



Portland Invitational Announced.

Portland will face Fullerton, Northern Colorado, and St. Thomas.

For Immediate Release

January 24th, 2025

Princeton, N.J. –

The Gazelle Group is pleased to announce that Portland will play host to Fullerton, Northern Colorado, and St. Thomas in the Portland Invitational, a three game round-robin tournament.

Each game will take place at Chiles Center between November 21st and November 23rd.

Portland: Head Coach: Shantay Legans (West Coast Conference)

Head Coach Shantay Legans is currently in his 4th season at Portland where he has won 52 games. Legans was hired by the Pilots after leading Eastern Washington to the NCAA Tournament in 2021. Legans' highlights as the head coach of Portland include wins over Villanova and NCAA Tournament team San Francisco in 2022.

Fullerton: Head Coach: Dedrique Taylor (Big West Conference)

Dedrique Taylor is currently in his 12th season as Head Coach, where he has won 161 games, a school record. Taylor has also led the Titans to the NCAA Tournament twice during his tenure. Taylor is the first Fullerton coach to lead the Titans to multiple NCAA Tournament appearances and win 10+ conference games 4 times.

Northern Colorado: Head Coach: Steve Smiley (Big Sky Conference)

Steve Smiley, currently in his 5th season as head coach of the Bears, owns the second highest winning percentage during the school's division 1 tenure (.538). Northern Colorado has finished in the top 3 of the Big Sky in 2 of the last 3 years under Smiley and currently sit in 1st place of the conference. Prior to

Smiley's arrival, 5 Bears played professionally, while 10 have turned professional since Smiley's first season.

[St. Thomas](#): *Head Coach: Johnny Tauer (Summit League)*

Johnny Tauer has successfully transitioned St. Thomas into the Division 1 ranks posting a (.547) winning percentage during the schools first four years. Tauer led the Tommies to a 20-win season during the 2023-24 season, the program's first at the Division 1 level. St. Thomas became the third team to post a 20 win season in their first years in D1 since 2000. The Tommies are the only team to move from Division 3 to Division 1 during that time.

About the Gazelle Group

The Gazelle Group is a sports marketing firm, specializing in event production and management, client representation, and sponsorship consulting. Gazelle produces numerous nationally recognized college sports events, such as the Empire Classic, Legends Classic, Gotham Classic, Sunshine Slam, College Basketball Invitational, Kwik Trip Holiday Face-Off, Deacon-Wolverine Challenge, Boardwalk Battle, Jersey Jam, and Holiday Hoopfest as well as on-campus events at Duke, Kentucky, Ohio State, Marquette and other institutions across the country. For more information on the Gazelle Group, please visit <https://www.gazellegroup.com/main/>.

About the Northeast Conference

The Northeast Conference (NEC) is the sponsoring conference of the Portland Invitational. Now in its 44th season, the NEC is an NCAA Division I collegiate athletic association consisting of 9 institutions of higher learning located throughout six states. For more information on the NEC, visit the official website at www.northeastconference.org or follow on Twitter [@NECsports](https://twitter.com/NECsports).