

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## Lincoln's Bryanna Brown and Virginia Union's Alkin Barkley Named 2020-21 Lowe's CCAA Senior CLASS Award Winners

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (May 20, 2021)** – Women's basketball standout Bryanna Brown of Lincoln University and men's golfer Alkin Barkley of Virginia Union University have been selected as winners of the 2020-21 Lowe's CCAA Senior CLASS Award® as the conference's top all-around senior student-athletes.

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*®, the award recognizes student-athletes throughout the conference who excel both on and off the field of play. The award's attributes are centered on the "4 C's" of Classroom, Character, Community and Competition.

While the CCAA cancelled all sports activities in 2020-21 due to the COVID pandemic, the award not only continued for the third consecutive year, but expanded to include all CCAA sports in a tribute to seniors who were concluding their collegiate careers. Each conference school nominated one male and one female candidate for the award. From those 24 candidates, the winners were determined by a selection process that included fan balloting, a media committee and the CCAA Management Council.

The two award recipients have clearly made a tremendous impact within their sphere of influence as a student-athlete.

On the court, Brown has been a key member of Lincoln's women's basketball team that established a school-record 23 wins a season ago. She has been equally impressive off the court. The native of New York, NY holds a 3.9 grade-point-average and was one of the inaugural members of the university's Chi Alpha Sigma national scholar-athlete society. She has been a role model in the community, volunteering at food drives, clothing drives and campus clean-ups among other service-based activities.

"I am extremely proud of Bryanna Brown for winning the Lowe's award," said former Lincoln University women's basketball coach, Darrell Mosley. "She is certainly deserving of this recognition for all of her hard work in the classroom, on the court and in the community. She has overcome a lot of adversity thrown her way. To see her persevere and still accomplish all of her goals makes me extremely proud to be her coach. Her story is still being written and I'm just happy to be a part of her journey."

A native of Johannesburg, South Africa, Barkley put together a remarkable collegiate career at Virginia Union. In 2019, he helped lead the Panthers to the school's first CIAA golf championship in 48 years and was named to the All-Conference Team with a 76.5 scoring average. In the classroom, Barkley maintained a 3.9 GPA while pursuing a degree in business accounting. Community service has also been a high priority, highlighted by his work with Feed More, an organization that collects, prepares and distributes food to people who struggle with hunger.

"I have had the opportunity to watch Alkin's academic progress since entering Virginia Union University," said VUU golf coach E. Lee Coble, "and to receive the Lowe's CIAA Senior Class Award speaks volumes about his academic and professional maturity."

Both Brown and Barkley said they were honored to close out their collegiate experience with an award that highlights the characteristics of being a total student-athlete.

"I'm honestly blessed and honored to receive this award from Lowe's and the CIAA," Brown said. "I truly appreciate my coaches for seeing the potential in me to win this award and pushing me to be the best that I can be. It helped a young girl from Harlem make a difference at the first degree-granting HBCU and in the CIAA. From here, I won't get comfortable and I'll remain focused on everything that's in store for me. To God be the glory!"

"This award came as a big surprise to me, but it's obviously a great feeling to be recognized for all the hard work I've put in behind the scenes, not only with my golf and academics, but also within the community," Barkley said. "Winning this award will definitely spur me on to continue to do my best and strive for all the goals I've set out for in all aspects of my life."

The two winners received the distinctive, four-pillar Lowe's Senior CLASS Award trophy during a special [virtual presentation](#) featuring CIAA Commissioner, Jacqie McWilliams, and Lowe's Executive Vice President of Human Resources, Janice Dupre.

"We have been excited to expand this award program to all CIAA sports this year, even further highlighting the excellence within our conference," said McWilliams. "We would like to send a big thank you to Lowe's for their support of our outstanding senior student-athletes."

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### **ABOUT THE AWARD**

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*, the Lowe's CIAA Senior CLASS Award recognizes the CIAA's top senior men's and women's student-athletes. In addition to the core requirement that a candidate be an NCAA Division II CIAA senior student-athlete, the award winners are selected based on personal qualities that define a complete student-athlete. These areas of excellence are defined by the four Cs: community, classroom, character and competition. Premier Sports Management manages the award.

### **ABOUT LOWE'S IN THE COMMUNITY**

As a FORTUNE® 50 home improvement company, Lowe's is committed to creating safe, affordable housing and helping to develop the next generation of skilled trade experts through nonprofit partnerships. Across every community we serve, Lowe's associates donate their time and expertise through the Lowe's Heroes volunteer program. For the latest news, visit [Newsroom.Lowes.com](https://www.lowes.com/newsroom) or follow [@LowesMedia](https://twitter.com/LowesMedia) on Twitter.

## **ABOUT THE CIAA**

Founded in 1912, the [Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association \(CIAA\)](#) is the first and longest running, African American athletic conference in the U.S. and one of the most recognized conferences in Division II. The CIAA conducts 14 championships attended by more than 150,000 fans from around the country. In 2020, the conference celebrated the special 75th anniversary of its Championship Basketball Tournament - an event that has become a must-see in the African American community. The Basketball Tournament has been honored as a Champion of Economic Impact in Sports Tourism by *Sports Destination Management*, the leading publication with the largest circulation of sports event planners and tournament directors in the sports tourism market, for both 2018 and 2019. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, the CIAA is governed by the Presidents and Chancellors of its 12 member-institutions: Bowie State University, Claflin University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Johnson C. Smith University, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, Livingstone College, Saint Augustine's University, Shaw University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and Winston-Salem State University. Chowan University is an associate member in football and women's bowling. For more information on the CIAA, visit [theciaa.com](http://theciaa.com), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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