

## Larkins, Spadoni earn inaugural Ideal Saxon awards

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Larkins

Spadoni

ALFRED, NY Alfred University senior student-athletes **Jordyn Larkins (Rochester, NY/Harley-Allendale-Columbia)** and **Jake Spadoni (Webster, NY/Webster Schroeder)** have been named recipients of the University's inaugural Ideal Saxon awards.

The Ideal Saxon award, created by Paul Vecchio, director of athletics, each year honors the achievements of one female and one male student-athlete at Alfred University who display excellence in both academics and athletics while providing service and leadership of distinction to the AU Community.

The pair was honored during the annual Senior Student-Athlete Recognition Luncheon, held each year during the week leading up to Commencement.

"In considering the attributes that we were seeking in this initial 'Ideal Saxon' award, I can think of no two people more deserving than Jordyn and Jake," Vecchio commented. "Both of them have impacted their particular sport in a tremendous fashion, both on and off the field, they each have excelled in the classroom and have made a difference in the AU community through their leadership and service. Most of all, they have earned the respect of everyone involved in AU Athletics with the pride and passion they have displayed in wearing the Purple and Gold."

Larkins starred in track and field and was one of the Saxons' top sprinters throughout her college career. Spadoni, a four-year starting defender on the men's lacrosse team, is a two-time Empire 8 Conference all-star who this season became the program's first All-American in nine years.

A recipient of the Alfred University's 2013 Outstanding Senior Award (given each year to one male and one female student), Larkins enjoyed success in the classroom and on the track.

A two-year team captain, Larkins has held several school records during her career. She is former school record holder in the outdoor 200-meter dash and 100-meter dash, and in 2011 earned First Team Empire 8 all-conference

recognition in those respective events. She is also former holder of the school's indoor 60-meter dash and 200-meter dash records, and is part of relay teams that hold school marks in the outdoor 4X100 and indoor 4X200.

Larkins has been named to the Dean's List each of her four years at AU and has been inducted into both the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and Phi Gamma Iota (language) Honor Society. She graduated on Saturday with a cumulative grade point average of 3.66 and last fall was named to the Empire 8 Conference Presidents' List honoring academic excellence among Empire 8 student-athletes. Larkins was this year's recipient of Faculty Award for Academic Excellence in Modern Languages.

She is a graduate of the Alfred University Women's Leadership Academy; was a member of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Advising Committee; and served on the Higher Education Opportunities Program (HEOP) Student Council, helping initiate community building programs among students enrolled through HEOP.

Larkins said of what it means to her to be an 'Ideal Saxon': "I have not won every single race or event, but I have worked hard. I put my heart into my sport and into my teammates by investing energy into helping them grow as athletes, and those are the qualities that the Ideal Saxon should have. We should strive to help motivate others after us, not only on the field or on the track, but in the classroom. That is the true definition of a leader and the framework of the Ideal Saxon."

Spadoni has been one of the top lacrosse defenders ever at Alfred University, earning Empire 8 Conference Second Team honors in 2012 and First Team honors this spring. He was recognized as one of the top players in all of Division III this year, being named a United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA) All-American. With that honor he earned honorable mention from the USILA -- he becomes AU's first All-American since 2004.

He is the school's career leader in caused turnovers a stat that became official in 2007 with 143. In 58 career games, he had 194 groundballs as well as one goal and an assist. In his senior year, he had 50 groundballs and 40 caused turnovers, the latter ranking first in the Empire 8. He has served as a team captain the last two seasons.

On Saturday, Spadoni graduated with a bachelor's degree in early childhood/childhood education. He earned a 4.0 GPA in the fall 2012 semester and was named to the Empire 8 Conference Presidents' List honoring academic excellence among Empire 8 student-athletes.

On what it means to be an 'Ideal Saxon,' Spadoni commented: "The 'Ideal Saxon' is an athlete that plays every second of every game with pride and battles throughout their whole career to better themselves and their teammates; they also lead by example on and off the field in the classroom and in society. The 'Ideal Saxon' represents themselves, their family, and Alfred University to their fullest potential."

Larkins and Spadoni were presented with plaques, along with specially-made glass mugs (created by Dr. William LaCourse, professor of glass science at AU) etched with their names, proclaiming them Ideal Saxon award winners. Barnes and Noble College Bookstore, an award sponsor, also provided gift certificates to the winners.

Larkins and Spadoni were chosen from among five female and five male finalists. The other female finalists were: **Maressa Mistretta (Shirley, NY/Longwood)**, softball; **Jennifer Miranda (Bronx, NY/Academy of Letters)**, volleyball and track and field; **Tracie McGinnity (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili)** soccer and lacrosse; and **Ali Garcia (Salt Lake City, UT/Judge Memorial)**, lacrosse. Other men&s finalists were: **Brett Dennis (Webster, NY/Webster Schroeder)**, basketball; **Tony Gai (Burke, VA/Lake Braddock)**, soccer; **Chris Steeves (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili)**, football; and **Chris Lopez (Rochester, NY/Pittsford Sutherland)**, track and field.