

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



# Iowa's Megan Gustafson Wins 2018-19 Senior CLASS Award for Women's Basketball

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (April 4, 2019) – First-team AP All-American center Megan Gustafson of Iowa has been selected as the 2018-19 Senior CLASS Award® winner in NCAA® Division I women's basketball. The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I women's basketball coaches, national basketball media and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I women's basketball. Gustafson is the second women's basketball player from Iowa to win the Senior CLASS Award after Samantha Logic also won for women's basketball in 2015.

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 academically and athletically by pushing me to be the best student and athlete that I can be," said Gustafson, who led the Hawkeyes to a Big Ten Championship and a spot in the Elite Eight this season. "I've also had a ton of resources in terms of tutoring and academic advising, and the coaches have always been there to support me. The overall support I've gotten has helped me manage balancing academics and athletics. It's one thing to be recognized for your athletic abilities, but it's a completely different level when you're able to be recognized for the kind of person you are and how you're able to impact others in a positive way. The University of Iowa has given me the opportunity to impact people. Whether it is going to hospitals and visiting with children, helping out in the community—whatever it is, Iowa has given me an amazing platform to use to make a positive impact on those around me."

One of the most dominant players in women's college basketball, Gustafson was named a first-team All-American by the AP, USBWA and espnW and earned her second consecutive Big Ten Player of the Year honor after leading the nation in scoring with 27.9 points per game. Also ranking third in the nation in rebounding (13.5 rpg), Gustafson was named national player of the year by espnW, as well as a finalist for the Naismith Trophy, John R. Wooden Award, Wade Trophy and Lisa Leslie Award after virtually rewriting the Iowa record books. Iowa's all-time leading scorer and rebounder, Gustafson became just the fourth player in women's Division I basketball history to score more than 1,000 points in a season this year, notching 1,001 during 2018-19.

“It’s hard to put into a few sentences how great Megan is,” said Head Coach Lisa Bluder. “Obviously, she is a tremendous player, but I think what makes Megan so special is not just her basketball statistics. I think that’s really a disservice to her just to look at her statistics and say that’s what she is as a player. She’s so much more than that. She is one of the best teammates and one of the hardest workers I’ve ever been around. She’s a great leader and student. She’s a community role model for us. There are boys and girls all around the state of Iowa that look up to her and try to emulate her. She is an unbelievable role model. Who she is as a person is what makes Megan so special.”

Gustafson’s commitment to excellence both on and off the court has been well-noted throughout her career. A two-time Academic All-Big Ten selection, Gustafson consistently volunteers in the community, visiting various elementary schools as part of the Fuel Up to Play 60 campaign. She also makes frequent visits to the University of Iowa Stead Family Children’s Hospital and Iowa City’s Ronald McDonald House, and also volunteers with Habitat for Humanity. Known for her high character, Gustafson is known as a valued teammate and beloved figure in the Iowa City community.

“We are thrilled that Megan Gustafson has been selected as our winner for the 2018-19 season,” said Erik Miner, Executive Director of the Senior CLASS Award. “She’s had an incredible career on the court, and has been equally as impressive in the classroom and community, doing things with humility and integrity. We offer our congratulations to Megan and to the University of Iowa.”

For more information on all the finalists, visit [seniorCLASSaward.com](http://seniorCLASSaward.com).

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#### **Senior CLASS Award First-Team All-Americans**

Kalani Brown, Baylor

Bridget Carleton, Iowa State

Megan Gustafson, Iowa

Teaira McCowan, Mississippi State

Brianna Turner, Notre Dame

#### **Senior CLASS Award Second-Team All-Americans**

Kristine Anigwe, Cal Berkeley

Allazia Blockton, Marquette

Asia Durr, Louisville

Jessica Kovatch, Saint Francis

Alanna Smith, Stanford

## **CONTACT**

Erik Miner

Phone: 913- 563-5412

[eminer@premiersportsonline.com](mailto:eminer@premiersportsonline.com)

## **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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