

Collegiate Running Association Announces 2019 Athletes of the Year

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Bethany Sachtleben
Northern Virginia Community College

Daniel Jaskowak
Virginia Tech

2019 Athletes of the Year

January 27, 2020 (Richmond, VA) – Bethany Sachtleben (Alexandria, VA/Northern Virginia Community College) and Daniel Jaskowak (Blacksburg, VA / Virginia Tech) have been named the 2019 Collegiate Running Association Athletes of the Year.

2019 Female Athlete of the Year - Bethany Sachtleben

Bethany Sachtleben has been named the Collegiate Running Association's Athlete of the Year Award for the third time in the last four years. Sachtleben's impressive 2018 was followed by an even more impressive 2019 where she repeated as the Collegiate 10K Road Race National Champion, claimed the runner-up position in the first-ever Collegiate Road Mile Championship, and earned the silver medal for Team USA in the Pan American Games Marathon in Lima, Peru.

Sachtleben opened 2019 at the USATF 15K Championships in Jacksonville, Florida. The George Mason University product led much of the race before crossing the line in 2nd place running 51:08. In late March, she decided to test her leg speed in the Raleigh Relays 5K. She won the race, setting a personal best of 15:46. She continued an outstanding 3-week race streak running 53:40 in the Cherry Blossom 10 Mile Race in Washington, DC where she finished 10th. The following weekend she capped the impressive three weeks of racing laying claim to the Collegiate 10K Road Race National Championship.



In claiming the title Sachtleben set a CRA 10K Road Race Championship record of 32:39 in the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K presented by Kroger. The Richmond, VA event drew over 2,000 college students and over 27,000 total participants.

In May, Sachtleben dropped down in distance to compete in the first-ever Collegiate Road Mile Championships where she placed 2nd (4:46.2), running one of the fastest times in the long history of the Loudoun Street Mile in Winchester, Virginia.

These events were all a prelude to her biggest achievement of the year. On July 27th Sachtleben represented team USA in the 2019 Pan American Games Marathon. Learning only a week before that she was selected for the U.S. team, she took full advantage of the opportunity and ran a brilliant race (2:31:20) to nearly match her personal best (2:31:19) under tough conditions in Lima, Peru.

A successful spring and summer racing season led to the fall. Sachtleben headed to the steel city for the EQT Pittsburgh 10 Miler where she won by nearly 40 seconds over another stellar field running 54:42. A week later she returned to Richmond to win the Markel Richmond Half Marathon, in a controlled 1:12:34. Her time was over a minute faster than her 2018 winning time.

Next up will be the 2020 U.S. Olympic Marathon Team Trials in Atlanta, Georgia.

As a student, Sachtleben earned a Bachelor's in Finance from George Mason University in 2015, where she also qualified for the NCAA Championships and won multiple Atlantic 10 Conference titles. She is currently enrolled in graduate classes at Northern Virginia Community College, where she is completing

a degree in Accounting while serving as a volunteer for the George Mason University track & field and cross country programs where she is coached by Andrew Gerard. Sachtleben has also served as a volunteer guest speaker for the [Virginia 529 Kids Run](#) before the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K.



In addition to her intense training, a full-time job, and helping with the George Mason University program, Sachtleben finds time to volunteer at the Animal Welfare League of Arlington. "I volunteer for the Animal Welfare League of Arlington," said Sachtleben. "I regularly foster dogs and cats who need some time away from the shelter whether it be to recover from sickness or just to get some extra love and human interaction. It's the best volunteer job ever!"

Sachtleben was also named the Athlete of the Year in 2016 and 2018. In her first-ever mountain race, Sachtleben was crowned the Collegiate Running Association's 2016 National Champion. The race also earned her a spot on the U.S. Mountain Running Team for the 32nd World Mountain Running Championships (WMRC) held in Sapareva Banya, Bulgaria, as she placed 2nd overall in the USATF Championship division of the race, which was held concurrently with the CRA's collegiate race. At the World Mountain Running Championship that September Sachtleben placed 18th and helped the USA team win the Bronze Medal.

When asked how she finds balance with a professional running career and graduate school, Sachtleben explained: "I wake up really early so I can fit everything in! I also have an awesome job with flexible hours which allows me to start early and get off early so I can train before the sun goes down and then study in the evenings."

Follow Sachtleben on Twitter ([@bsach1](#)) and Instagram ([@bethsach](#)).

2019 Male Athlete of the Year – Daniel Jaskowak

Daniel Jaskowak is the Collegiate Running Association's Male Athlete of the Year. Jaskowak, who runs for the VT Elite Racing Team, won the 2019 Collegiate Trail Running National Championship and finished third in the 2019 Collegiate 10K Road Race National Championship within the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K.

The Collegiate Trail Running Championships were held within the Thunderbunny 12K in Athens, Ohio in early May. In a dramatic finish, Jaskowak claimed the title by less than one second in the closest men's finish in CRA Championships history. His winning time of 44:11 broke the Thunderbunny 12K course record by a whopping 13 minutes.

A month earlier, Jaskowak placed 3rd in a very competitive field at the 2019 Collegiate 10K Road Race National Championship within the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K. His time of 30:12 was only four seconds out of the runner-up position.

As fall approached, Jaskowak focused his training on the marathon with a few longer races in the buildup. In August he claimed the title at the historic Charleston 15 Miler (Charleston, WV) running 1:20:12. He followed in September with a 2nd place finish (1:08:00) in the Hokie Half Marathon in Blacksburg, VA and in October he placed 4th (1:07:00) in the Columbus (OH) Half Marathon.

In November, Jaskowak ran his debut marathon at the VCU Health Richmond Marathon. With an eye on the 2020 U.S. Olympic Team Trials standard, he passed the half-marathon in 1:09:27. Under windy conditions he pushed home to finish 2nd in an impressive debut of 2:20:55. "My first marathon at Richmond was incredible," said Jaskowak. "I went out conservatively, which allowed me to pick people off from 4 miles onward. The pain that you feel when you are running the last three or four miles is unlike any other."



Jaskowak ran for Virginia Tech as an NCAA undergraduate student-athlete where he earned a B.S. Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise (2017 Virginia Tech) and a M.S. Clinical Physiology and Metabolism (2018 Virginia Tech). He is now working on a Doctorate in Clinical Physiology and Metabolism at Virginia Tech. After earning All-America honors on the Hokies Distance Medley Relay as an undergraduate, he turned to road racing. In the 2018 Markel Richmond Half Marathon he placed 3rd running 1:04:59. He holds a personal best in the 5K of 14:04 set at the 2018 Duke Invitational and earned NCAA All-Region honors by placing 10th in the 2017 NCAA Southeast Regional where he ran a 10K best of 29:26.



"Having finished my collegiate eligibility, my training schedule has shifted to fit my academic schedule" explained Jaskowak. "Travel is the most difficult thing to balance. Most of the time I am not able to get any work done while traveling, because I mainly travel alone and don't stay at the race destination for longer than necessary. I find that I am able to compensate for the lost time by working harder or longer hours before and after the trip, but the mental frustration of knowing that I am wasting a day adds to my school stress. Running is able to keep my stress in check. This past fall semester I began to learn the computer language R. The semester was filled with days of banging my head against the wall, trying to solve my syntax errors. A nice long run would remedy my coding woes while also allowing me to brainstorm more effective strategies to solve my problem."

"At this point in my life, running is so intertwined to my everyday routine, that balancing my school workload, with running isn't as hard as most would think. I have friends in the Blacksburg/Virginia Tech community that I will do easy runs

with which is super helpful. Often times I will run from my office to meet the pub runners on Wednesdays. During cross country season this past semester I ran two long run workouts a week with the Virginia Tech cross country team. Having people to train with regularly has helped me to achieve all that I have in this past year.”

Follow Daniel: Twitter: [@see_wak_run](#) / Instagram: [@seewakrun](#)

“2019 has been another great year with inspiring successes by Collegiate Running Association members,” said **Steve Taylor**, Co-Founder of the **Collegiate Running Association**. “Both Bethany and Daniel are dedicated students and amazing athletes. They are among the top collegians who serve as an example for other college students balancing training, work and academic pressures faced daily. Competitive, successful, and dedicated, they have a love of the sport and support its growth across the multiple disciplines the Collegiate Running Association promotes (road, mountain and trail running).”

Collegiate Running Association Athletes of the Year

2019- **Bethany Sachtleben (Northern Virginia College, VA)**
Daniel Jaskowak (Virginia Tech, VA)

2018- Bethany Sachtleben (Northern Virginia College, VA)
Matthew McDonald (Georgia Tech, GA)

2017- Corey Dowe (University of New England, NH)
Patrick Smyth (University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI)

2016- Bethany Sachtleben (Northern Virginia College, VA)
Hayden Hawks (Southern Utah University, UT)

2015- Kellyn Taylor (Coconino College, AZ)
Joseph Gray (Calvary Bible College, CO)

2014- Megan Deakins Roche (Stanford University, CA)
Tyler McCandless (Penn State University, PA)



The Collegiate Running Association (CRA) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization founded in November 2013 with a mission to promote healthy lifestyles among college students by

providing and expanding opportunities in the sport of running. The vision of the CRA is to offer national championship events in road, mountain, and trail running with prize money specifically reserved for college students enrolled in at least one class. Since 2014, the CRA has awarded over \$125,000 in prize money and travel specifically to college students in road, mountain and trail running events. Membership is open to the public ([click here](#)). Follow the CRA on [TWITTER](#), [INSTAGRAM](#), [FACEBOOK](#), [GOOGLE+](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [RunnerSpace](#).