

## END NOTES

**Jose Alcala**, university lecturer and coordinator of the Industrial Design Program in the School of Art + Design, was named one of the 30 Most Admired Educators for 2014 by *DesignIntelligence* magazine. Along with being a teacher, Alcala is the co-founder of MADLAB, which offers architecture, interior design, product design, fabrication and design-build services; and RELAB, a company specializing in the design, engineering, fabrication and installation of sustainable energy products.

**Nancy Coppola**, founding director of the Master of Science in Professional and Technical Communication program, has received the Distinguished Service Award from the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication for significant long-term contributions to instruction in technical communication and for service to the profession and the organization.

**Casey Diekman**, assistant professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, recently had his paper "Causes and Consequences of Hyperexcitation in Central Clock Neurons" published in *PLOS Computational Biology*, a journal of the International Society for Computational Biology. The article reports that the electrical activity of "clock neurons" may be more important than previously thought. Such

neurons influence daily rhythms in the physiology and behavior of mammals.

**Nancy Steffen-Fluhr**, associate professor in the Department of Humanities and director of the Murray Center for Women in Technology, addressed the third annual International Gender Summit, held in Washington, DC, in November. Steffen-Fluhr, principal investigator for an NJIT National Science Foundation Advance Grant, demonstrated how co-authorship network mapping can be used to track faculty career development and interdepartmental research collaboration.

**William V. Rapp**, Henry J. Leir Chair in International Trade and research professor in the School of Management, has projected that US economic growth will rise to 3.1 percent in 2014, while unemployment will fall to 6.9 percent by December of 2014. Recognized internationally for his expertise, Rapp presented this forecast in his invited address at the 27th Annual Economic Outlook Symposium sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

# POINT BY POINT

The latest news about NJIT sports:  
[www.njithighlanders.com](http://www.njithighlanders.com)

## FIRST LACROSSE COACH JOINS NJIT

Travis Johnson has been named the first head coach of men's lacrosse at NJIT. Johnson, who officially started his new post in early January, has been hired to coach a start-up program that is slated to begin play in 2015 as an NCAA Division I team. He is a former player who has been coaching at the college level since the 1999-2000 academic year and most recently served as the first assistant, defensive coordinator and recruiting coordinator at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Prior to Mount St. Mary's, where he has worked since 2010-2011, Johnson was an assistant coach in two stints at Penn State (2004-2006 and 2008-2010) and also at Stony Brook (2006-2008). He began his coaching career as an undergraduate at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and continued at Stevens Institute of Technology (2001-2004). He is a 2000 graduate of RIT, where he played lacrosse and was selected by the professional Rochester Knighthawks in the 2000 National Lacrosse League draft.

Johnson will be in charge of the Highlanders' 11th varsity men's team and the 19th varsity team overall for NJIT. According to reports in the lacrosse news media, NJIT is the 69th institution nationwide that either fields a team or is in the process of starting a Division I men's lacrosse team. In New Jersey, the Highlanders will be the fourth Division I lacrosse team, joining Princeton, Rutgers and Monmouth (which begins

play this spring).

The new head coach of the Highlanders did his first coaching with the Division III programs at his alma mater and then at Stevens. From there, he entered the Division I ranks with Penn State, which made the NCAA Tournament in his first season on the staff. After another year with the Nittany Lions, Johnson headed to Stony Brook, working as the top assistant to Rick Sowell, now the head coach at the United States Naval Academy. As recruiting coordinator, Johnson helped Sowell assemble the core of a Stony Brook squad that, in 2010, reached the NCAA Tournament and was ranked as high as sixth in the nation during the season. ■

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

The NJIT women's soccer team finished 2013 with an 8-10-1 record, including six shutouts. The eight wins and six shutouts were new highs in the program's NCAA Division I era, which began in the 2006 season. The previous Division I high for wins came in 2009, when the Highlanders were 7-9-2.

This year's team also matched the overall program record for wins. Started as a Division III program in 1996, NJIT played in Division II from 1997 to 2005, posting an 8-6-3 mark the final season in Division II.

First-year head coach Mandi Risdan, who served the program as an assistant coach from 2008 to 2012 before taking over the top job in April, was pleased by the progress that saw the school Division I records fall, propelled

*Junior Marko Drljic collected postseason honors, including All-North Atlantic Region second team from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.*

by a 4-2-1 record in October and November.

“They achieved it,” said the coach, emphasizing the “they” and pointing to the players as they walked off the field for the final time in 2013. “We don’t have a conference tournament, so the staff and players knew this was going to be the end of our season and we wanted to go out and achieve our season goal of winning the most Division I games.

“We started slowly, but we still finished strong and every single girl on the team was part of our reaching one of our biggest goals. Sam (Samantha Bersett\*) was great and she really had a good year, working hard and getting better as the season went along. We all hit a bump in the road (three road losses by a combined 11-0 in late September), but she stayed with it and was a big part of us turning it around



Samantha Bersett

defensively (6 goals allowed over the last 8 games after the aforementioned 11-goal spell).”

The team’s accomplishments were recognized by the website CollegeSportsMadness.com, which named five players to its 2013 Independent All-Conference squad and tabbed Ridsen as Coach of the Year. Players Rebecca Tustin, Kaelyn Gamel and Jenny Cislo\* were first-team honorees, while Madeline Griep and Danielle Pierce\* were second-team picks.

Tustin, who missed the entire 2011 season due to knee surgery, returned to the form that had made her one of the program’s most promising players when she arrived on campus in 2010. Tustin, an architecture major who will play as a 5th-year senior in 2014, had a team-leading 9 points (3 goals, 3 assists) this year.

Gamel started in all 19 matches and finished fourth on the team with five points, two goals and one assist. Cislo started every match (19), while scoring her first collegiate goal on October 4 at Delaware State and notching one assist vs. South Carolina State on October 13. Griep started all 19 matches and finished with a goal and two assists, while Pierce started 13 matches. ■

## MEN’S SOCCER

NJIT capped its second-best won-lost record in its 10-year Division I era (7-9-2) with a 6-0 rout of Howard in Washington, DC. The six goals at Howard were the most for NJIT since it began playing Division I men’s soccer and the most for the Highlanders since 2001, when they were a Division II program.

The clean sheet at Howard was a program Division I-record sixth for NJIT, which also allowed a DI-era low 24 goals.

Although the 2013 record was a shade off the program’s best Division I mark of 10-9 in 2012, the Highlanders continued to prove they could compete with the best. Two of the 2013 losses were one-goal decisions on the road against teams ranked in the national Top 25 – 2-1 at #19 St. John’s, which later entered the national Top 10, and 1-0 at Fairleigh Dickinson, ranked #22.

Junior Marko Drljic collected postseason honors, including All-North Atlantic Region second team from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. The top scorer for the 2013 Highlanders, the native of Slovenia became the first player honored as an all-region player by the NSCAA in NJIT’s 10 years as a Division I program.

Drljic, who is listed as a defender but played positions all over the field in various games, led the 2013 Highlanders in goals (6), assists (4) and points (16). All of his totals were twice that of the next person in each category. He played in 16 of the



PHOTOS: LARRY LEVANTI

Marko Drljic

team’s 18 games. Drljic began his NJIT career in 2012 and set a new program Division I record with seven assists, while adding two goals for 11 points. With one season of eligibility remaining, he is the program’s Division I career leader in assists (11), while ranking fifth in goals (8) and fourth in points (27).

Earlier, Drljic headed a group of five Highlanders who earned 2013 Independent All-Conference honors from CollegeSportsMadness.com, which picked him as Defensive Player of the Year. Drljic was joined on the all-conference first team by Cristian Marcel\* and Jimmy Myers, while Sven Beverst and Philipp Hannemann earned second-team honors.

Marcel, a junior from East Setauket, New York, appeared in 16 matches (15 starts), scoring one goal against VMI on September 6. Myers, a sophomore from Hicksville, New York, played in 17 matches, notching two goals. Beverst, from Germany, started in 17 matches and Hannemann, also from Germany, appeared in 17 matches (16 starts). ■

*\*Dorman honors scholars*