



BMCC PENDLETON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BMCC Rodeo receives honors, scholarship donations; head to nationals

PENDLETON, Ore. – Blue Mountain Community College rodeo standout Quincy Pendergrass on Tuesday was awarded the prestigious Riley Freeman Memorial Athlete of the Year Award. Since 2009, this award is given in memory of former BMCC instructor and rodeo coach Riley Freeman to a sophomore rodeo athlete who has demonstrated not only excellence in the sport of rodeo, but also in the classroom. The winner is selected by BMCC rodeo coaches Larry Patterson and Shawn Eng.

Pendergrass, a sophomore from Adrian, Ore., with a 4.0 GPA at BMCC, plans to transfer to Eastern Oregon University next fall to study nursing. She'll head to College National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyo., next week (June 12-17) ranked 5th in the nation to compete in barrel racing and breakaway roping. She was a member of the National Champion BMCC Women's Rodeo teams in 2015 and 2016.

The men's and women's rodeo teams also received a financial boost this month with two large donations to go towards scholarships for rodeo team members. On Monday (June 5), the teams received a \$5,000 donation towards scholarships from the Pendleton Round-Up Association, presented by Pendleton Round-Up Scholarship Committee Chair Rob Collins and Sponsors Director Tiah DeGrofft. Also on Monday, BMCC was presented with a \$20,000 check from the Northwest Intercollegiate Rodeo Finals Association. NWIRFA Board President Jason Graybeal, treasurer Blaine Hendrickson and board member Tiah DeGrofft presented the scholarship funds to BMCC President Cam Preus and rodeo team coaches Larry Patterson and Shawn Eng.

The NWIRFA Board organizes BMCC's home rodeo at the Umatilla County Fairgrounds each spring, and initially, the rodeo's proceeds just went to cover expenses related to putting on the rodeo. However, the rodeo's success over the past several years has enabled NWIRFA to provide scholarship funds to the rodeo team as well.

"For the last seven or eight years, we've been able to provide additional funds for scholarships," Graybeal said. "We feel really good about that since NWIRFA was originally created to just put the rodeo on each year."

(more)

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Ten BMCC rodeo team members will head to Casper, Wyo., next week for the College National Finals Rodeo (June 12-17), including Pendergrass, who will compete in breakaway roping and barrel racing events. Joining Pendergrass are Jessica Lewis (barrel racing), Lauren Leyva (goat tying), and reigning women's national all-around champion Danyelle Williams (barrel racing, goat tying and team roping with Quinton Nyman). Representing the men's team at CNFR will be Johnny Espeland (saddle bronc), Quinton Nyman (team roping, with Danyelle Williams), Preston Pederson (tie down roping), Chaise Robbins (team roping, with Cole White), Calvin Shaffer (saddle bronc), and Cole White (team roping, with Chaise Robbins).

The women's team will defend its 2015 and 2016 national titles. They are currently sitting in first place nationally, while the men are 5th in the national rankings going into Casper.

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