

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



North Dakota's Jordan Kawaguchi Wins 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award for Men's Hockey

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (April 9, 2021) - North Dakota forward Jordan Kawaguchi has been selected as the 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award® winner in NCAA® Division I men's hockey. The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I men's hockey coaches, national hockey media, and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I men's hockey. Kawaguchi is the first student-athlete from the University North Dakota 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.

"My career as a student-athlete has molded me into becoming a leader on and off the ice, as well as in the community," said Kawaguchi, who led the Fighting Hawks in scoring for the third consecutive year. "As I go through the people I have met and the relationships I have built, it's truly something special and something I will lean on in the future. Coming back for my senior year was the best decision I have made. It's incredible to think how many positive things have come out of it. While I believe everyone has room to grow, I hope I set a good example for those in Grand Forks and have positively affected the community. That being said, I am humbled and honored to have won the Senior CLASS Award!"

Before arriving at North Dakota, Kawaguchi spent four seasons with the Chilliwack Chiefs of the British Columbia Hockey League. In 213 career games, he amassed 120 goals and 242 points. Kawaguchi, a two-time team captain for the Chiefs, was named a BHCL All-Star twice.

In his first year at North Dakota, Kawaguchi quickly made his presence known with five goals and 14 assists. His stellar performance during the second half of the season resulted in being a co-recipient of North Dakota's Most Improved Player Award. Kawaguchi continued his rise as a sophomore, leading the Fighting Hawks in goals, assists, and total points. Finishing second in the country in total points with

15 goals and 30 assists, he earned national recognition in his junior season. Kawaguchi, a consensus All-America first team selection, was named the USCHO National Player of the Year, NCHC Forward of the Year, and a Hobey Baker Hat Trick finalist.

Electing to return for his senior year, Kawaguchi earned his second consecutive All-NCHC first-team selection and captained North Dakota to a 22-6-1 record. He led the Fighting Hawks with 34 points, tallying 9 goals and 25 assists.

"You would have to go long and far to find student-athletes who have made the type of impact throughout the course of their careers that Jordan Kawaguchi has," said Brad Berry, who coached North Dakota to the No. 1 overall seed in the NCAA men's hockey tournament. "He made an impact and put his fingerprints on the program. He showed our younger group how to be a North Dakota hockey player every day. Jordan added to the tradition and left the program in a better place. He is mindful and thoughtful of others before himself, which is what a great leader is."

Kawaguchi prides himself on his academics and community involvement, as well. He passed up multiple NHL free agent offers to graduate with his marketing degree. While at North Dakota, Kawaguchi has been a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Through his involvement with the organization, he has volunteered at food drives, pen pal programs, and Halloween bashes. Kawaguchi has also spent time volunteering with Special Olympics in Grand Forks.

"Jordan Kawaguchi has excelled in all facets of being a student-athlete at the University of North Dakota," said Erik Miner, Executive Director of the Senior CLASS Award. "He has displayed tremendous character through his achievements in the classroom, in the community, and on the ice. We congratulate Jordan Kawaguchi and the University of North Dakota for winning this award."

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

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

Nick Jenny, Robert Morris University

Jordan Kawaguchi, University of North Dakota

Jack LaFontaine, University of Minnesota

Brannon McManus, University of Minnesota

Scott Reedy, University of Minnesota

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

Kevin Fitzgerald, St. Cloud State University

Matt Hellickson, University of Notre Dame

Alex Limoges, Penn State University

Zach Solow, Northeastern University

Odeen Tufto, Quinnipiac University

CONTACT

Matt Gasper

(913) 563-5415

matt@seniorclassaward.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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