

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



# Michigan's Jake Butt Selected as the 2016 Senior CLASS Award® Winner for FBS Football

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (December 28, 2016) – Michigan All-American tight end Jake Butt has been selected as the 2016 Senior CLASS Award® winner for the NCAA® Division I Football Bowl Subdivision. The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I FBS football coaches, national football media and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I football. To be eligible for the award, a student-athlete must be classified as an NCAA Division I senior and have notable achievements in four areas of excellence: classroom, community, character and competition.

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*®, the Senior CLASS Award focuses on the total student-athlete and encourages students to use their platform in athletics to make a positive impact as leaders in their communities. While multiple student-athletes from Michigan have been named first- or second-team Senior CLASS Award All-American, Butt is the first Wolverine from any sport to win the award.

"This award means a lot—just to be nominated with the other nine finalists has been an honor," said Butt, whose Michigan Wolverines will take on Florida State in the Capital One Orange Bowl on Friday. "I really don't think there is one winner of this award. Everyone wins by giving back to their communities and making a difference and an impact off the field, in the classroom and on the field, as well. The real winners are the people whose lives we can make an impact on off the field."

Already named the 2016 John Mackey Award winner as the nation's top collegiate tight end, Butt earned first-team All-America honors from the AFCA, *Sports Illustrated* and the Walter Camp Football Foundation and second-team honors from the AP and *Sporting News*. Michigan's all-time leading receiver in receptions and yards by a tight end, Butt hauled in 43 receptions for 508 yards (11.8 avg.) and four touchdowns during the 2016 season, including 29 receptions for first downs. Also earning first-team All-Big Ten honors for the second consecutive year, Butt helped lead the Michigan offense to the second-ranked scoring offense and total offense in the Big Ten, with 5,272 total yards and 59 touchdowns.

As a junior, Butt earned national recognition including first-team All-America honors from *Sports Illustrated* and CBS Sports and second-team honors from AP and *Sporting News* but chose to forego the NFL Draft and return to Michigan for his senior season.

"Returning for my senior season made me a better football player because I was able to meet some of my goals," said Butt, who is projected to go in the first or second round of the upcoming NFL Draft. "I became a better blocker, I got a lot faster, and I became the person and leader that I wanted to be for this team. It's been awesome playing with these guys. We've had a lot of success on the field, and we've laid a foundation for future success at Michigan."

As impressive as he is on the field, Butt's commitment to excellence also has led to success in the classroom. A 2016 Academic All-Big Ten selection, Butt has maintained a GPA above 3.0 as a sociology major and graduated early, finishing his undergraduate degree this month. He also completed an internship with multinational mass media and information company Thomson Reuters in Dexter, Mich., during the summer of 2016, which provided him with a challenging but valuable experience.

“Jake is dedicated to being the best football player and person he can possibly be,” said Michigan Head Coach Jim Harbaugh. “We are extremely proud of his achievements on the field, in the classroom and in the community. He is passionate about being a role model for today’s youth and takes that responsibility very seriously. We couldn’t be happier for Jake and his family on being named the Senior CLASS Award recipient. It is a great honor and recognition for an individual that puts his heart into everything, and we are proud that Jake represents the University of Michigan.”

Outside of competition and classroom achievements, Butt also has earned a reputation as a dedicated public servant with excellent character. Nearly every week, Butt volunteers at C.S. Mott’s Children’s hospital in Ann Arbor, visiting the pediatrics ward with other U-M student-athletes to spend time with the children and help them forget about their diseases and afflictions. Last year, he helped fulfill a Make-A-Wish request for a young boy who suffers from cancer, and instead of saying good-bye when the event was over, Butt gave the boy’s family his phone number, and formed a lasting relationship. When heroin overdose hit his hometown of Pickerington, Ohio, Butt went home to help raise funds and participate in a charity 5K to benefit those affected. He also is among Michigan’s most dedicated members to the #ChadTough Foundation, which supports pediatric brain tumor research.

“We are thrilled that the voters selected Jake Butt as this year’s Senior CLASS Award winner,” said Erik Miner, executive director for the Senior CLASS Award. “He is an upstanding young man with tremendous dedication to excellence both on and off the field, and our congratulations go out to him, his team and the entire university.”

For more information, visit [seniorCLASSaward.com](http://seniorCLASSaward.com).

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#### **First-Team All-Americans**

Zach Banner, USC  
Jake Butt, Michigan  
O.J. Howard, Alabama  
Zay Jones, East Carolina  
Tyler Orlosky, West Virginia

#### **Second-Team All-Americans**

Jake Elliott, Memphis  
Jordan Evans, Oklahoma  
Evan Ingram, Ole Miss  
Chad Kelly, Ole Miss  
Tre’Davious White, LSU

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#### **ABOUT THE AWARD**

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*, the Senior CLASS Award honors the attributes of senior student-athletes in four areas: community, classroom, character and competition. The award program is designed exclusively for college seniors who are utilizing their complete athletic eligibility, remaining committed to their university and pursuing the many rewards a senior season can bring. Premier Sports Management manages the award.

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