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### **Southern Arkansas University Holds All-Sports Banquet**

The 2003-04 Southern Arkansas University All-Sports Banquet was held Tuesday night at the campus cafeteria in the Bruce Center. The climax of the banquet was the naming of the Auburn Smith Outstanding Senior Male and Female Awards. The Auburn Smith Award is the highest honor a student-athlete at SAU can achieve. Athletic ability, performance, character, and scholastic achievement are all considerations by a selection committee of head coaches in all sports at the university. The award is named in memory of Auburn Smith, who served as coach, athletics director, teacher, administrator, and friend until his death in 1992.

The coveted Auburn Smith Male Award was presented to football player Jordan Babineaux and the Female Award to volleyball player Brittany Wright.

Babineaux, a four-year player for the Muleriders in the defensive backfield, came to SAU from Port Arthur, Tex. He recently signed a free agent contract with the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League.

Babineaux received numerous honors and awards at SAU and he helped re-write the school, conference, and national record books. Among his numerous accomplishments in 2003: selected to the D2Football.com second-team All-America as a defensive back; a Daktronics second-team All-America cornerback; *Football Gazette* All-America cornerback, Dopke.com first-team All-America kick returner; Dopke.com National Special Teams Performer of the Year, Daktronics first-team All-South Region cornerback; first-team *Football Gazette* All-South Region defensive back; and first-team All-Gulf South Conference defensive back.

He played for the East in the NCAA Division II Whataburger Cactus Bowl All-Star game. He was the D2Football.com and *Football Gazette* National Special Teams Player of the Week on October 20 and was the *Football Gazette* National Defensive Player of the Week September 6. He was the GSC Defensive Player of the Week on both September 8 and October 27, and the GSC Special Team Player of the Week October 20.

Babineaux tied the NCAA Division II record for the longest kickoff return---100 yards, and tied the NCAA Division II record with two kickoff returns for touchdowns in a game. He broke the GSC record with two kickoff return touchdowns in a game and broke the GSC record with 208 yards in kickoff returns in a game, and tied the GSC record for the longest kickoff return (100 yards), all against Delta State. He set new SAU school records with the 100-yard kickoff return touchdown and the 208 return yards in one game.

A Mass Communications-Broadcast Journalism major with a Print Journalism minor, Babineaux has a 2.47 cumulative GPA.

Wright was an outside hitter on the SAU volleyball team for four years. She graduated December 12 with an English major and a Spanish minor with a 3.34 cumulative GPA. She was a one-time member of SAU's All A's List and a two-time member of the SAU Dean's List. She came to SAU from Dallas, Tex.

Wright was selected to the 2003 Fall Gulf South Conference All-Academic Team and was on the GSC Academic Honor Roll in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. In 2003, she was honored as the GSC West Division Player of the Year and named first-team All-GSC. In 2002, she was second-team All-GSC.

In 2003, Wright was chosen on three occasions as the GSC West Division Offensive Player of the Week. She was selected on the 2003 Labor Day/Texas Woman's University first-team All-Tournament team, was named to the 2003 Montevallo-Coca Cola Classic All-Tournament team, was picked on the 2003 West Florida Invitational All-Tournament team, and was a 2003 pre-season All-GSC choice.

Wright set a school match record of .708 hitting percentage against Arkansas Tech University and a school career record for 2,773 total attacks in her 2000-03 career with the Lady 'Riders.

Others nominated for the Auburn Smith Award were Nick Davis from men's basketball, Tyler Johnson from men's cross country, Amy Thomas from women's tennis, Lyndsey Knight from softball, and Ricky Martinez from men's track and field.

The prized 2003-04 Southern Arkansas University Female Scholar-Athlete Award went to Krystal Poulin and the Male Scholar-Athlete Award went to Thomas LaToof.

Poulin is a senior softball player for the Lady Muleriders from Marana, Ariz., who transferred to SAU from Texas Wesleyan University after her freshman season. She is a two-time member of SAU's All A's List and a three-time member of the SAU's Dean's List. She was selected on Verizon's third-team Academic All-America team, was a 2003 Verizon first-team District VI Academic All-America selection, and was named to the 2003 Spring Gulf South Conference All-Academic team. She is a Biological Science major with a Psychology minor and has an impressive 3.87 cumulative GPA.

Poulin was a second-team 2003 All-South Region choice and a first-team 2003 All-Gulf South Conference selection. She was twice named the GSC West Division Pitcher of the Week in 2003 and was also chosen as the GSC West Division Pitcher of the Week in 2004.

She set a school record for strikeouts in a game against Emporia State University (Kans.) in February 2004, and tied her own record with 17 whiffs against the University of West Alabama in April. She set a school record for strikeouts in a season with 267 in 2004 and a school record 497 strikeouts in a career from 2002 through 2004.

Poulin pitched the first perfect game in school history (no hits, no runs, no walks, no hit batters, no errors, no base-runners) against the University of North Alabama in April and repeated with a second perfect game against Delta State University in the GSC Tournament last Saturday.

She set a school record nine shutouts in a season in 2003, a school record 18 career shutouts from 2002-04, a school record 0.81 ERA in a season (2003), has a school record four no-hitters in a career, set a school record for no-hitters in a season with two in 2004, set a school record for appearances in a career with 81, set a school record for 70 games started in a career, and set a school record for wins in a career with 39.

LaToof, a senior kicker from New Boston, Tex., transferred to Southern Arkansas University as a junior from the University of Arkansas. He is an Exercise Science major with an impressive 3.88 cumulative GPA.

He graduated Magna Cum Laude in December, was a two-time member of SAU's All A's List and a two-time member of SAU's Dean's List. He was on the fall Gulf South Conference All-Academic Team in both 2002 and 2003, was a member of the 2003 CoSIDA first-team District VI Academic All-America team, and was on the Fall GSC Academic Honor Roll in 2002 and 2003.

LaToof was the 2003 Dopke.com second-team All-America kicker, a 2003 second-team Daktronics All-South Region kicker, a 2003 third-team *Football Gazette* All-South Region kicker, a 2003 second-team All-GSC kicker, and a 2003 GSC Special Teams Player of the Week. He set a school season record for extra points made with 46 in 2003.

Others nominated for the award were Adrian Romanos from men's cross country, Nick Davis from men's basketball, Valeri Turner from women's basketball, Brandi Patterson from volleyball, Bobby Beeson from baseball, Amy Thomas from tennis, Shelley Johnson from women's track and field, Gaby Mendoza from women's cross country, and Daniel Keithley from men's track and field.

Both the Auburn Smith and Scholar-Athlete Awards were presented by the university's director of athletics, Jay Adcox.

Outstanding athlete awards went to Melinda Pitcock from volleyball coach Shawna Laurendine, Nick Davis from men's basketball coach Brian Daugherty, Tammie White from women's basketball coach Sam Biley, Nik Lewis from football coach Steve Quinn, student trainer Krystal Avery from head trainer Ken Cole, Leonard Biddle from golf coach Dave Graham, Adam Jester from rodeo coach Corey Carroll, Nelly Tualla from tennis coach Wayne Garner, Shelley Johnson and Eli Elias from track and field coach Dan Veach, Tyler Johnson from men's cross country coach Dan Veach, Chipper Crum from baseball coach Mike Godfrey, and Robyn Smith from softball coach Jenifer Pagani.

Dan Gregory, the "Voice of the Muleriders," served as Master of Ceremonies, the invocation was given by Harold Jameson, the associate Sports Information Director, and special recognition of SAU's athletic programs, achievements, and accomplishments of the student-athletes were given by university president, Dr. David Rankin.