

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Minnesota's Stephanie Samedy Wins 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award for Women's Volleyball

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (April 21, 2021) - Four-time AVCA All-American Stephanie Samedy of the University of Minnesota has been selected as the 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award® winner in NCAA® Division women's volleyball.

The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I women's volleyball coaches, national volleyball media, and fans, is given annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I women's volleyball. Samedy is the second student-athlete from the University of Minnesota 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.

"Coming to the University of Minnesota has not only has been an opportunity to improve as a volleyball player, but also a place to develop as a person," said Stephanie Samedy, a four-time first team All-Big Ten selection. "Having the space whether it was on the court or in my day to day life, to cultivate my skills is something I do not take for granted. I can say I've been afforded the opportunity to leave the U with a degree that will hopefully take me far in life. Volleyball skills that I will continue to develop, and a new found set of life skills to not only manage but thrive in any setting I find myself in life. In such an unprecedented time, it's comforting to know that my teammates and coaches come in every day, giving their all to the program, which pushes me to be better every day. Again, I am so thankful for my teammates, my coaches and staff, and for the University of Minnesota for an experience, I would not trade for the world."

Samedy, an Under Armor All-American, signed with Minnesota in 2016 while playing for East Ridge High School and Top Select Volleyball Academy. She was named the 2016-17 Florida Gatorade Volleyball Player of the Year after recording 424 kills, 189 digs, and 25 blocks during her senior year.

Samedy made history during her first season at Minnesota, becoming the first Gopher to earn first team AVCA All-American honors as a freshman. She played in all 118 sets and 34 matches, leading the team with 478 kills and averaging 4.05 kills per set. Samedy followed up her unprecedented freshman season with a successive first team AVCA All-American selection as a sophomore. She once again led the team with 359 kills and ranked second in digs. Samedy continued to earn national recognition as a junior. Playing in all 115 sets, she was named a second team AVCA All-American after leading Minnesota with 353 kills and recording 299 digs.

Samedy, who elected to return for her senior season, was named an AVCA first team All-American and the 2021 Big Ten Player of the Year for her success on the court. She led Minnesota with 295 kills while also tallying 176 digs and 55 blocks. Samedy averaged 4.15 kills per set to help the Gophers earn the No. 3 overall seed in the NCAA women's volleyball tournament.

"We are so proud of Stephanie for receiving the 2020-21 Senior CLASS Award," said head coach Hugh McCutcheon, who coached Minnesota to a 16-3 record. "Stephanie will receive her degree in psychology this spring. During her time here, she has been an Academic All-Big Ten selection, a three-time AVCA All-American, and a four-time All-B1G award winner. She is a great representative of our program and the University of Minnesota. We couldn't be more happy for her."

Samedy has stood out in the classroom at the University of Minnesota as well, where she studies psychology. She was honored as a member of the 2019 Academic All-Big Ten team for her dedication to her studies. Since arriving in Minneapolis, Samedy has also made an effort to better the community. She has dedicated her time while volunteering with Team Impact and HopeKids.

"Stephanie Samedy has demonstrated what the ideal student-athlete looks like while at the University of Minnesota," said Erik Miner, Executive Director of the Senior CLASS Award. "She has excelled in the classroom, in the community, and on the volleyball court. It is our pleasure to congratulate Stephanie Samedy and the University of Minnesota."

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

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2020-21 Senior CLASS Award Women's Volleyball First Team All-Americans

Gabby Curry, University of Kentucky

Nadia Dieudonne, Western Kentucky University

Kenzie Koerber, University of Utah

Regan Pittman, University of Minnesota

Stephanie Samedy, University of Minnesota

2020-21 Senior CLASS Award Women's Volleyball Second Team All-Americans

Camille Conner, Texas A&M University

Kylie Deberg, University of Missouri

Madison Lilley, University of Kentucky

Chinaza Ndee, University of Pittsburgh

Yossiana Pressley, Baylor 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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