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Taylor Herd of Quinnipiac University and Chris Liggio of the University of New Haven Named Hartford HealthCare Connecticut Courage Award Winners

Courageous student-athletes honored at ceremonies today with Rebecca Lobo

HARTFORD, Conn. – DEC. 10, 2019— The College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), in association with Hartford HealthCare, Connecticut’s most comprehensive healthcare network, have selected **Taylor Herd**, a senior guard on the **Quinnipiac University** women’s basketball team, and **Chris Liggio**, a senior running back for the **University of New Haven** football team, as the first two recipients of the inaugural **Hartford HealthCare Connecticut Courage Award**. At a pair of ceremonies today, basketball hall-of-famer Rebecca Lobo presented each of the honorees with a plaque and their universities with a \$1,000 donation to the general scholarship funds in their names to help future students achieve their dreams.

Each month between November and April, two inspiring student-athletes, one male and one female, who have demonstrated courage in the face of adversity—such as overcoming injury, illness or other challenges—will be recognized as **Hartford HealthCare Connecticut Courage Award Winners**. A panel of writers, editors and sports information directors from CoSIDA, AP and *College Hoops Illustrated*, as well as the program’s Ambassador, Rebecca Lobo, will select the honorees.

“Hartford HealthCare is excited to recognize these two remarkable young student-athletes, who despite setbacks, have overcome challenges to continue to perform their best as both scholars and athletes,” said Jeffrey A. Flaks, president and chief executive officer of Hartford HealthCare. “Our organization’s purpose is to help people live their healthiest lives, and both Taylor and Chris’ courageous stories of recovery and perseverance are an inspiration to all.”

Herd suffered a pair of ACL tears in the same knee, which forced the Quakertown, Pa., native to miss both her junior and senior seasons of high school basketball for Lansdale (Pa.) Catholic. Despite this, she still received multiple Division 1 offers. After a freshman season during which the 5-foot, 9-inch guard saw action in 12 games, her father, Glenn, suffered a silent heart attack. He received an artificial heart transplant in 2017 but continues to await an organ donation

at a Florida rehabilitation facility. His treatment has prevented him and Herd's mother, Brenda, from attending her games the last three seasons as they travel for treatment. Despite this personal adversity, the journalism major continues to excel on the court, posting scoring averages of 6.0, 7.6 and 7.8 as an integral member of three straight MAAC Championship teams. She was named the MAAC Sixth Player of the Year last season. This year Herd is playing a career-high 29.6 minutes per game, averaging 7.6 points and four rebounds and scored her 500th career point on Nov. 30 versus Harvard.

Liggio tragically lost his parents at the age of 15 to a murder/suicide. He turned to football to help him through, and it enabled him to discover a sense of purpose, his potential as a leader and, ultimately, the power to heal. During his stellar career at Holy Cross Preparatory Academy in Riverside, N.J., Liggio led the Lancers to a pair of Liberty Division Championships, two state semifinal appearances and was named All-Conference and All-County. After a redshirt season in 2015, the 5-foot-10, 215-pound running back from Mount Laurel, N.J., appeared in 31 games during the past four years for the Chargers, including all 12 games in 2018 when he rushed for 597 yards and a pair of touchdowns. His leadership was recognized when he was named a co-captain for the 2019 season, during which he rushed for 415 yards and three touchdowns on 101 carries in just seven games. In his career, the communications and film major compiled 1,261 yards rushing and receiving and six touchdowns.

Sports information directors at all colleges and universities in Connecticut can nominate deserving male and female intercollegiate student-athletes through March 30, 2020, at HartfordHealthCareCourageAward.com.

In May, one male and one female student-athlete will be chosen from the 12 finalists as **Hartford HealthCare Courage Award Winners**. Hartford HealthCare will donate \$15,000 to the general scholarship funds for the 12 student-athletes selected as finalists, with \$2,500 being awarded in the names of each of the two winners and \$10,000 on behalf of the other 10 finalists. The winners will be recognized at a special ceremony with Ms. Lobo.

"We thank Hartford HealthCare for helping us create a platform to share the personal stories of courage for student-athletes at colleges and universities throughout Connecticut," says Doug Vance, executive director of CoSIDA. "We hope the stories of the personal challenges that these remarkable young men and women have battled can inspire other young people to show courage in the face of adversity in their own lives."

As the **Hartford HealthCare Courage Award Ambassador**, Ms. Lobo will attend award ceremonies with several of the honorees and help raise awareness for their inspiring stories of courage. Ms. Lobo retired in 2003, is a member of the National Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, the Naismith National Basketball Hall of Fame and the CoSIDA Academic All-America Hall of Fame. She has served on the Board of Directors for Hartford Hospital, where she was born and currently works as a television analyst, author and motivational speaker. She lives in Connecticut with her husband and their four children.

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About Hartford HealthCare: With 30,000 colleagues and total operating revenue of \$4.3 billion, Hartford HealthCare has cultivated a strong, unified culture of accountability and innovation. Its care-delivery system, with more than 360 locations serving 185 towns and cities, includes two tertiary-level teaching hospitals, an acute-care community teaching hospital, an acute-care hospital and trauma center, three community hospitals, the state's most extensive behavioral health network, a large multispecialty

physician group, a clinical care organization, a regional home care system, an array of senior care services, and a large physical therapy and rehabilitation network. Hartford HealthCare's unique, system-wide Institute Model offers a single, high standard of care in crucial specialties at hospital and ambulatory sites across Connecticut. The institutes include: Cancer, Heart and Vascular, Ayer Neuroscience, Orthopedics and Tallwood Urology. Visit Hartford HealthCare at www.hartfordhealthcare.org.

About CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America): CoSIDA was founded in 1957 and is a 3,000+ member national organization comprised of the sports public relations, media relations and communications/information professionals throughout all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. The organization is the second oldest management association in intercollegiate athletics. For more than 60 years, CoSIDA has recognized student-athletes as part of its Academic All-America awards program. The Hartford HealthCare Courage Award is the third CoSIDA award specifically for student-athletes. Approximately 5,000 student-athletes are recognized each year for their excellence in the classroom and in competition. To learn more, visit cosida.com.

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