Fourth annual Blue Tie Ball set for March 30

Tickets are on sale now for the fourth annual Blue Tie Ball, a University of Nevada, Reno Scholarship Gala benefiting Wolf Pack student-athletes.

This year’s event is set for Saturday, March 30 at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino.

The evening raises money for student-athlete scholarships at the University and promises a night of elegance, amazing food, wine and fun. Wolf Pack student-athletes will greet guests and escort them into the Tuscany Ballroom.

Former Wolf Pack skier Eric Andersen and Reno native Whitney Myer, who recently appeared on NBC’s The Voice, will be performing at this year’s Blue Tie Ball.

For tickets and more information, call (775) 682-6965.

Athletics Graduation Success Rate reaches all-time high

The University of Nevada, Reno’s Graduation Success Rate for student-athletes has climbed to an all-time high of 80 percent.

This year’s mark is up from its previous best of 78 percent in 2011. The Wolf Pack’s graduation rate has increased in each of the last eight years and has climbed 17 percent since 2005, going from 63 percent to its current all-time high of 80 percent.

The federal graduation rate for Nevada’s student-athletes, which doesn’t count transfer students, is also at its all-time high of 71 percent this year. That number has significantly increased from 47 percent in 2007.

“We are very proud to have our Graduation Success Rate reach 80 percent, the highest it has ever been,” said Cary Groth, director of Wolf Pack Athletics. “Hitting that milestone and having our graduation rate improve in each of the last eight years is a testament to the hard work of our student-athletes as well as the commitment of our academic staff, coaches and university community to providing our student-athletes the support and resources they need to reach their academic goals and graduate.”

The GSR was developed by the NCAA as part of its academic reform initiative to more accurately assess the academic success of student-athletes. Unlike the federal graduation rate, the GSR holds institutions accountable for transfer student-athletes, includes mid-year enrollees, and is calculated for every sport. This year’s mark is based on student-athletes who began full-time enrollment at any school in the fall of 2005 and received athletic aid in their first year of college.

“Just as we cheer on our Wolf Pack teams on the field or on the court, we are also pleased to celebrate their academic success,” said University President Marc Johnson. “The continued improvement in the Graduation Success Rate demonstrates our commitment to help set our student-athletes on a path for success in life.”
Wolf Pack celebrates women’s athletics at Salute to Champions dinner

Nevada Athletics held its Salute to Champions Dinner on Nov. 8 in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Title IX, the federal civil rights law that prevents gender discrimination in education.

In addition to a keynote address by Olympic gold medalist Brandi Chastain, the evening celebrated the success of women’s athletics at the University of Nevada, Reno and honored the contributions of donors Mary Ansari, Dixie May ’01HDG of the Wilbur D. May Foundation, Christina Hixson of the Lied Foundation, Lynn Bremer, Kathie Dees ’09 of the Marguerite Wattis Petersen Foundation and Jean Jones of the Nell J. Redfield Foundation as well as former University of Nevada and NCAA President Joe Crowley, former athletics administrator Angie Taylor ’85, ’91MPA, ’04Ph.D., former Wolf Pack athletics director Chris Ault ’69, ’73M.Ed. and team physician Dr. Carol Scott ’91M.D.

Several former student-athletes were also honored at the event. In attendance were event emcee Wendy Damonte ’94 who swam for the Wolf Pack in the early 1990s, Taylor who played basketball from 1982-86 before going on to work as an administrator in the Wolf Pack athletics department, Jane Miller ’77 who played basketball, volleyball and softball from 1972-76, Jane Witter ’74 who skied for the Wolf Pack from 1971-74, Pat Klos who skied from 1958-59 and Betty McCauley ’50 who competed in basketball, volleyball, tennis, horseback riding and rifle in the late 1940s.

Prior to the passage of Title IX in 1972, budgets for women’s sports were very small or non-existent and women did not receive scholarships, often had to share uniforms or make their own and sometimes had to sleep in travel vans or on gym floors. Female student-athletes also did not receive lettermen’s jackets like their male counterparts, so as part of the celebration, the former student-athletes were presented with their letter at the dinner.

Academic Excellence Brunch honors classroom achievement

Nevada Athletics took time to honor the academic achievements of its student-athletes this winter at its Academic Excellence and Scholarship Banquet. The sixth annual event was held at the Joe Crowley Student Union and was sponsored by Drs. Rita ’72 (business education) ’76 M.A. (education) and Harry Huneycutt.

Nevada presented the Dr. Exline Academic Effort Award to LaTijera Avery, a women’s track and field student-athlete majoring in general studies, and Mark Avery, a football student-athlete majoring in human development and family studies. Named for the late Chris Exline, Nevada’s longtime faculty athletics representative, the award is given to a male and female student-athlete who have both significantly improved their academic standing through consistent dedication to achieving classroom requirements while continuing to maintain superior athletic performance.

Also honored were the Wolf Pack rifle and women’s golf teams, which shared the Sport Team Award as the squads with the highest cumulative GPA (3.40), as well as 80 Wolf Pack Scholars who maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0-3.49 and 54 Silver and Blue Scholars who hold a cumulative GPA of 3.5-4.0. Nevada also honored the 103 student-athletes who earned Western Athletic Conference All-Academic honors during the 2011-12 academic year as well as student-athletes who were named scholar-athletes by coaching associations.

The afternoon ended with recognition for the donors and 56 student-athletes who are the recipients of Nevada’s endowed scholarships, as well as the presentation of the special silver and blue cords to all of the Wolf Pack’s winter graduates.