



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MICHIGAN STATE GOALTENDER AND SCHOLAR ATHLETE JEFF LERG VOTED  
WINNER OF LOWE'S SENIOR CLASS AWARD IN MEN'S ICE HOCKEY DIVISION  
FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS ON AND OFF THE ICE**

**Announcement of Nation's Premier Award for Seniors Made by  
Lowe's at NCAA® Men's Frozen Four® in Washington, DC**

(Washington, DC) – Michigan State University goaltender Jeff Lerg, the nation's collegiate hockey leader in saves who performed equally as well in the classroom and mentored youngsters in his community, has been selected winner of the 2009 Lowe's Senior CLASS Award in the men's ice hockey division.

The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of coaches, media and fans, is presented annually to college hockey's outstanding NCAA Division I senior student-athlete. The announcement and trophy presentation were made today by Lowe's during the NCAA Men's Frozen Four in Washington, DC.

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*, the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award has grown into the nation's premier tribute to college seniors. The award identifies personal qualities that define a complete student-athlete, with criteria including excellence in the **classroom**, **character** and **community**, as well as **competition** on the ice.

Lowe's, an official Corporate Partner of the NCAA, expanded the Senior CLASS Award program in 2007 to include NCAA Division I men's and women's soccer, men's ice hockey, men's lacrosse, baseball and softball in addition to men's and women's basketball. With the addition of football (Bowl Subdivision) in 2008, the award is now presented in nine NCAA sports.

"Being a four-year student-athlete at Michigan State has provided me so many opportunities and given me a lifetime of memories," Lerg said. "I received my education, was able to be a part of one of the storied programs in college hockey and we were able to win a national championship. So many people played a part in getting me where I am today, so the community outreach was important to me as well, as a chance to give back to the campus and surrounding communities that supported me and my teammates. Thanks to Lowe's for sponsoring this award as well as the people who voted for me."

"Jeff is such a unique individual," said Rick Comley, Michigan State's head hockey coach. "There is no question he is the most prepared student-athlete I have ever seen in my 36 years as a head coach. His attention to detail, his commitment to doing everything in his life the right way and the balance he is able to find between his preparation to compete, his academic work and his community involvement is just remarkable. I cannot believe anyone would better represent what we all want our student-athletes to be as competitors, students and citizens than the way Jeff Lerg has for Michigan State University."

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As a senior, Lerg led the country in saves with 1,050 and became the Central Collegiate Hockey Association's all-time saves leader in the last week of the regular season. His 3,996 career saves place him second all-time on the NCAA's career list. The Spartans captain compiled a 2.94 goals against average and .917 save percentage in his senior season. In his career, Lerg's .921 save percentage ranks second all-time in the MSU annals and ties for 15th all-time in the NCAA record book.

Lerg's impact has extended into the classroom and community as well. An Academic All-American and CCHA Scholar Athlete of the Year, he carries a 3.75 grade-point-average as a finance major. Lerg, who will graduate this spring, has posted a 4.0 GPA in two semesters.

Recently named co-recipient of the ninth annual Ilitch Humanitarian Award as the CCHA's top citizen, Lerg has put in countless hours on community service projects. He became passionate in developing a mentoring relationship with several young boys through the Big Brothers program and the Spartans Buddies program. While mentoring these boys, Lerg was inspired to get involved with raising money for the "Cure Kids Cancer" campaign. He even had the bracelet from one of the youngsters -- "Stay Strong, Do It. Gordie #22" -- painted onto the back of his helmet for his senior season.

His long list of other community activities includes the American Lung Association (Blow the Whistle on Asthma), Children's Miracle Network, Make A Change (collecting money at home football games for cancer research), Project Read at local elementary schools, "Jump Start Your Heart" (health and fitness), Junior Spartan Tailgate, "Fall into Fitness" (promoting health and wellness), Trick or Treating for Kids with Cancer, Teams for Toys (team adopts a local family every Christmas), Family Skate Night with local elementary schools, the CCHA's Have Fun, Play Hockey clinics, participated in fundraising wheelchair hockey games for a local wheelchair hockey team, MSU Athletics Fan Fest and served as a celebrity speaker for Hike For Hospice.

"The Lowe's Senior CLASS Award has developed into a wonderful tribute for college student-athletes," said **Bob Gfeller**, senior vice president of marketing and advertising at Lowe's. "On behalf of the 228,000 associates at Lowe's, we salute Jeff for a tremendous collegiate career at Michigan State. He has been a role model for many youngsters and has clearly taken his status as a college student-athlete and used it to impact others."

The Lowe's Senior CLASS Award also names an All-Senior All-America Team each year based on voting results of the finalists. Joining Lerg on the 2009 First Team is: **Erik Condra**, University of Notre Dame; **Matt Cook**, Union College; **Jordan Pearce**, Notre Dame; and **Mike Phillipich**, United States Air Force Academy. The Second Team consists of **Andrew Carroll**, University of Minnesota Duluth; **Chris Hahn**, University of Maine; **Trevor Hyatt**, University of Alaska Fairbanks; **Mathias Lange**, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; and **Dean Strong**, University of Vermont.

This marks the third year for the men's hockey division of the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award. Notre Dame's **David Brown** was the inaugural winner in 2007 and Princeton's **Landis Stankievech** was the recipient in 2008.

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## **ABOUT THE AWARD**

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*, the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award honors the attributes of senior student-athletes in four areas: classroom, community, 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 that a senior season can bring. For more information, visit [www.seniorclassaward.com](http://www.seniorclassaward.com).

## **ABOUT LOWE'S**

With fiscal year 2008 sales of \$48.2 billion, Lowe's Companies, Inc. is a FORTUNE® 50 company that serves approximately 14 million customers a week at more than 1,650 home improvement stores in the United States and Canada. Founded in 1946 and based in Mooresville, N.C., Lowe's is the second-largest home improvement retailer in the world. For more information, visit [Lowe.com](http://Lowe.com).

## **ABOUT THE NCAA**

The NCAA is a membership-led nonprofit association of colleges and universities committed to supporting academic and athletic opportunities for more than 400,000 student-athletes at more than 1,000 member colleges and universities. Each year, more than 54,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA championships in Divisions I, II and III sports. Visit [www.NCAA.org](http://www.NCAA.org) and [www.NCAA.com](http://www.NCAA.com) for more details about the Association.

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**The Nation's Premier Award for**



**NCAA® Senior Student-Athletes**

## **All-Senior All-America Teams**

*As selected in balloting for the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award by cumulative results of NCAA® Division I Coaches, National Media and Fan Balloting*

### **First Team**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>School</u></b>
Erik Condra	Forward	University of Notre Dame
Matt Cook	Forward	Union College
Jeff Lerg	Goaltender	Michigan State University
Jordan Pearce	Goaltender	University of Notre Dame
Mike Phillipich	Right Wing	United States Air Force Academy

### **Second Team**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>School</u></b>
Andrew Carroll	Forward	University of Minnesota Duluth
Chris Hahn	Forward	University of Maine
Trevor Hyatt	Forward	University of Alaska Fairbanks
Mathias Lange	Goaltender	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Dean Strong	Forward	University of Vermont