



## **Bard College and Rochester Institute of Technology To Join The Liberty League**

June 16, 2009 – Bard College and Rochester Institute of Technology will join the Liberty League as full members, beginning in the 2011-12 academic year. The announcement was made today by Jim McLaughlin, Liberty League President and Director of Intercollegiate Athletics at Union College in Schenectady, N.Y.

“We’re delighted to welcome Bard and RIT into the Liberty League,” said McLaughlin. “Both of these outstanding institutions share the ideals of the Liberty League in terms of student-first philosophy and approaching intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the overall educational experience. We look forward to the contributions that Bard and RIT will make to the league, both academically and athletically.”

Bard College, located in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., is a highly selective liberal arts and science institution of 1,800 undergraduates, including representatives from all 50 states as well as an international student population of twelve percent. Bard sponsors 15 intercollegiate athletic programs and is a current member of the Skyline Conference, as well as the College Squash Association and the North East Collegiate Volleyball Association.

“Bard College enthusiastically accepts the invitation to join the Liberty League. We believe that the Liberty League schools mix academic and athletics excellence in the right proportions,” said Dr. James Brudvig, Vice President for Administration. “We look forward to our full participation in 2011.”

“Bard is very pleased to accept membership into the Liberty League, a long and well respected conference with a clear focus on the balance of the student-athlete experience,” added Kristen Hall, Director of Athletics. “Our academic profile blends nicely with that of the league’s membership and we look forward to the future experiences that our student-athletes will have with our peer institutions.”

Rochester Institute of Technology, located in Rochester, N.Y., is a privately endowed, coeducational university with eight colleges emphasizing career education and experiential learning. The RIT student body consists of approximately 12,000 full-time and 1,600 part-time undergraduate students, and 2,650 graduate students. Enrolled students represent all 50 states and more than 95 foreign countries. RIT offers 24 intercollegiate sports and is a current member of the Empire 8 Athletic Conference, as well as the Empire Collegiate Wrestling Conference and the Division I Atlantic Hockey Association.

“The acceptance into the Liberty League for all of our Division III sports is wonderful news on the campus, particularly for our scholar athletes,” said RIT President Dr. Bill Destler. “RIT fits in very well with the intercollegiate athletic philosophy of the other Liberty League institutions.”

“We are very pleased and honored to have gained acceptance in to the Liberty League,” added Director of Athletics Lou Spiotti. “The Liberty League is a premier NCAA Division III conference composed of colleges and universities with values and aspirations similar to those of RIT. This is a historic move for RIT and for our intercollegiate athletics programs and we look forward with great anticipation to our new association.”

A member conference of the NCAA’s Division III, The Liberty League has nine full members and sponsors championships in 24 sports. The member institutions of the league place the highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of its student-athletes’ academic programs. The member institutions seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete’s athletic activities are conducted as an integral part of the educational experience.

Originally founded as the Upstate Collegiate Athletic Association in 1995, the conference was renamed the Liberty League during the summer of 2004. The league includes founding members Clarkson University, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, the University of Rochester, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, St. Lawrence University, Skidmore College, and Union College. Vassar College became a full member of the league during the 2000-01 academic year. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy is an associate member in the sports of football and men's golf, while Susquehanna University and Worcester Polytechnic Institute are associate members in football only. Hamilton College will depart the league in 2011-12 in order to fully integrate its athletic programs within the New England Small College Athletic Conference.

---

For More Information:

Liberty League: <http://www.libertyleaguesports.org>

Bard College: <http://www.bard.edu>

Rochester Institute of Technology: <http://www.rit.edu>

---