UMass Lowell’s Sanca and Merrimack’s Hall Named
Northeast-10 Outstanding Scholar-Athletes

South Easton, Mass. - The University of Massachusetts Lowell senior Ruben Sanca (Boston, Mass.) and Merrimack College senior Caitlin Hall (Westminster, Mass.) were named the 2008-2009 Northeast-10 Outstanding Scholar-Athletes of the Year as selected by the Northeast-10 Faculty Athletic Representative Council (FAR). Both student-athletes were honored Monday evening at the conference’s end of the year awards banquet in Mystic, Conn.

Sanca put together an impressive year as he was named the Northeast-10 Cross Country and Indoor Track & Field Athlete of the Year. In cross country, Sanca helped lead the River Hawks to the Northeast-10 and NCAA East Region Championships, winning both individual titles. For his efforts he was named the NCAA Division II East Region Athlete of the Year in the process. He also helped the team to its second New England Championship in three years as he placed second by one second in a field of 316 runners from Division I, II and III.

During the indoor track season, Sanca qualified for three events for the NCAA Championships, including the 5,000-meters, distance medley relay and the mile. He also received athlete of the year honors from the USTFCCCA.

“This is quite an accomplishment for Ruben and caps what has been an extraordinary four years,” said UMass Lowell Athletic Director Dana Skinner. “Ruben has been an outstanding student and athlete, a leader on campus and a role model in every way. We are proud to have him as a representative of UMass Lowell.”

Sanca excelled not only athletically, but academically as well. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in finance with a grade point average of 3.30. He earned NE-10 All-Academic honors for the second straight year in cross country and was named to the Dean’s List four times during his time at UMass Lowell. In May, Sanca was the recipient of the David Boutin Award for leadership and excellence in athletics, academics and service. At commencement he was one of ten graduating students that received Chancellors Medal.

Hall capped off her four-year career as a member of the Merrimack women’s soccer team in fine fashion. She earned All-Northeast-10 honors for the third straight season after earning second team honors this year. She earned NSCAA All-East Region and NEWISA All-New England honors as well. Hall helped lead the Warriors to the Northeast-10 quarterfinals and an appearance in the NCAA Division II Tournament. She finished her career with 20 goals scored.
In the classroom, Hall was just as successful as she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in health science with a minor in business administration. She compiled a 3.86 GPA and was named to the Dean’s List each semester while at Merrimack. As a result of her combined academic and athletic achievements she was named to the Northeast-10 All-Academic team for the third straight year.

In addition, Hall earned ESPN/CoSIDA Academic All-American honors this year being named to the District I Second Team for the second time in her career and third time she received Academic All-American honors. Hall was also this year’s recipient of the 2009 Merrimack College Female Scholar-Athlete Award. She also became the first student ever to earn a scholarship to Boston College’s nursing graduate program.

With 15 member institutions the Northeast-10 is the second largest NCAA Division II athletic conference in the nation. Its 23 championship sports provide athletic opportunities for over 5,500 student-athletes, the largest such program of any Division II conference.