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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DON LUCIA NAMED WCHA 2000s COACH OF THE DECADE
PRESENTED BY ANDERSON'S PURE MAPLE SYRUP AND SPIRE CREDIT UNION**
The long-time WCHA head coach won two national titles with Minnesota in the 2000s

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – March 3, 2021 – Former Minnesota, Colorado College and Alaska Fairbanks head coach **Don Lucia** has been named the Western Collegiate Hockey Association's Coach of the Decade for the 2000s, the WCHA announced Wednesday. The honor is presented by Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup and SPIRE Credit Union.

Lucia, who coached at Minnesota from 1999-2018, led the Golden Gophers to back-to-back national championships (2001, 2002) along with a third Frozen Four appearance during the 2000s (2004-05). In WCHA play, Lucia's Minnesota squads captured two MacNaughton Cups and three Broadmoor Trophies during the decade. After moving from WCHA rival Colorado College in 1999, Lucia guided the Gophers to a 256-125-45 (.652) overall record and a WCHA mark of 155-91-34 (.614) between 1999 and 2010 and made eight NCAA tournament appearances with the Maroon & Gold, earning WCHA Coach of the Year honors in 2006.

The Grand Rapids, Minn., native compiled a 31-season record of 736-403-102 (.634) with Alaska Fairbanks, Colorado College and Minnesota, coaching in the Great West Conference (1987-88), WCHA (1993-2013) and Big Ten (2013-18) along with five seasons guiding UAF as an independent (1988-93) during his tenure. His career win total ranks No. 8 in NCAA history. He received the Spencer Penrose Award in 1993-94 as the national coach of the year at Colorado College and was honored with the WCHA's Coach of the Year award three times (1993-94, 1995-96, 2005-06).

As a WCHA head coach at CC and Minnesota, Lucia posted an overall mark of 510-250-77 (.655) and a 325-167-55 (.644) record in WCHA play, winning the MacNaughton Cup seven times, the Broadmoor Trophy three times and taking home a pair of NCAA championships.

His 510 wins and 837 games coached in the WCHA both stand No. 2 in league history behind only **Jeff Sauer**, who won 655 games and coached 1,246 contests with Colorado College and Wisconsin from 1971-2002. Lucia's seven WCHA regular season titles at Colorado College and Minnesota tie him with 1960s WCHA Coach of the Decade **Murray Armstrong** of Denver for the most won by one coach in league annals.

In all, Lucia won 11 regular-season conference titles in the WCHA and Big Ten, including an unprecedented six straight encompassing Minnesota's final two WCHA seasons and first four Big Ten campaigns. His 457 wins with the Gophers stand as the most in school history and while his 736 career wins rank eighth all-time in the NCAA.

Lucia is the sixth of seven Coach of the Decade honorees that will be announced by the WCHA during the 2020-21 season. The WCHA is also honoring an outstanding player and selecting an All-Decade Team for each decade as the league celebrates 70 Years of Excellence. The WCHA 2000s Player of the Decade will be announced March 4.

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Don Lucia Year-by-Year

| Season | School (Conference) | Overall | WCHA (Place) | WCHA Postseason | NCAA |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1987-88 | Alaska Fairbanks (GWC) | 21-10-2 | | | |
| 1988-89 | Alaska Fairbanks (Ind.) | 21-12-3 | | | |
| 1989-90 | Alaska Fairbanks (Ind.) | 10-20-9 | | | |
| 1990-91 | Alaska Fairbanks (Ind.) | 17-16-2 | | | |
| 1991-92 | Alaska Fairbanks (Ind.) | 7-27-1 | | | |
| 1992-93 | Alaska Fairbanks (Ind.) | 23-12-2 | | | |
| 1993-94 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 23-11-5 | 18-9-5 (1 st) | WCHA First Round | |
| 1994-95 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 30-12-1 | 22-9-1 (1 st) | WCHA Runner-up | West Semifinal |
| 1995-96 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 33-5-4 | 26-2-4 (1 st) | Third Place | NCAA Runner-up |
| 1996-97 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 25-15-4 | 17-11-4 (T-4 th) | Third Place | NCAA Frozen Four |
| 1997-98 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 26-13-3 | 16-10-2 (3 rd) | Third Place | East Semifinal |
| 1998-99 | Colorado College (WCHA) | 29-12-1 | 20-8-0 (2 nd) | Third Place | East Semifinal |
| 1999-2000 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 20-19-2 | 13-13-2 (6 th) | Fourth Place | |
| 2000-01 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 27-13-2 | 18-8-2 (3 rd) | Fourth Place | East Quarterfinal |
| 2001-02 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 32-8-4 | 187-3 (3 rd) | WCHA Runner-up | National Champion |
| 2002-03 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 28-8-9 | 15-6-7 (T-2 nd) | WCHA Champion | National Champion |
| 2003-04 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 27-14-3 | 15-12-1 (T-4 th) | WCHA Champion | Midwest Final |
| 2004-05 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 28-15-1 | 17-10-1 (T-3 rd) | Fourth Place | NCAA Frozen Four |
| 2005-06 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 27-9-5 | 20-5-3 (1 st) | Fourth Place | West Semifinal |
| 2006-07 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 31-10-3 | 18-7-3 (1 st) | WCHA Champion | West Final |
| 2007-08 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 19-17-9 | 9-12-7 (7 th) | WCHA Runner-up | Northeast Semifinal |
| 2008-09 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 17-13-7 | 12-11-5 (5 th) | WCHA Quarterfinal | |
| 2009-10 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 18-19-2 | 12-14-2 (7 th) | WCHA First Round | |
| 2010-11 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 16-14-6 | 13-10-5 (4 th) | WCHA First Round | |
| 2011-12 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 28-14-1 | 20-8-0 (1 st) | WCHA Semifinals | NCAA Frozen Four |
| 2012-13 | Minnesota (WCHA) | 26-9-5 | 16-7-5 (T-1 st) | WCHA Semifinals | West Semifinal |
| 2013-14 | Minnesota (Big Ten) | 28-7-6 | | | NCAA Runner-up |
| 2014-15 | Minnesota (Big Ten) | 23-13-3 | | | Northeast Semifinal |
| 2015-16 | Minnesota (Big Ten) | 20-17-0 | | | |
| 2016-17 | Minnesota (Big Ten) | 23-12-3 | | | |
| 2017-18 | Minnesota (Big Ten) | 19-17-2 | | | Northeast Semifinal |
| Totals | | 736-403-102 | 325-167-55 | | |

Other Top Coaches of the 2000s

George Gwozdecky, Denver: Won two NCAA championships, two MacNaughton Cups and three Broadmoor Trophies during the decade while compiling a 238-137-37 (.623) record in the 2000s. **Scott Owens, Colorado College:** Won three MacNaughton Cups during the decade as he led the Tigers to a 239-133-35 (.630) record. **Dean Blais, North Dakota:** Won one NCAA championship, a pair of MacNaughton Cups and one Broadmoor Trophy while posting a record of 132-55-24 from 1999-2004.

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Previous WCHA Coach of the Decade Winners

1950s: Vic Heyliger, Michigan

1960s: Murray Armstrong, Denver

1970s: Herb Brooks, Minnesota

1980s: Gino Gasparini, North Dakota

1990s: Dean Blais, North Dakota

For more on the 2000s and the rest of the WCHA's history, visit wcha.com.

Celebrating 70 Years of Excellence

The WCHA will celebrate 70 Years of Excellence throughout the 2020-21 season. The league will name all-decade teams and players and coaches of the decade for each of its seven decades. The teams and individuals will be selected by a panel of current and former WCHA staffers and media members who have or are currently covering the WCHA. More than 200 nominees were submitted for consideration by the 21 schools that have called the WCHA home since 1951.

About Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup

Anderson's Maple Syrup Inc. is proud to continue its 90-year tradition of producing, processing, and packaging consistently high-quality pure maple syrup, organic pure maple syrup, and other maple products. For more information, visit Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup.

About SPIRE Credit Union

Founded in 1934, SPIRE Credit Union's commitment to friendly, personal and genuine service remains today. Founded as Twin Cities Co-ops Credit Union, SPIRE strives to improve lives through banking with a purpose as one of Minnesota's top credit unions. For more information, SPIRE Credit Union.

About the Western Collegiate Hockey Association Men's League

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, is marking its 69th season of men's competition in 2020-21. The 10-team NCAA Division I conference consists of the University of Alabama in Huntsville (Chargers), the University of Alaska Anchorage (Seawolves), the University of Alaska (Nanooks), Bemidji State University (Beavers), Bowling Green State University (Falcons), Ferris State University (Bulldogs), Lake Superior State University (Lakers), Michigan Technological University (Huskies), Minnesota State University (Mavericks) and Northern Michigan University (Wildcats). For more information, visit wcha.com.

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