

National award named after UWO's Vercauteren

by Contributor - Tuesday, November 25, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1496/national-award-named-after-uwo-vercauteren/>

The United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) will create an award to honor the all-around success that University of Wisconsin Oshkosh head women's cross country and track and field coach Deb Vercauteren has achieved.

The Deb Vercauteren Program of the Year Award will be presented annually to the most outstanding NCAA Division III women's cross country and track and field program. The award will honor the institution that has achieved the most success in cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field at the NCAA Division III Championships.

Teams must be represented at each of the three NCAA Division III Championships in order to be eligible for the award. Scoring for the award will be based on each institution's national finish in cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field (for example, first place equals one point, second place equals two points, 31st place equals 31 points). The lowest combined total score for all three championships will determine the award recipient.

Vercauteren took over the women's cross country and track and field program at UW Oshkosh in 1981. In her second year at the helm, she led the Titans to a seventh-place finish at the NCAA Division III Cross Country Championship. Since then, Vercauteren's name has become synonymous with success.

Vercauteren's Titans have combined to capture 18 NCAA Division III titles (four cross country, six indoor track and field, and eight outdoor track and field). In addition, her student athletes have combined to win 50 individual national titles and earn 347 All-America awards.

Vercauteren's teams have won 36 Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference titles (15 cross country, 11 indoor track and field, and 10 outdoor track and field). She is the only NCAA Division III women's head coach to have won a national championship in cross country, indoor track and field and outdoor track and field.

Throughout her career, Vercauteren has received numerous national and conference coach of the year honors. In 2006, the USTFCCCA honored Vercauteren as its NCAA Division III Women's Silver Anniversary Coach.

The inaugural Deb Vercauteren Program of the Year Award will be presented at the conclusion of the 2009 outdoor track and field season. Programs who have qualified for the 2008 NCAA Division III Cross Country Championship will accumulate points towards the award.

Vercauteren, an Ashwaubenon, Wis., native, received a bachelor's degree from UW-Stevens Point in 1976 and a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1980.

The UW-Stevens Point, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 14 and USTFCCCA Halls of Fame member is married to John Zupanc, the head men's cross country coach and track and field coach at UW Oshkosh.

In addition to her coaching duties, Vercauteren also serves as the senior assistant director of athletics at UW Oshkosh.