

The University of Nebraska at Kearney celebrated excellence in athletics on Wednesday, April 24, at the 6th Annual Orthman Senior Recognition and Awards Banquet.

The 2013 class of 62 student athletes were recognized for their career accomplishments as Lopers.

Those in attendance included athletes, family members, university staff and donors. Guests enjoyed a dinner with a program consisting of coaches speaking about each senior's contribution to the team as well as academic recognition, Student Athlete Advisory Awards and finally the announcement of the 2013 Senior Student Athletes of the Year.

Co-Female Student Athlete of the Year is Brooke Harris of Dickens, Neb.

Harris has been a part of the cross country and track teams the past five years.

In cross country, she was named the Lopers Most Improved Runner in 2009. As a junior, she became just the fourth UNK woman to earn All-RMAC honors in cross country, finishing 13th at a league meet, which produces the nation's most elite Division-II distance runners.

An All-RMAC performer and an NCAA provisional qualifier in track, she currently holds the school record in the mile and ranks in the UNK all-time top 10 in four other events.

When asked about Harris, Coach Brady Bonsall quoted, "Her commitment to excellence as a student, athlete, and a musician throughout college was nothing short of amazing. She truly took ownership of her own success and found success in all avenues. I'm blessed to have been a part of her growth the last five years."

Her accomplishments off the track are even more impressive as a member of the Kearney Symphony Orchestra, the UNK Marching Band and the UNK Wind Ensemble. She was selected the UNK Outstanding Senior by the Music Education and Instrumental Performance Department, has been selected as a member of the National Flute Association Collegiate Flute Choir and her research has been published in multiple Undergraduate research publications.

Harris is a three-time Academic All-American thanks to an impressive 3.99 GPA as a music performance major.

Athletes selected for this award must attain the following criteria:

- Cumulative academic standing (must obtain a 3.4 or higher GPA entering their final semester)
- Athletic achievement (has shown exemplary achievement as a competitor, received accolades on a regional/national level)
- Citizenship (is a leader and positive representative of the team, university, and community of Kearney during time as a student-athlete)
- Campus and community engagement (active in campus life/organizations, participates in outreach/service activities)