



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UC Irvine's Daniel Bibona Selected by Nationwide Vote of Coaches, Fans and Media as the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award Winner for NCAA® Division I Baseball

June 25, 2010 (Overland Park, KS) – Five-time all-American and Big West Conference pitcher of the year Daniel Bibona from the University of California, Irvine, has been selected as the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award winner for baseball.

The award, chosen by a nationwide vote of Division I baseball coaches, national media and fans, is awarded annually to the most outstanding senior student-athlete in NCAA® Division I baseball. The announcement and trophy presentation were made today by Lowe's, an official Corporate Partner of the NCAA, during the NCAA College World Series® in Omaha.

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*®, the Lowe's 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. The award identifies personal qualities that define a complete student-athlete, with criteria including **community** service, excellence in the **classroom**, outstanding **character** and **competition** on the field.

"Winning an award that means as much as this one is more than a dream come true. Last year, I had an opportunity to leave college and pursue my dream of playing professional baseball. When I gave it some serious thought, I decided to come back to the University of California, Irvine, and accomplish my other dream of earning my degree. I not only was able to accomplish that, but also was able to play my senior year for one of the best collegiate programs in the nation," Bibona said. "The joy that one experiences by being a part of a team, especially a team with the kind of guys that we had, is something that can be cherished for life. John Wooden had a quote that is so perfect for my experience – 'The main ingredient to stardom is the rest of the team.' The camaraderie on this team was so special that I will have friendships that will last the rest of my life. This award is also theirs.

"Playing in Rosenblatt is every college baseball player's dream. I was fortunate enough to play at Rosenblatt Stadium earlier in my collegiate career and now, in the final year of Rosenblatt, it is amazing to have the opportunity to be here to receive this honor," Bibona continued. "I want to thank the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award once again as there are so many deserving seniors across the country."

In addition to his conference pitcher-of-the-year and all-America honors, Bibona owns the UC Irvine record for career strikeouts. His team advanced to NCAA post-season play for the fifth straight time. Bibona is one of 30 semifinalists for the USA Baseball Golden Spikes Award, recognizing the game's top player.

"Daniel Bibona embodies all of the qualities of the ultimate student-athlete. He was an elite student and graduated with honors and has served his community in a variety of ways, including offering his time to the kids of the community and to children battling serious illness," said UC Irvine head coach Mike Gillespie. "Daniel has been a

premier athlete too. He was the No. 1 pitcher on four consecutive NCAA playoff teams, the two-time pitcher of the year in the Big West Conference, and an All-American. He has been the consummate worker, and a great teammate who is both well liked and admired by his peers, and he stood out as a leader.”

Bibona graduated this month with a degree in sociology and a 3.25 grade point average. He was the 2010 Big West Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year. In addition to being a regular visitor at the Children’s Hospital of Orange County and coaching youth baseball, Bibona is a member of a non-profit organization called American Home Dream, which assists children with terminal illnesses.

“Baseball players have to remain focused in the summer months because their championship occurs after most students have graduated and left campus,” said **Tom Lamb**, Lowe’s senior vice president of marketing. “Daniel Bibona is an example of someone who continues to excel even during the pressures of final exams, graduation ceremonies and the amateur baseball draft. He’s also a great example of how student-athletes can maintain their commitment of giving back to the community.”

This marks the fourth year for the baseball division of the Lowe’s Senior CLASS Award. The University of Alabama’s **Emeel Salem** was the inaugural winner in 2007, Rice University’s **Cole St. Clair** was the recipient in 2008 and the University of Florida’s **Brandon McArthur** took home the award in 2009.

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ABOUT THE AWARD

An acronym for *Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School*[™], the Lowe’s Senior CLASS Award honors the attributes of senior student-athletes in four areas: classroom, community, 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 that a senior season can bring. Sportscaster **Dick Enberg**, Honorary Chairman of the Lowe’s Senior CLASS Award, first conceived the idea of an award for seniors in 2001 in response to the growing trend of men’s basketball players leaving school early for the NBA. The award program has expanded the past two years to include a total of nine NCAA[®] Division I sports – football, men’s and women’s soccer, men’s ice hockey, men’s lacrosse, baseball and softball in addition to men’s and women’s basketball. The award is sponsored by Lowe’s, an official Corporate Partner of the NCAA[®], and managed by Premier Sports Management. For more information, visit www.seniorCLASSaward.com.

ABOUT LOWE’S

With fiscal year 2009 sales of \$47.2 billion, Lowe’s Companies, Inc. is a FORTUNE(r) 50 company that serves approximately 15 million customers a week at more than 1,700 home improvement stores in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Founded in 1946 and based in Mooresville, N.C., Lowe’s is the second-largest home improvement retailer in the world. For more information, visit Lowe.com.

ABOUT THE NCAA

The NCAA is a membership-led nonprofit association of colleges and universities committed to supporting academic and athletics opportunities for more than 400,000 student-athletes at more than 1,000 member colleges and universities. Each year, more than 54,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA championships in Divisions I, II and III sports. Visit www.NCAA.org and www.NCAA.com for more details about the Association, its goals and members and corporate partnerships that help support programs for student-athletes.

2010 Lowe's Senior CLASS Award Senior All-American First Team

Name	Position	School
Daniel Bibona	Pitcher	UC Irvine
Blake Dean	First Base	LSU
Jim Klocke	Catcher/Pitcher	Southeast Missouri State
Cory Kovanda	Second Base	Ohio State
Tony Plagman	First Base	Georgia Tech

Senior All-American Second Team

Name	Position	School
Stephen Cardullo	Shortstop	Florida State
Mike Donato	Outfield	Massachusetts
Tyler Lyons	Pitcher	Oklahoma State
Matt Payton	Infield	Western Kentucky
David Towarnicky	First Base	Appalachian State