DOVER, Del. – The Delaware State University equestrian team continues to rack up honors for the first time in school history as three riders were recently named National Collegiate Equestrian Association Academic All-Americans.

“I am so proud and excited that we have finally made our mark both athletically and academically to receive these honors,” stated DSU head coach Jennifer Ridgely. “It takes a dedicated, mature, young woman to be able to achieve academic success while simultaneously competing at such a high level.”

Co-captain and senior Brittni Collins-Rideout (Denton, Md.) was one of 45 collegiate riders to be named to the NCEA Academic All-American First Team. In order to receive First Team honors, a student-athlete must have competed in a minimum of 70 percent of their school’s competitions, not including demo or exhibition rides, and have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.5 while maintaining full-time enrollment in the previous spring and fall semesters, respectively.

“This honor just proves that hard work and determination will put you on the road to success,” commented Collins-Rideout. “I am honored to be recognized for my academic and athletic successes.”

Collins-Rideout is majoring in Agriculture Business with the goals of working for the USDA upon graduation from Delaware State in May.

Fellow senior and co-captain Caroline Foltz (Dover, Del.) was one of 37 collegiate riders to be named to the Second Team. Second Team honors are given to student-athletes who have competed in 60 percent of their school’s competitions and have earned a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25.

“I am very honored to be named an Academic All-American,” Foltz remarked. “Being a student-athlete at DSU has taught me a lot about hard work, dedication and especially time management. Our whole team is working hard to find success in all aspects of our
collegiate career, so I know this year’s recipients certainly won’t be the last for Del State.”

Foltz has also majored in Agriculture Business and has accepted a position with Fifer Farms, Inc. as Retail and Marketing Manager. She also hopes to continue working in the equine field, training horses and riders in the USEF A Circuit Competition.

Also earning Academic All-American honors was junior McKenzie Trueba (Williams, Ariz.), who was recognized as an Honorable Mention selection. Student-athletes who have competed in 50 percent of the team’s shows and have earned a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 are named to the Honorable Mention team.

“Being a student-athlete isn’t just about performing well in your sport, it’s about doing well in the classroom,” Trueba said. “It’s an honor to represent my team and the university as a successful student-athlete.”

Trueba is majoring in studio art with the goals of becoming a professional photographer upon graduation in 2013.

Harry J. Sanchez, MSW, is the Academic Counselor for the equestrian team and stated, “Given the rigorous demands placed on our student-athletes to maintain excellence requires a very strong sense in managing the fine balance between ‘student first, athlete second. For our three equestrians to receive this recognition comes as no surprise to me. Brittni, Caroline and McKenzie have not only demonstrated a high level of academic excellence in preparing themselves for their chosen career path, but have also shown individual commitment in maintaining the balance between being a student first and athlete second. We salute them for their recognition as NCEA Academic All-Americans, not only for earning this award for the first time in school history, but more importantly, for their individual academic achievements they so zealously earned.”