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FOUR WCHA PLAYERS NAMED CCM HOCKEY DIVISION I ALL-AMERICANS

Michigan Tech's Tanner Kero and Minnesota State's Matt Leitner earn First Team honors; Mavericks' Zach Palmquist and Alaska's Colton Parayko named to Second Team

EDINA, Minn. – April 10, 2015 – Four players from the men's Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) have been named CCM Hockey Division I All-Americans for the 2014-15 season, with forwards Tanner Kero (Michigan Tech) and Matt Leitner (Minnesota State) earning First Team honors and defensemen Zach Palmquist (Minnesota State) and Colton Parayko (Alaska) garnering Second Team accolades.

Nineteen schools overall received at least one selection among the nation's top 24 college hockey players, announced today at the NCAA Men's Division I Frozen Four in Boston, Massachusetts. Minnesota State is one of just five institutions to have two honorees, joining Boston University, Denver, Michigan and Yale.

Kero is Michigan Tech's first All-American since 2005 (Colin Murphy), while Leitner and Palmquist are the first honorees from Minnesota State since David Backes in 2006.

Tanner Kero / Sr., F, Michigan Tech (Hancock, Mich.)

A senior forward from Hancock, Mich., Kero helped return Michigan Tech to national prominence. The Huskies' co-captain led the WCHA in conference scoring (13-21—34 in 28 games) and overall scoring, tying for 12th nationally with 46 points in 41 games (20 goals and 26 assists). A consistent and clutch performer, he tallied 12 multi-point efforts and tied for third in the country with seven game-winning goals. Kero, a Hobey Baker Award top-10 finalist, was named the 2014-15 WCHA Player of the Year, the WCHA Outstanding Student-Athlete of the Year and to the All-WCHA First Team, while also earning Senior CLASS First Team All-America status. He recently signed with the NHL's Chicago Blackhawks and scored his first professional goal last night (April 9) for the AHL's Rockford IceHogs.

Matt Leitner / Sr., F, Minnesota State (Los Alamitos, CA)

Leitner capped a marvelous four-year career with a stellar senior campaign, leading the WCHA and tying for seventh in the country with 32 assists. The Los Alamitos, Calif. native added nine goals to tie for 24th nationally with 41 overall points, while he finished third in the WCHA scoring race (7-25—32 in 28 games). Only two other players in the country amassed more points than Leitner's 162 over the last four years, while the two-time All-WCHA First Team honoree finished with 113 collegiate assists – second-most in the nation since 2011.

Zach Palmquist / Sr., D, Minnesota State (South St. Paul, MN)

A stalwart defenseman, Palmquist was a key factor on both ends of the ice for a Minnesota State team that ranked third nationally for both scoring offense and scoring defense. A first team All-WCHA selection, he ranked second among league defensemen (eighth nationally) with 29 points (eight goals and 21 assists). The South St. Paul, Minn. native signed with his hometown Minnesota Wild and has tallied one assist through his first three professional contests with the AHL's Iowa club (as of April 9).

Colton Parayko / Jr., D, Alaska (St. Albert, Alberta)

A two-time All-American, Parayko also earned his second consecutive WCHA Defensive Player of the Year award in 2014-15. The junior from St. Albert, Alberta ranked third among WCHA defensemen with 20 points (4 goals, 16 assists) in 28 league contests, while his 15 overall power-play points tied for sixth amongst NCAA blue liners. Parayko, who tallied 23 overall points, anchored a Nanooks' defense that ranked in the top 25 nationally – including yielding just 1.38 goals per game over a perfect 7-0-1 stretch to end the season. On March 10, the All-WCHA First Team defenseman signed a two-year entry level contract with St. Louis, after he was originally drafted by the Blues in the third round (86th overall) of the 2012 NHL Entry Draft. Parayko has three goals and two assists in his first 11 professional outings with the AHL's Chicago Wolves (as of April 9).

About the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA)

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, proudly marked its 63rd season of men's competition in 2014-15. Covering five time zones and more than 4,200 miles, the 10-team Division 1 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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