

JOANNE MERRILL NAMED GNAC ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

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Athletic Director **Joanne Merrill** was named the 2008-2009 Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC) Administrator of the Year. The award honors athletic directors for their contributions to their schools and the conference. Merrill has served as secretary of the GNAC for four years; Rivier hosts the conference cross country championships and serves as a neutral site for baseball games.

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Merrill says she was surprised when she was named the winner at the GNAC's August meeting. "I was very surprised—I'd voted for someone else," she says.

Jennifer Pacelli, Athletic Director at Albertus Magnus, nominated Merrill for the award. For Merrill, hearing what Pacelli had written was the best part of winning the award. "She wrote the nicest thing, essentially saying that I was a mentor to young administrators, balancing my job and family," Merrill says. "It's great realizing that someone I have a great deal of respect for in the conference felt like I was doing a good job and was someone she could learn from."

Merrill says it was nice to receive recognition from her peers. "It's meaningful because all the athletic directors in the GNAC are really committed to their schools—they all work really hard," she says. ■