



CLOSING REMARKS AT RALLY AWARDS by xFinity
D. Rosowsky, Provost and Senior Vice President
May 5, 2015 at the Flynn Theater

Good evening! So we have come to the end of the 11th Annual University of Vermont RALLY AWARDS, a ceremony – an *event* – celebrating the academic and athletic success of Vermont Student-Athletes during the 2014-2015 season.

About a month ago, I had the honor of speaking at the 2nd Annual Faculty Appreciation Night, organized by the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, where I shared my thoughts on the unique and important connection between academics and athletics. Tonight, we celebrated both of these components, and we recognize the important role our faculty, academic staff, coaches, and athletics staff play in enabling the academic success *and* the athletic success of our amazing student-athletes.

And you *are* successful. As a group, each year you outpace the overall UVM student body in GPA. And you are recognized throughout the America East conference and across the nation for your academic awards and high standing. In fact, UVM's reputation and the success of our scholar-athletes was the topic of discussion at last week's meeting of the *America East Academic Consortium*, a meeting of America East provosts. You should be very proud of how well you balance the demands of academics and athletics. WE are certainly very proud of YOU.

I'd also like to acknowledge a few students and teams in particular. An incomplete list for sure, but these are among the many highlights of this incredible year.

As a group:

- 32% of our student-athletes earned a 3.5 GPA or better in Fall 2014; 63% earned a 3.0 or better.
- In fact, Athletics had its highest department-wide GPA in 4 years.
- Men's Cross-Country and Women's Lacrosse had their highest GPA's (3.26 and 3.25, respectively) in 8 years.
- Our student-athletes earned higher GPA's than our overall undergraduate population, both men and women.
- 16 student-athletes earned perfect 4.0's in the fall.

And it's worth highlighting just a few of the amazing individual highlights from this year:

- Mike Paliotta was named a Second Team All-American and won the Bob Monahan Award as the Best Defenseman in New England.
- Martin Kallur won the Coaches Award at the America East Indoor (Track) Championships for earning the most points of any male athlete; he also won the Elite 18 Award with a perfect 4.0 GPA.
- Dom Garand was this year's NCAA National Champion in men's slalom.
- Jessica Roach, who has had just an incredible year, set the single season scoring record for Women's Lacrosse at UVM.

And while you, as student-athletes, certainly deserve the bulk of the credit, I also want to recognize the important human and physical infrastructure that surrounds you. The coaches, the staff, the facilities that they maintain, and the programs that they lead – all contribute to your athletics experience, and your success as UVM student-athletes. Please give a round of applause to all of our coaches and athletics staff!

I want to give a special shout-out to the staff of the *Student Success Center*, led by Joe Gervais, a former Catamount himself. This group of professionals works hard each and every day, right alongside you, to help you achieve academically and grow into the next generation of leaders. Please join me in thanking Joe and his team.

I have had the privilege of getting to know many of you – athletes, coaches, and staff – over the past two years. I am so impressed by what our student-athletes do as students, as highly trained athletes, as teammates, as peer-mentors, as friends, as volunteers, as role models, and as citizens in our community. You inspire me as you do so many others on our campus and in our community.

And then I see how you work together and perform as a team on the court, on the ice, on the field, in the pool, and on the track. And I am in awe. YOU ARE THE MODEL SCHOLAR-ATHLETES. You are here for a UVM education (and most importantly, a UVM degree) *and* to be able to compete at the highest level in college athletics, Division I. You take seriously the opportunity you have been afforded to study at a great university, renowned for its academic excellence and its beautiful campus.

And you are guided and coached by a dedicated athletics staff. They guide you, push you, counsel you, and help you maintain priorities, set goals, and achieve success in academics as well as athletics. What makes a great scholar-athlete program is this *picture-perfect combination* of dedicated, caring, and highly educated athletics staff and intelligent, balanced, and driven student-athletes.

YOU GET IT. And it is my sincere hope that those of you who are graduating next weekend GOT what we promised to you just four years ago: a world-class university education, a warm and supportive academic community, a vibrant campus and community life, and a place where you could grow – as a student and as an athlete.

And if we succeeded, I hope you will continue to come back to UVM, and GIVE back to UVM, in the years ahead. We are counting on your support. And more importantly, future student-athletes are counting on your support.

In closing, again let me congratulate not only our award winners this evening, but ALL of you for a tremendous season. You have made all of us proud. Proud of *you*, proud of your *accomplishments*, proud *Vermonters*, and proud to be part of CATAMOUNT NATION.

Thank you for inviting me to share in this wonderful evening with you. *GO CATS!*

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