

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Winston-Salem State's Hailey Gipson and Fayetteville State's Greg Brooks Named 2021-22 Lowe's CCAA Senior CLASS Award Winners

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (February 26, 2022) – Women's basketball player Hailey Gipson of Winston-Salem State University and men's football player Greg Brooks of Fayetteville State University have been selected as winners of the 2021-22 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.

Each conference school nominated one male and one female student-athlete to become a 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, Gipson is a key player for the Rams and utilized her tremendous on-court vision to help her team throughout the season. Off the court, she's been on the Dean's List her entire collegiate career and will be earning her degree in computer science this spring. Gipson is a true leader that possesses strong, uplifting qualities, which has ultimately led her to becoming a mentor for first-year students on the Winston-Salem State campus. She volunteers at nursing homes, the Ronald McDonald House and Habitat for Humanity.

"I am extremely excited for Hailey to represent Winston-Salem State University as a Lowe's CCAA Senior CLASS Award winner," said Winston-Salem State University women's basketball coach, L'Tona Lamonte. "During her years here at WSSU, she embodied the Four C's of the award. Her academic prowess, her leadership ability, being a leader on and off the court, and serving the community are intangibles that made her not only a candidate but the winner."

On the gridiron, Brooks has enjoyed a stellar career with the Broncos. He's a two-time All-Conference first-team selection, and collected numerous 'Offensive Lineman of the Week' awards to go along with being name the first ever 'CAA Lineman of the Year'. He's a Don Hansen DII All-American and

participated in the HBCU Legacy Bowl. In the classroom, Brooks earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and graduated magna cum laude with a 3.91 overall grade-point-average. He's a seven-time Dean's List member and has also obtained a degree in psychology with a behavioral research certificate. As a team captain, Brooks looks for ways to impact his local community by volunteering with several organizations, as well as assisting elementary school students and soup kitchens.

"We are extremely proud of Greg Brooks," said Fayetteville State University football coach Richard Hayes. "He has lived up to the meaning of student-athlete while here at Fayetteville State University by achieving high academic and athletic success."

Both Gipson and Brooks said they were honored to close out their collegiate experience with an award that highlights the characteristics of being a complete and well-rounded student-athlete.

"I am grateful to have learned a lot over my past four years as a student-athlete at Winston-Salem State University," said Gipson. "Playing sports teaches you to have self-confidence, and people with high self-confidence are not discouraged by defeat or failure. Playing sports provides life lessons that will correlate into the workforce. I plan to take the lessons I have learned from past mistakes to create success in my future career path. As the great Muhammad Ali once said, 'I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion'. Being a student athlete is hard, but not quitting makes it better, and now I will live the rest of my life as a champion!"

"My career as a student-athlete at Fayetteville State has really shaped my current outlook on life and the plans for my future," said Brooks. "I've built connections through my hard work in the classroom as well as on the football field. Through being a student-athlete, I found a connection with my love for sports and my love for the field of psychology. I'm preparing to move forward with pursuing a career in sports psychology. My time at FSU also helped me understand the importance of reaching out and giving back to the community. It's important to uplift the community you're in and it's an overall great feeling to help others. I'm blessed to call Fayetteville State my alma mater and I will take everything I gained from my experiences at FSU with me moving forward."

The two winners were presented with the distinctive, four-pillar Lowe's Senior CLASS Award trophy during the men's and women's championship games of the CIAA Conference Basketball Tournament by league Commissioner, Jacqie McWilliams, and Lowe's Vice President of Customer Relationship Marketing, Sharonda Britton.

"It is a privilege to see some of our brightest stars be recognized for their contributions to their sport and as a scholar at their respective institutions," said McWilliams. "Greg and Hailey exemplify what is so special and inspiring about CIAA sports and student-athletes. Lowe's, once again you have opened the door to showcase the legacy, leadership and community that is embedded in the CIAA."

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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

Lowe's Companies, Inc. (NYSE: [LOW](#)) is a FORTUNE® 50 home improvement company serving approximately 20 million customer transactions a week in the United States and Canada. With fiscal year 2021 sales of over \$96 billion, Lowe's and its related businesses operate or service nearly 2,200 home improvement and hardware stores and employ over 300,000 associates. Based in Mooresville, N.C., Lowe's supports the communities it serves through programs focused on creating safe, affordable housing and helping to develop the next generation of skilled trade experts. For more information, visit [Lowe's.com](#).

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](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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