

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Tennessee's Madison Shipman wins the 2014 Senior CLASS Award® in softball

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (May 30, 2014) – All-American shortstop Madison Shipman from Tennessee has been selected as the 2014 Senior CLASS Award® winner in softball. 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 – community, classroom, 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.

"Tennessee has not only prepared me for my future career as a professional softball player and coach but has taught me the importance of community," Shipman said. "The Tennessee softball program provided me with the opportunity to work with different charity organizations and helped me gain a true understanding of what 'giving back' means. It doesn't have to mean simply monetary contributions. Your time, respect, dedication and caring spirit are all ways to give back. My journey these last four years has been full of life experiences and I wouldn't be the same person that I am today without all of the charity events that the Tennessee program participated in.

"As for my professional career, I have learned a lot from my coaches. From leadership skills to my maturity on the softball field, I owe my progression to Ralph and Karen Weekly and Marty McDaniel," Shipman continued. "They provided me the opportunity to flourish as a leader on and off the field and the ability to improve my skills as a softball player. In the classroom, I developed life skills and knowledge that will prepare me for my future. Being a Lady Volunteer at the University of Tennessee has been a wonderful experience for me and I will cherish my four years in orange the rest of my life."

Shipman will graduate with a degree in anthropology. The four-time Dean's List student has been active in the Knoxville community. She and her teammates enjoy fun activities with Averil Ramsey, a young cancer patient her team adopted as a teammate. Shipman is active in several community efforts that involve children such as helping with Halloween festivities and promoting exercise for local kids. She has assisted the athletics department by distributing season tickets to fans door-to-door.

"This is a tremendous achievement for one of the most outstanding players Karen and I have ever coached," Tennessee co-head coach Ralph Weekly said. "Madison is a leader on the field. She is a leader in the classroom. She is a leader in the community. She is a person that everybody respects and that people want to emulate."

Shipman was selected as the 2014 Southeastern Conference Player of the Year, was named a National Fastpitch Coaches Association All-American for the third straight year and was one of 10 finalists for the USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year award. She led the Lady Vols to the 2014 NCAA Super Regionals and finished the season as the team's leader in batting average (.417), runs (56), hits (70), doubles (16), total bases (140), slugging percentage (.833), walks (46) and on-base percentage (.548) while also hitting a career-best 18 home runs.

"Madison Shipman has been an excellent role model both on the diamond and in the classroom during her career at Tennessee," said Erik Miner, executive director for the Senior CLASS Award. "She is a great example of how dedication to her studies and to her sport pays off in a big way."

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Senior CLASS Award First-Team All-Americans

Dallas Escobedo, Arizona State

Kaila Hunt, Alabama

Kaitlin Inglesby, Washington

Nicole Sappingfield, Michigan

Madison Shipman, Tennessee

Senior CLASS Award Second-Team All-Americans

Katie Keller, Louisville

Destinee Martinez, Oklahoma

Sara Nevins, South Florida

Hannah Rogers, Florida

Alysha Rudnik, Georgia Tech

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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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