

Northwest University's Student Magazine

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## NU TRACK & FIELD ATHLETES QUALIFY FOR NATIONALS

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By Kelly Grant

Photo by Johnathan Swayne



Six Northwest University Track and Field athletes have qualified for the NAIA Indoor National Championships. Jonathan Ferguson, Cassidy Brown, and Charmie Dondrea qualified during the University of Washington Indoor Open meet on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Cassidy Brown, Sarah Estabrook, Meagan Governor and Robi Long qualified as a relay team at the Warner Pacific 50/50 meet in Gresham, Oregon on February 21<sup>st</sup>.

Dondrea qualified for the NAIA "B" standard in the high jump by jumping a height of 1.63 meters (about 5.35 feet) and placing sixth in the meet. Both Ferguson and Brown qualified for the NAIA "B" standard in the mile. Ferguson with a time of 4:20.32 and seventh place in his heat and Brown with a time of 5:10.01 and 6<sup>th</sup> place in her heat.

Brown, Estabrook, Governor and Long qualified for the NAIA "A" standard in the 4x800 meter relay with a time of 9:43.05. Michelle Perez will take Brown's place in the relay team for nationals, as Brown is competing in the mile.

Leading up to the outdoor track season NU competes in indoor track alongside some of the country's most competitive teams including the University of Washington, Stanford and the University of Oregon.

Brown said the high level of competition in the indoor season helps her train harder through the winter, which is typically a difficult training season for her.

"The only negative part of having big competition throughout the indoor season is that if you push too hard too early it can lead to injury or an early peak," Brown said. "The ultimate goal is to be fast and healthy for the outdoor season which ends in late May."

A unique aspect of indoor track is that collegiate athletes occasionally compete against professional athletes. NU athletes have competed in the same meets as Evan Jager – the 25-year-old, Nike-sponsored American record holder in the 3000-meter steeplechase – and 18-year-old Mary Cain – the youngest athlete to represent the United States at a World Championship meet.

NU's first outdoor track meet is scheduled March 14<sup>th</sup> at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma.