



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Duke's Christina Gibbons Wins the 2016 Senior CLASS Award[®] for Women's Soccer

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (December 2, 2016) – Duke University defender/midfielder Christina Gibbons has been selected in nationwide balloting as the 2016 Senior CLASS Award[®] winner in NCAA[®] Division I women's soccer.

The award, chosen by a vote of Division I women's soccer coaches, national soccer media and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I women's soccer. In order 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.

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*[®], the Senior CLASS Award was inspired by Duke men's basketball player Shane Battier and his decision to forego the NBA to remain in school all four years. Established in 2001, the award is presented in 10 NCAA sports and focuses on the total student-athlete, encouraging students to use their platform in athletics to make a positive impact as leaders in their communities.

"For me, this award represents everything that a student-athlete wishes to be during their four years of college," said Gibbons, the fourth Blue Devil to win the Senior CLASS Award behind Alison Bales (2007), J.J. Redick (2006) and Alana Beard (2004). "Winning the award has given me the confidence to continue to pursue excellence in each endeavor, knowing that I can have a consistent impact on the people around me. I feel humbled, yet determined to uphold the same standards of hard work and commitment in every aspect of my life upon graduation."

On the pitch, Gibbons has distinguished herself as one of the top female collegiate soccer players in the country. One of only 15 semifinalists for the MAC Hermann Trophy honoring the top player in the country, Gibbons so far has earned the 2016 ACC Defensive Player of the Year Award and was named a first-team All-ACC honoree after leading Duke to a 15-5-3 overall and 7-2-1 record in the ACC this season. As a junior, Gibbons helped the Blue Devils to a NCAA College Cup appearance, earning All-Tournament Team honors and being named a second-team NSCAA All-American.

Off the field, the visual media studies major has remained committed to her work in the classroom, holding an impressive 3.896 GPA and earning a second-team NSCAA Scholar All America honor as a junior. She has been named to Duke's Dean's List five times and earned three All-ACC Academic Team honors while also excelling as a team leader and earning a reputation as one of the hardest-working players.

"We are really happy Christina has won this prestigious award," said Head Coach Robbie Church. "Christina symbolizes everything the Senior CLASS Award stands for. She has brought nothing but excellence for Duke University the last four years on the field, in the classroom and in the community. Christina will leave a lasting impression on our program in so many different areas, and we will miss her a great deal."

In addition to her competition and classroom responsibilities, Gibbons has made community outreach a consistent priority. During her time at Duke, Gibbons and the Blue Devil women's soccer team have welcomed in two young cancer patients, spending time with them off the field and inviting them to practices. Gibbons also has spoken to girls' soccer teams about hard work and dedication and taken part in Duke's youth soccer clinics.

"Christina is truly the kind of athlete we hope gets recognized with the Senior CLASS Award," said Erik Miner, executive director for the Senior CLASS Award. "Along with her accomplishments on the pitch, in the classroom and in the community, she has proven to be a strong leader and helped facilitate a winning culture within her team. Her character and dedication are certainly worth rewarding, and we congratulate Christina, her team and the entire university on this honor."

For more information, visit seniorCLASSaward.com.

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First-Team Senior CLASS Award All-Americans

Kadeisha Buchanan, West Virginia
Christina Gibbons, Duke
Simone Kolander, Minnesota
Casie Ramsier, Auburn
Tabitha Tindell, Florida Gulf Coast

Second-Team Senior CLASS Award All-Americans

Courtney Dike, Oklahoma State
Savannah Jordan, Florida
Serina Kashimoto, Butler
Rose Lavelle, Wisconsin
Ashley Lawrence, West Virginia

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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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