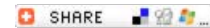




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For Immediate Release
Contact: Wendy Parker
404-219-4278

Annual event to feature formal award presentations, panel discussion



USBWA WOMEN'S AWARDS BREAKFAST SET FOR SAN ANTONIO

ST. LOUIS (USBWA) – Farmingdale State (N.Y.) point guard Tiffara Steward, who has battled numerous disabilities to play college basketball, will be honored with the U.S. Basketball Writers Association's Most Courageous Award on Tuesday, April 6 at the organization's Women's Awards Breakfast at the Final Four in San Antonio.

The event, sponsored by longtime USBWA partner ESPN, will take place in the Lone Star ballroom at the Grand Hyatt Hotel San Antonio at 9 a.m. and will include the formal announcement of the USBWA's women's All-America team and national player, freshman and coach of the year awards.

Other featured guests include Jane Meyer, senior associate athletics director at the University of Iowa and the current chairwoman of the NCAA women's basketball committee.

The breakfast also will include a panel discussion about the present and future coverage of women's basketball in the wake of technological change that has swept through the media industries.

Steward, who at 4-foot-6 is believed to be the shortest player in college basketball, was born three months premature, at just 2-1/2 pounds. One leg is longer than the other due to scoliosis, she is blind in one eye and she also experiences hearing loss.

Yet Steward, a business management major, has been a starter and a captain for her Farmingdale State team, and during her career averaged 4.5 points a game. As a senior, Steward started all 27 games as the Rams posted a 25-2 record, the best in school history, and qualified for the NCAA Division III tournament.

Her story has been featured prominently in the national media and she has been named ABC World News' "Person of the Week."

Meyer is completing her fifth year on the NCAA women's basketball committee. She will offer remarks on the state of the women's championship and will take questions from the audience.

The panel discussion is devoted to developing ideas and strategies for sustaining and increasing coverage of women's basketball following the sharp decline of journalists assigned to follow the sport.

As the focus of media efforts shift from print to online, representatives of the working press, the NCAA, the College Sports Information Directors of America and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association will discuss how these changes have affected what they do.

Topics to be covered include NCAA credentialing criteria, the growth of online media guides, social media and other tools that are shaping coverage, and a coach's perspective on how these trends have altered efforts to gain greater exposure for the sport.

Credentialed media, NCAA staff and local media are invited to attend and participate.

The **U.S. Basketball Writers Association**, formed in 1956, has named a women's All-America team since the 1996-97 season. The association has also named a national player of the year since 1987-88 and a national coach of the year since 1989-90. In 2002-03, the USBWA initiated an award for the nation's top freshman. For more information about the USBWA and its award programs, contact Executive Director Joe Mitch in the Missouri Valley Conference office at 314-421-0339.

