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## **PRESS RELEASE – *For Immediate Release***

### **MJC tennis player receives national award from ITA**

(Modesto, CA) – The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) announced the 2015 national award winners for Junior and Community Colleges men's tennis this week. Among them was Modesto Junior College's Jose Gonzalez-Torres, who was named the 2015 ITA Most Improved Player of the Year. Gonzalez-Torres, who played at the bottom of the lineup in his freshman year, moved up to first singles for MJC this season.

He had a spectacular fall, claiming the singles crown at the United States Tennis Association/ITA Northern California Regional Championships to qualify for the USTA/ITA National Small College Championships. He was never ranked during his rookie season, yet has been ranked No. 1 in singles and No. 5 in doubles in Northern California this spring. Gonzalez-Torres has accomplished all this on the court while working 30+ hours each week and maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA.

Earlier in the season, Gonzalez-Torres qualified for the ITA National Small College tournament in Sumter, South Carolina.

"Jose represented the Nor Cal region in this tournament, competing against the top players in the nation. This is quite an accomplishment and honor for Jose and MJC," said Shawn Black, MJC Head Men's Tennis Coach. "This was even more remarkable as Jose is basically self-taught, and had been on his own since graduating from Waterford High School in 2004. He didn't even make the MJC team his first time out in 2006."

Gonzalez-Torres is 29 years old and has worked very hard to get where he is today.

Coach Black added, "Anytime you go down to the MJC courts, you will find Jose there, working out, hitting, or teaching."

After graduating from Waterford High School in 2004, Jose attended MJC. He came out for the tennis team in 2006. At that time he wasn't able to break into the top six players. He practiced with the team through 2006-2008 and played tennis all the time. In 2009 he came out for the team again and this time he made the cut and played No. 6 on what was one of MJC's recent strongest teams. After that year, he was unable to afford to play his second year. Yet Jose has stuck around. His hard work and

perseverance paid off.

According to Coach Black, "Jose is a calm guy on the court. He is soft spoken on and off court. Actually, when you watch him play it would be very difficult to tell if he is winning or losing. He does not yell 'Come on!' or pump his fist after a long exchange and eventual winner. Nor does he hang his head or throw his racket after a loss. In fact, sometimes he chuckles after a poor shot or a bad shot selection. Beyond that, he rarely utters a word. Jose is a very personable guy who has persevered through a lot of trials to arrive at this point. "

For more information contact Coach Shawn Black at (209) 575-6275.

-MJC-

**Note: Attached for media use is a photo of Jose Gonzalez-Torres with his national award (center) with MJC Coach Shawn Black (right) and Jay Samonte, ITA Awards Chair for NorCal Awards Committee (left).**

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