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Iowa's Luka Garza Wins 2020-2021 Senior CLASS Award for Men's Basketball

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (April 2, 2021) - Consensus first-team All-American Luka Garza from the University of Iowa has been selected as the 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award® winner in NCAA® Division I men's basketball. The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I men's basketball coaches, national basketball media, and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding student-athlete in Division I men's basketball. Garza is the third student-athlete from Iowa to win the Senior CLASS Award.

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. 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.

"The University of Iowa has prepared me for the real world both on and off the court," said Garza, who led the country in total points. "I am forever grateful to the countless teachers, advisors, tutors, and classmates that have helped me balance the life of a Division I student-athlete with the rigorous curriculum in the Tippie College of Business. I will use all the knowledge that I have accumulated at the University of Iowa to help me in my future endeavors."

Garza signed with Iowa as a four-star recruit from Maret School in Washington, D.C., where he was the school's all-time leading scorer. Over the next four years, he would achieve that same status in the Hawkeyes record books.

In his first season at Iowa, Garza quickly worked his way into the starting lineup and averaged 12.1 points and 6.4 rebounds per game. He continued his consistent play as a sophomore, finishing the season with an average of 13.1 points and 4.5 rebounds. Garza exploded as a junior and gained national acclaim. Starting all 31 games, he became the first player in Iowa program history to earn National Player of the Year honors after tallying 23.9 points and 9.8 rebounds per game. Garza was also the third player at Iowa, and first since 1952, to earn consensus All-America first team honors.

Garza continued his run of excellence during his senior year, leading Iowa to a top 15 ranking in the Associated Press poll throughout the entire season. He was named the Big Ten Player of the Year for a second consecutive season after recording 24.1 points, 8.7 rebounds, 1.7 assists, and 1.6 blocks per game. Garza was a consensus All-America first team selection and was named the National Player of the Year by the Associated Press, National Association of Basketball Coaches, United States Basketball Writers Association, *Sporting News*, and *Basketball Times*.

On February 21, 2021, Garza became Iowa's new all-time leading scorer by breaking Roy Marble's 32-year record. He finishes his Hawkeye career with 2,306 points, the seventh-most in Big Ten history.

"I've been truly blessed to have had Luka on our basketball team," said Fran McCaffery, who coached the Hawkeyes to a 22-9 record. "Luka embodies all that a student-athlete at the University of Iowa represents. His leadership, his work ethic, his determination, his example for the young players, his consistency of effort and performance -- we may never see another one like him. I believe that is the legacy that he will leave, and that is why everybody in Hawkeye Nation appreciates what he has done for our program and university the last four years."

Garza is also extremely committed to his studies and community. Instead of leaving Iowa to play professional basketball, he returned to earn his undergraduate degree in economics. While in Iowa City, Garza spent time at Horn Elementary School reading to the children. He also volunteered his time visiting patients at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Garza participated in Iowa's Annual Day of Caring multiple times, where the Hawkeyes helped non-profit organizations.

"Luka Garza has embodied the quintessential student-athlete while at the University of Iowa," said Erik Miner, Executive Director of the Senior CLASS Award. "He has truly demonstrated what it means to be a role model with his character, impact in the community, and record-setting accomplishments. We would like to offer our congratulations to Luka Garza and the University of Iowa."

For more information on all of the finalists, visit seniorCLASSaward.com.

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2020-21 Senior CLASS Award Men's Basketball First-Team All-Americans

Manny Camper, Siena

Ross Cummings, Mercer

Marcus Garrett, Kansas

Luka Garza, Iowa

Corey Kispert, Gonzaga

2020-21 Senior CLASS Award Men's Basketball Second-Team All-Americans

Cam Davis, Navy

Collin Gillespie, Villanova

Cameron Krutwig, Loyola Chicago

Justin Turner, Bowling Green State

Oscar da Silva, Stanford

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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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