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Oregon's Sabrina Ionescu Wins 2019-20 Senior CLASS Award for Women's Basketball

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (March 31, 2020) – First team All-American guard Sabrina Ionescu from the University of Oregon has been selected as the 2019-20 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. Ionescu is the first student-athlete from Oregon 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.

"Being able to play the game I love with people that I love has been nothing short of amazing," said Ionescu, who helped lead the Ducks to a 31–2 record and a Pac-12 regular-season conference championship. "It has taught me life lessons that I wouldn't have been able to learn doing anything else. Attending the University of Oregon and getting my undergraduate degree, and now working towards my Masters, has prepared me for life after basketball and has shaped me into the person that I am."

From her hometown of Walnut Creek, California, Ionescu earned National Player of the Year honors in high school by USA Today and Maxpreps before transitioning her career to the University of Oregon. Her impact was immediately noticed on the court as she was named the Pac-12 Freshman of the Year after recording four triple-doubles, a freshman NCAA record, during the 2016-17 season. Ionescu's accolades only increased during her sophomore season. She earned the Pac-12 Player of the Year and was named First-Team All-America by the Associated Press, WBCA, ESPNW, USA Today and USBWA. As a junior, Ionescu elevated her game even further by winning the Wooden Award and Wade Trophy on top of repeating as Pac-12 Player of the Year and numerous First-Team All-America honors. In her senior season, Ionescu became just the second player in history to unanimously win the

Associated Press' National Player of the Year award. She was also unanimously named the Pac-12 Player of the Year to accompany her list of First-Team All-America honors by the USBWA and Associated Press. Ionescu became the first player (female or male) in NCAA history to surpass 2,000 career points, 1,000 career rebounds and 1,000 assists. She is also the NCAA's all-time leader with 26 career triple-doubles. Ionescu finishes her career at Oregon as the all-time leader in points (2,562), assists (1,091), three-point field goals (329) and double-figure scoring games (134).

"Sabrina is the consummate team player in every aspect and I think she exemplifies everything that is good about intercollegiate athletics," said Pac-12 Coach of the Year Kelly Graves, who led the Ducks to their third consecutive season with at least 28 wins. "Her class and poise were personified on the day she spoke at Kobe Bryant and (his daughter) Gianna's memorial. To deliver such an elegant eulogy in the morning, and then turn around and fly up to the Bay Area to record a triple-double against Stanford on national television later that evening just shows what an extraordinary young woman she is to accomplish all of that in one day. She is a great person, teammate, player, citizen and student."

As impressive as her on-court accomplishments are, Ionescu also excels in the classroom. She earned her bachelor's degree in general social sciences (with a minor in legal studies) in just three years since arriving on campus. Ionescu is currently pursuing the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication's Master of Advertising and Brand Responsibility degree and is one of 18 students enrolled in the second-year degree program.

Last season, Ionescu elected to return to Oregon for her senior season, and to continue her studies, despite likely being a top pick in the WNBA Draft. While hopes of a national championship were cut short due to the coronavirus outbreak and the NCAA's decision to cancel winter championships, Ionescu still etched her name in the college basketball record books. This additional year at Oregon also enabled Ionescu to continue dedicating her time to uplift the community and serve as an extraordinary role model for young fans and athletes aspiring to play collegiate athletics.

"Sabrina Ionescu is an exceptional student-athlete that exemplifies all the qualities necessary for the Senior CLASS Award," said Erik Miner, Executive Director of the Senior CLASS Award. "She has displayed great poise and determination by balancing her record-breaking performances on the court at Oregon with her classroom studies. Her strong character and involvement within the Eugene community has enabled Sabrina to be a true champion and well-deserving of this prestigious award. We offer our congratulations to Sabrina Ionescu and the University of Oregon."

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

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2019-20 Senior CLASS Award First-Team All-Americans

Lauren Cox, Baylor University
Ellie Harmeyer, Belmont University
Sabrina Ionescu, University of Oregon
Mikayla Pivec, Oregon State University
Brenna Wise, Indiana University

2019-20 Senior CLASS Award Second-Team All-Americans

Chelsea Brackmann, Bradley University
Kaila Charles, University of Maryland
Bailey Greenberg, Drexel University
Ruthy Hebard, University of Oregon
Stella Johnson, Rider University
Peyton Williams, Kansas State University

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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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