

State, Empire 8 name AU's Davis top women's swimming coach

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ALFRED T.J. Davis, head coach of men's and women's swimming and diving at Alfred University, has been honored by the New York State Women's Collegiate Athletic Association (NYSWCAA) and the Empire 8 athletic conference. Davis was named Swimming Coach of the Year after the NYSWCAA women's championships Feb. 21-23. He has also been named women's swimming Coach of the Year by the Empire 8. The NYSWCAA honor is determined by a vote among coaches of teams competing at the state championship meet. Davis guided the Lady Saxons to a sixth-place finish at the state championships, held at Nottingham High School in Syracuse. Eleven new school records were established: five in relays and six in individual events. Despite bringing only 13 swimmers to the state meet, AU still scored 709 points, its highest total ever. The relay teams did particularly well, finishing no lower than fifth. Prior to this year's meet, the highest an AU relay team had placed at the women's state meet was fourth. Of 19 events for which AU has all-time records, 11 were broken at the state meet. Davis was quick to point out that most of the team contributed to that effort. "It's important to note that these are not just a few fast swimmers making this happen," Davis commented. "Out of 13 swimmers who traveled to the state meet, nine were involved in setting new records." Alfred was one of the strongest teams academically to compete in the state meet. Of the team's 13 swimmers, six were named to the NYSWCAA All-Academic team, which requires a GPA of 3.3 or better. They were: seniors Gretchen Jeitler (Depew/Cheektowaga), chemistry, and Kristen Cary (Hannawa Falls/Potsdam), business administration; juniors Anne Martin (Wayne, NJ/Wayne Hills), business administration, Melissa McAllister (Hornell/Hornell), accounting, and Lisa Rosa (Avoca, PA/Wyoming Seminary), business administration, and sophomore Sara Thompson (Batavia/Batavia), biology. Thompson, who established three new individual school records and swam on four record-setting relay teams, turned in NCAA qualifying "B" cut times in two events: the 100 breaststroke and 200 breaststroke. She now awaits word on whether she will qualify in either or both events at the upcoming NCAA Division III championships, March 14-16. Thompson is only the third woman in school history to set NCAA qualifying times. Davis has also been named Empire 8 women's swimming Coach of the Year after leading AU to a 5-5 record, including a 2-3 mark in conference meets.