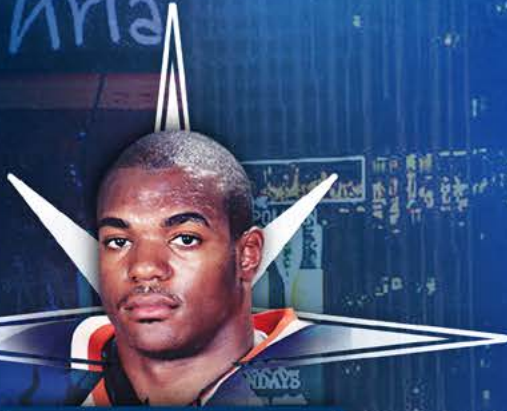




THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION'S

FOOTBALLETTER

Vol. 65, No. 3 // 2023 Hall of Fame Issue // Fall 2023



FREENEY



KRAMER



MANNING



STONEBREAKER



VINCENT

NFF CHAIRMAN ARCHIE MANNING WILL WELCOME
A STAR-STUDED HALL OF FAME CLASS DEC. 5 IN VEGAS

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NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

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Join the NFF today at caringcent.org/nff/membership to support the game of football while receiving special benefits including a vote on the College Football Hall of Fame ballot and NFF-branded t-shirts and mugs.

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For more information on purchasing an ad in the NFF Annual Awards Dinner program and the NFF Footballletter, published by LEARFIELD, please contact Clerrinda Queen at clerrinda.queen@learfield.com or (336) 473-3145.



PRESIDENT & CEO'S MESSAGE

FROM STEVEN J. HATCHELL

Welcome to the latest issue of the NFF Footballletter highlighting the College Football Hall of Fame Class of 2023, which will be officially inducted during the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas on Dec. 5.

We are thrilled to be returning to Las Vegas for the third consecutive year. Las Vegas has opened new opportunities for us, and it has allowed us to enhance the experience for our honorees and their guests, ensuring it ranks among the most memorable moments of their lives. I especially want to thank the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and its president and CEO Steve Hill for once again serving as the Annual Awards Dinner's presenting sponsor.

Set for Dec. 5 at the ARIA Resort & Casino, the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas will feature the induction of the star-studded 2023 College Football Hall of Fame Class; the presentation of the 2023 NFF National Scholar-Athlete Awards Presented by Fidelity Investments; the bestowing of the 34th William V. Campbell Trophy® to college football's top scholar-athlete; and the honoring of several top leaders with NFF Major Awards.



We hope you will join us for this historic occasion. Visit <https://footballfoundation.org/feature/NFF2023> for information on the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas, including how to purchase tickets online and take advantage of special travel rates from ARIA and Delta Air Lines.

We continue to forge ahead with all our initiatives to shine a light on the "Good in the Game," including the Future For Football® campaign, the NFF On-Campus Salutes presented by Fidelity Investments, the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, and a full range of programs — many highlighted in this issue of the Footballletter — that showcase our nation's best and brightest.

As you read the Footballletter, we encourage you to remember the valuable role football has played in your life, and we ask you to think about how you can give back to our sport. Connect with your local chapter; become a national member; and encourage your friends to join.

If you're not already an NFF member, please consider joining to support our scholarships and efforts to preserve the game for the next generation. [Click here](#) to join today and become a "Protector of the Game."

Thank you for your continued support as we work to promote the Future For Football®.

Steven J. Hatchell
NFF President & CEO



The main ballroom at ARIA Resort & Casino served as a venue for the 2021 NFF Annual Awards Dinner, and the event returns again for the 2023 edition Dec. 5.

NFF CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Oct. 25** — Announcement of the finalists for the William V. Campbell Trophy® and NFF National Scholar-Athlete Awards Presented by Fidelity Investments
- **Nov. 15** — Announcement of the 2023 NFF Faculty Athletics Representative Honorees
- **Dec. 5** — 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas at the ARIA Resort & Casino
- **Dec. 5** — Announcement of the winner of the 34th NFF William V. Campbell Trophy® during the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas
- **Dec. 11** — Presentation of the Asa S. Bushnell Cup to the Ivy League Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year at the New York Athletic Club in New York City
- **Jan. 8** — Announcement of the 2024 College Football Hall of Fame Class
- **Jan. 8** — CFP National Championship at NRG Stadium in Houston
- **Feb. 3** — Announcement of the State Winners of the 2023-24 NFF National High School Academic Excellence Awards Presented by the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation
- **Feb. 9** — Announcement of 2024 Recipient of the NFF Hatchell Cup, Presented by "The Original" Bob's Steak & Chop House

LAS Vegas

NFF ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER



NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

65TH NFF ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER PRESENTED BY LAS VEGAS -

Held on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023, at the ARIA Resort & Casino is "THE" place to connect for the college community. Hosts the induction of the College Football Hall of Fame Class, the recognition of the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Class presented by Fidelity Investments, and the announcement of the William V. Campbell Trophy® recipient.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME - Inducting the greatest players and coaches in the history of college football.

WILLIAM V. CAMPBELL TROPHY® AND NATIONAL SCHOLAR-ATHLETE PROGRAM - Awarding the William V. Campbell Trophy® to college football's top scholar-athlete. Honoring the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Class presented by Fidelity Investments. Bestowing postgraduate scholarships. Recognizing Faculty Athletics Representatives.

FUTURE FOR FOOTBALL - Celebrating the positive impact the game has made on millions of players, coaches, administrators, volunteers and fans nationwide.

CHAPTER NETWORK - Distributing \$1 million in scholarships annually and holding local events to promote amateur football through 120 chapters in 47 states.

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS AND HATCHELL CUP - Recognizing the nation's top high school football programs for their efforts in the classroom, on the field and in the community. The Hatchell Cup presented by "The Original" Bob's Steak & Chop House is awarded to the nation's best.



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2023 COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS

INTRODUCING THE HONOREES

During the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas on Dec. 5, 2023, the 2023 Class will officially take its place in the College Football Hall of Fame alongside the greatest of all time. Of the 5.7 million individuals who have played college football since Princeton first battled Rutgers on Nov. 6, 1869, only 1,074 players and 230 coaches have earned the right to be immortalized in the sport's ultimate shrine. In other words, only two one-hundredths of a percent (.02%) of those who have played the game have earned the distinction.



ERIC BERRY
DB, Tennessee (2007-09)



MICHAEL BISHOP
QB, Kansas State (1997-98)



REGGIE BUSH
RB, Southern California
(2003-05)



DWIGHT FREENEY
DE, Syracuse (1998-2001)



ROBERT GALLERY
OT, Iowa (2000-03)



LAMICHAEL JAMES
RB, Oregon (2009-11)



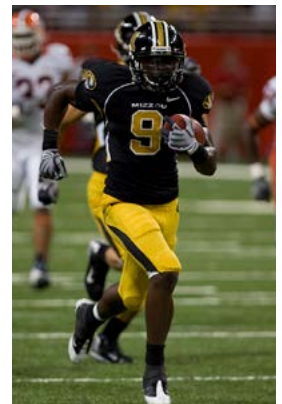
DERRICK JOHNSON
LB, Texas (2001-04)



BILL KOLLAR
DT, Montana State (1971-73)



LUKE KUECHLY
LB, Boston College (2009-11)



JEREMY MACLIN
WR/KR, Missouri (2007-08)



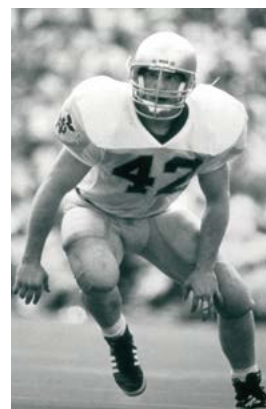
TERANCE MATHIS
WR, New Mexico
(1985-87, '89)



BRYANT MCKINNIE
OT, Miami [FL] (2000-01)



COREY MOORE
DL, Virginia Tech (1997-99)



MICHAEL STONEBREAKER
LB, Notre Dame
(1986, '88, '90)



2023 COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS

INTRODUCING THE HONOREES



TIM TEBOW
QB, Florida (2006-09)



TROY VINCENT
DB, Wisconsin (1988-91)



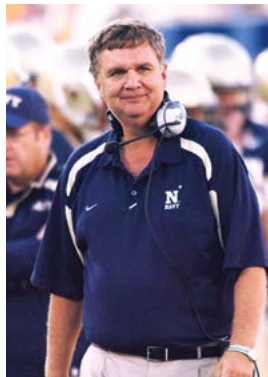
BRIAN WESTBROOK
RB, Villanova
(1997-98, 2000-01)



DeANGELO WILLIAMS
DB, Memphis (2002-05)



COACH MONTE CATER
275-117-2 (70.1%); Lakeland [WI]
(1981-86), Shepherd [WV]
(1987-2017)



COACH PAUL JOHNSON
189-99-0 (65.6%); Georgia Southern
(1997-2001), Navy (2002-07),
Georgia Tech (2008-18)



COACH ROY KRAMER
83-32-2 (71.8%); Central Michigan
(1967-77)



COACH MARK RICHT
171-64-0 (72.8%); Georgia (2001-15),
Miami [FL] (2016-18)

2023 CLASS BY THE NUMBERS

- 1** Heisman Trophy winner
NFF William V. Campbell Trophy® recipient
Coach with the most wins in school history
- 3** Teams coached to national titles
National Coach of the Year honors
- 4** Players on national championship teams
- 5** Decades represented
- 8** Consensus First Team All-Americans
- 9** Players on conference championship teams

- 10** Unanimous First Team All-Americans
Multi-year First Team All-Americans
- 11** Winners of college football major awards
- 12** First-round NFL Draft picks
Players who still hold school records
- 13** Conference Players of the Year
- 21** Conference Coach of the Year honors
- 50** Bowl/postseason appearances by coaches
- 51** First Team All-Americans coached



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



ERIC BERRY

University of Tennessee • Defensive Back • 2007-09



Eric Berry may have been a native of Georgia, but Tennesseans have always embraced him as one of their own. His father James was a captain at Tennessee. His younger twin brothers played for the Volunteers, too. It's where Berry first made his mark nationally as a player, before becoming a role model at the NFL level as he battled back from cancer. Now Berry can be immortalized as a College Football Hall of Famer, becoming the 22nd former Tennessee player to earn the honor.

"I wasn't born in Tennessee but the Berry roots and Berry legacy runs deep," Berry told the Tennessean this summer in Nashville after making the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame. "My dad went here. A lot of his friends went here. My brothers went here. You heard Rocky Top. Rocky Top will always be home sweet home to me. To see those lyrics and that song actually means something. They pretty much embraced me as their own."

A prep football and track star at Creekside High in Fairburn, Georgia, Berry was a U.S. Army All-American who made an immediate impact upon stepping foot on the Knoxville campus in 2007. Berry helped lift the Volunteers to the SEC title game. He led SEC freshmen with 86 tackles and was named the conference's freshman of the year.

Berry picked off five passes in 2007 and amassed 222 interception return yards, beating Bobby Majors' school record of 177 from 1970. Berry went on to top his own record the following season, when he was named the SEC's Defensive Player of the Year after recording seven interceptions for 265 return yards, an SEC single-season record. His 494 career interception return yards are also an SEC record.

"I think I had great mentors," Berry told the newspaper. "I think I had great coaches in little league. My dad, but outside of my dad, a great community, getting to high school and having a coach who challenged me, didn't let me settle, and then getting to the University of Tennessee where I felt like Coach (Phillip) Fulmer (HOF Class of 2012) and that staff challenged me, as well as Inky Johnson and a few of my other teammates

who I really hold in high regards. And they just always pushed me to the best that I could be."

A two-time captain, Berry became the school's first two-time unanimous First Team All-American in 2008 and 2009, and he won the Jim Thorpe Award in 2009 as the nation's top defensive back. He also won the Jack Tatum Award from the Touchdown Club of Columbus as the nation's top defensive back.

Berry exited college with career totals of 245 tackles, 17.5 tackles for loss, three sacks, 14 interceptions, 31 passes defended, two forced fumbles and four fumble recoveries. His efforts led Tennessee to two bowl berths, including a 21-17 win over Wisconsin in the 2008 Outback Bowl, which gave the Vols a final No. 12 ranking.

The Chiefs picked Berry No. 5 overall in the 2010 NFL Draft, and he performed in the pros to the level he played at in college, making the first of five Pro Bowl appearances during his rookie year. He became a three-time All-Pro, and he made the NFL's all-decade team.

Berry became a national inspiration in 2014 when he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, a disease he overcame to win the NFL's Comeback Player of the Year award in 2015. He has donated more than \$100,000 to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, and he has been a source of influence for many who have battled cancer, including NFL running back James Conner, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2015 while at Pitt and returned to become a First Team All-ACC player in 2016.

"I understand the magnitude of these awards but there's also an understanding of a reference point on that timeline which was me overcoming cancer," Berry told the newspaper. "It's all about the people that I've encountered on my journey."



Berry played four more seasons after his diagnosis, all in Kansas City, finishing his career with 445 tackles and 14 interceptions.

Following his NFL career, Berry returned to his hometown of Fairburn, Georgia, and he currently works as an entrepreneur. He established the Eric Berry Foundation in 2011, which provides safe environments for children to participate in sports, and he hosts annual youth football clinics in Atlanta, Kansas City and throughout Tennessee. He has donated funds for the field turf in Duncan Park (Georgia) where he learned to play football. Berry is the one of three former Chiefs teammates who are a part of this year's Hall of Fame class, along with Jeremy Maclin and Derrick Johnson.

"He didn't play as long as you would think he would have played, because he made such a big impact in such a short amount of time," Johnson said of Berry. "When you talk about a leader, you're talking about Eric Berry."

ERIC BERRY: UP CLOSE

- Named a two-time unanimous First Team All-American (2008 and 2009), claiming the Jim Thorpe Award in 2009 as the nation's top defensive back after being a finalist in 2008.
- Holds the record as the SEC's all-time leader in career interception return yards (494) and single-season interception return yards (265 in 2008) as well as the Vol record for career yards (35.3) per interception.
- Finished his career with 245 tackles, 17.5 tackles for loss, three sacks, 14 interceptions, 31 passes defended, two forced fumbles and four fumble recoveries.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame head coach Phillip Fulmer and one year under Lane Kiffin.
- Becomes the 22nd Vols player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



MICHAEL BISHOP

Kansas State University • Quarterback • 1997-98



Michael Bishop came home one winter day to his wife telling him that somebody had called to speak to him.

What Bishop interpreted as a phone call was actually a Zoom call. And one of the people on the Zoom was Bill Snyder. The legendary Kansas State coach's message? Bishop had made the College Football Hall of Fame.

"Once I finally realized I made it, I thought about all the lows and the 'yes' I got," Bishop said, referring to Kansas State's belief in him. "Everybody that's ever crossed paths with me — coaches, players, starting with the locker room, which made me the player that I was. It allowed me to go out there and battle with those guys.

"Without those guys, there's no Mike Bishop going into the College Football Hall of Fame, and I respect that and I honor that."

Bishop is just the fourth Kansas State player to make the Hall, and the seventh member of the program, joining Snyder, his coach (2015). He committed to the Wildcats out of Blinn Junior College because they were the only program that never doubted his ability to play quarterback at a high level, a belief that he made good on by going 22-3 as a starter in Manhattan, leaving college with 26 game, season or career records.

Bishop had played the position since he was 7 years old, and it became a part of his identity and, eventually, his legacy. The Willis, Texas, native appreciated the new home he found in the state of Kansas and just what suiting up in that purple uniform meant for the people of the Sunflower State.

"I'm different from a lot of people," Bishop said. "Some of the local guys from Kansas on the team had dreams and aspirations to play for Kansas State. For me, when I see those guys doing well, when I see them scoring touchdowns and making big plays, that's a lifetime accomplishment, a lifetime dream for them. And a guy like me, I'm playing football, I'm from the state of Texas where football is huge. So, to see somebody that loves football and gets to play at the biggest school, and they're a local Kansas kid, to see them be able to line up

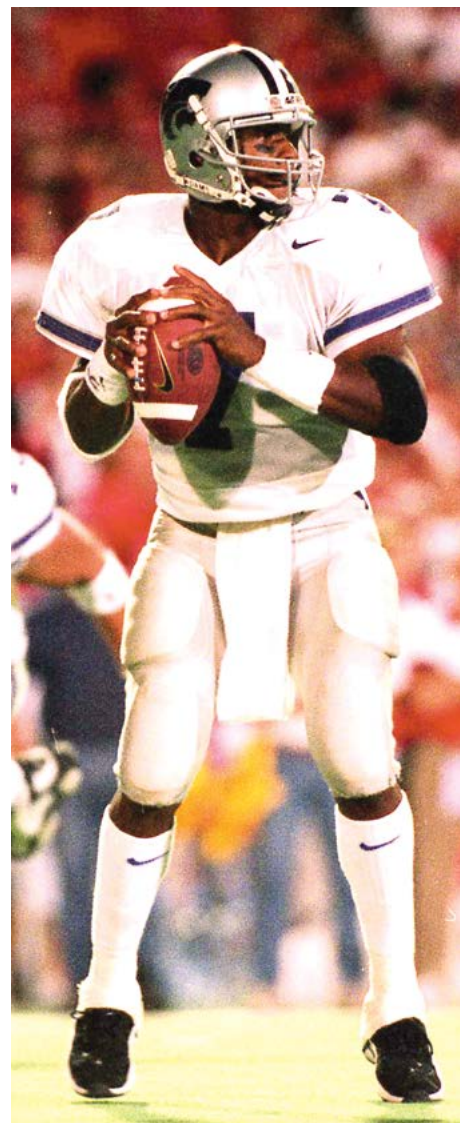
and come out of that locker room and hear the crowd, for me that was amazing, because being from Texas I got to be around some great high school football with amazing crowds and loud noises. And for those guys to experience that and for me to see that, it shined a different light on football and Kansas State for me."

Bishop's best personal memory came from the 1998 season. One year earlier, he and his teammates had been on the losing end of a 56-26 blowout at Nebraska, and Bishop vowed to keep that from happening again. "Never twice," read the wristband Bishop wore that day. And the quarterback followed through on that promise, leading the Wildcats to a 40-30 win.

"I told my teammates they got us this time, but when they come back next year it's going to be a whole different ball game," Bishop said. "To see the crowd, to see the fans, to see Coach Snyder's face when those last seconds ticked off the clock, to see them take the goalposts off the ground and take them downtown, those were great memories for me, and I know it was special for the whole state of Kansas, the whole city of Manhattan and all the fans across the world that support Kansas State. That was something big, and I was just blessed to be a part of it."

Kansas State had a perfect regular season record, eventually falling in the Big 12 title game and in the Alamo Bowl. Bishop finished as the Heisman Trophy runner-up. He won the Davey O'Brien Award. The Wildcats finished in the top-10 in both of Bishop's seasons.

"There was a foundation at Kansas State before I got there," Bishop said. "We were just lucky enough to add to the Kansas State legacy. And for me and my teammates as well, we just loved playing football, and the way we loved the game and the way we played the game, it speaks for itself."



Bishop now lives in Houston, where he is the head football coach of the Legacy School of Sport Sciences.

MICHAEL BISHOP: UP CLOSE

- Named a consensus First Team All-American in 1998 and two-time All-Big 12 selection.
- Claimed the Davey O'Brien Award as the nation's top quarterback and finished as the Heisman Trophy runner-up and a finalist for Maxwell and Johnny Unitas Golden Arm awards.
- Set 34 school records and 14 Big 12 records while rushing for 1,314 yards and 23 touchdowns and throwing for 4,401 yards and 36 touchdowns during his two seasons in Manhattan.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame head coach Bill Snyder.
- Becomes the fourth K-State player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



REGGIE BUSH

University of Southern California • Running Back • 2003-05



The entire college football world knows the area code for San Diego, thanks to Reggie Bush. The entire college football world knows what a dynasty in Hollywood looks like, also thanks to Bush. And an entire generation of college football fans fell in love with the sport because they saw Bush do things with the ball in his hands that were previously deemed impossible; his effect on the game was mesmerizing.

To call Bush a running back would be shortchanging him, as he impacted the game from so many areas. To call him simply a football player would undersell the effect he had on the sport as a whole.

One thing now, everyone can safely label him as a “Hall of Famer,” as Bush becomes the 34th USC player to the College Football Hall of Fame, joining his quarterback Matt Leinart as members from the dynasty-era Trojans as inductees.

“It means a lot, because it’s confirmation of the hard work that I put in throughout my career on and off the field, and it’s also confirmation of just the amount of talent and good coaching that I was surrounded by,” Bush said of the honor. “Because I always believed I was a reflection of the guys around me who pushed me to get to the level that I was day in and day out. I had great teammates, great coaches, and I put the work in and never settled for anything less than greatness.”

The 6-foot, 200-pound Bush was one of the most electrifying players of all-time. Wearing “619” on his eyeblack as a tribute to his home city, he set an NCAA record by averaging 7.3 yards per carry during his career. His 222.3 all-purpose yards per game led the nation in 2005. His late-night performance against Fresno State became the stuff of legend, as he rushed for 294 yards and two touchdowns on 23 carries, caught three passes for 68 yards and tallied 151 return yards in an epic 50-42 win in the penultimate game of the 2005 regular season.

His 513 all-purpose yards that night marked the No. 2 performance in NCAA history. His 50-yard, third quarter, start-and-stop touchdown run — among several other highlights that night

— will live on in the memories of college football fans forever.

“Super excited for Reggie, totally deserves this honor,” said Steve Sarkisian, a USC assistant at the time. “He was a guy that was as electrifying a football player that was so versatile, that we could do so much with, whether it was running the ball between the tackles, running the ball on the perimeter, using him in the passing game, using him in the return game. He could impact the game in a lot of ways, but all of that was because of his work ethic. Nobody practiced harder than Reggie Bush. Nobody prepared more than Reggie Bush did, and the way that he practiced carried over to the way that he played on Saturdays.”

USC made the national title game in each of Bush’s three years in Los Angeles, and it never finished worse than No. 2 in the AP poll. The Trojans lost just two games during Bush’s career. Bush was a two-time First Team All-American who, in 2005, won the Doak Walker Award as the nation’s top running back. He was named the player of the year by Walter Camp, the AP, and *The Sporting News* while winning the Heisman Trophy at the best player that season.

He finished fifth in the 2004 Heisman voting, when Leinart, his teammate, won the trophy. He was a two-time Pac-10 Player of the Year and two-time USC team MVP. He finished his Trojans career in the top-10 of the school record books for career rushing yards (3,169), kick return yards (1,523) and punt return yards (559). He had 95 career catches for 1,301 yards and 13 touchdowns. Oh, and he completed a 52-yard touchdown pass to Dwayne Jarrett in a 2004 game against Arizona State, too.



The Saints selected Bush No. 2 overall in the 2006 NFL Draft, and he spent five seasons in New Orleans before playing for the Dolphins, Lions, 49ers and Bills. He earned first-team All-Pro honors in 2008, and he won Super Bowl XLIV with the Saints in the 2009-10 season.

A father of one girl and two boys, Bush remains active in the community, having founded the 619 Charitable Fund to support youth in San Diego, among several other charitable endeavors. Nearly two decades removed from his college career, Bush still hears from aspiring players today about the influence he and his USC teammates had throughout the sport.

“Every time I see a former teammate or a current player, toward the end of my career, I would always get comments, and still do to this day, from players who just thank me for what we did on the football field,” Bush said.

REGGIE BUSH: UP CLOSE

- Named a consensus First Team All-American in 2004 and a unanimous selection in 2005 as an all-purpose player, winning the Heisman Trophy, Doak Walker Award and Walter Camp, AP and *The Sporting News* player of the year honors in 2005.
- Helped Southern California claim two national championships and a 37-2 record during his three years.
- Set an NCAA record with an astounding 7.3 yards per carry during his career and finished with 6,552 career all-purpose yards, including 433 rushes for 3,169 yards and 25 touchdowns; 95 receptions for 1,301 yards and 13 touchdowns; returned 67 kickoffs for 1,523 yards and one touchdown and fielded 44 punts for 559 yards and three touchdowns.
- Played for head coach Pete Carroll.
- Becomes the 34th Trojan to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

WE MOVE THE PEOPLE WHO
MOVE THE WORLD.



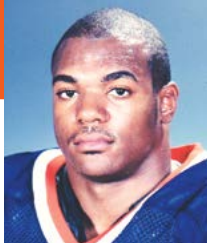
KEEP CLIMBING





HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



DWIGHT FREENEY

Syracuse University • Defensive End • 1998-2001



Dwight Freeney points to two different games against Virginia Tech as his two endearing memories during his time at Syracuse — for two different reasons.

The first matchup between the Orange and the Hokies was the then-freshman Freeney's indoctrination into the madness that is college football, as Syracuse won on a 13-yard touchdown pass on the game's final play, leading to a field-storming from the fans.

"It was just absolutely nuts," Freeney said. "The Carrier Dome was so loud, and it was one of those moments you just never really will ever forget, winning in the last second of a game."

The second big memory came two years later, when Freeney set a Big East record with 4.5 sacks in a game, a feat that was all the more impressive considering it came against Michael Vick.

"To this day, that offensive tackle is probably still in his stance, because I was flying off the ball, man," Freeney said, laughing. "I don't know what got into me, but it was one of those games where I felt like I was literally flying. I was shot out of a cannon."

Those feats all came flashing back for Freeney this year, as he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame — just five days after he was named a finalist for this year's Pro Football Hall of Fame, coincidentally enough.

Freeney becomes the 10th Syracuse player to make the College Football Hall of Fame, an honor that comes after a decorated career in which he set the NCAA career sacks per game record (1.61), a mark he still holds to this day.

Freeney finished ninth in the Heisman Trophy voting in 2001, and he was a finalist for the Bednarik, Lombardi and Nagurski awards that season as well. He posted 17.5 sacks during his senior campaign, a single-season record at that time.

The Connecticut native chose Syracuse because it reminded him of his football experiences playing at Bloomfield High School.

"It was a complete adrenaline rush," Freeney said. "It was just one of those atmospheres that you felt the energy in the room. You've got



guys telling you, 'Get ready for the game,' and that type of thing. So, when I went to Syracuse, that's what I felt. That's what I saw. The intensity, I could feel it when I walked in that locker room. So, I knew that was the place for me, because it was so similar to what I was experiencing in high school."

A two-time First Team All-Big East honoree, Freeney carried that edge with him through his pro career. The Colts drafted him 11th overall, and he spent 11 of his 16 NFL seasons in Indianapolis, winning Super Bowl XLI, making seven Pro Bowls and three times being named All-Pro.

Freeney lives in Florida now, where he has two young daughters. He sees it as a blessing to start his family life after a lengthy pro career. The former Orange captain counts high school coach Jack Cochrane, college coach Paul Pasqualoni

and position coaches Deek Pollard, John Terrlinck and Jerry Azzinaro among his biggest football influences, specifically citing Cochrane for helping him to fall in love with the game.

"I've always said this: You don't reach those types of accolades or those types of places by yourself," Freeney said. "It's going to take a community. It's going to take people to help you get there, and I definitely had a whole bunch of people who helped me, and it starts with my high school coach, Jack Cochrane, who basically took me off the soccer field — because I was a soccer guy — and took me away from there, put me on that football field and taught me what it was to truly, truly work hard."

"You don't really know what hard work is until you put the pads on, and you have to go and push yourself to limits that you didn't even know you had, and that's where it started for me."

DWIGHT FREENEY: UP CLOSE

- Named a 2001 unanimous First Team All-American while finishing as a finalist for the Bednarik, Lombardi and Nagurski awards.
- Owns NCAA record for career sacks per game (1.61) and finished his career as the NCAA leader in single-season sacks with 17.5 in 2001.
- Notched eight forced fumbles in 2001, ranking him third in the NCAA record books and holds school records for career (50.5) and single season tackle for loss (25.5 in 2001).
- Played for head coach Paul Pasqualoni.
- Becomes the 10th Syracuse player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



ROBERT GALLERY

University of Iowa • Offensive Tackle • 2000-03



In keeping with the ethos of an offensive lineman, Robert Gallery was all business, all the time. He was always focused on the next snap, the next practice, the next opponent — rarely giving himself much time for reflection.

But being a decade removed from his playing career has allowed for some room to soak in those special moments, such as when he learned that he was making the College Football Hall of Fame, becoming just the 11th former Iowa player to earn the honor.

“Overwhelming,” Gallery said of the news. “It set me back a little bit. As you get older and farther way from your career, these things seem to mean a lot more because you have time to really think about what they mean.”

Gallery was a kid from Manchester, Iowa, who rarely doubted that his future would take him to Iowa City. His older brother Nick was a four-year punter for the Hawkeyes who would go on to play in the NFL, and trips to campus to visit Nick and standout teammates such as Tim Dwight and Jared DeVries had sold Robert early on.

“This honor brought back a lot of memories,” Gallery said. “Now that I am done, it’s nice to be able to think of what it really means for me. It was the days and weeks afterward that were more overwhelming for me than the initial news, because you get the numbers of how few people are in the Hall of Fame to begin with, and then all the (information) from Iowa came, the very few number of guys who have ever played at Iowa and other things that come with it.”

Gallery’s individual accolades speak for themselves — a 2003 unanimous First Team All-American who also won the Outland Trophy, in addition to becoming a three-time First Team All-Big Ten tackle and a three-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree. The Hawkeyes’ transformation as a program, however, is what stands out the most.

Coach Kirk Ferentz’s first season in 1999 was a forgettable 1-10 campaign. Gallery came aboard in 2000 and played in the final six games of his freshman year, but Iowa went just 3-9 that year. In Gallery’s final three seasons, the Hawkeyes went 28-10, 17-7 in Big Ten play and

won two bowl games, finishing No. 8 in the final AP poll in 2002 and ‘03. They shared the Big Ten title in 2002, going 8-0 in conference play.

“We were not good those first couple of years,” Gallery said. “Nobody in our class, and typically from Iowa, is super highly recruited. I don’t think they gave star (ratings) back then, but we were a bunch of hungry guys that just came in and worked. I was 230 pounds when I showed up on campus. And to build over the years — it’s not an instant success — but to build up that program and see what it’s done and to stay consistent since then is the biggest accomplishment when I look back. That means a lot.”

Gallery protected the blind side for quarterback Brad Banks, who passed for an impressive 2,573 yards and 26 touchdowns as the Davey O’Brien winner and Heisman Trophy runner-up in 2002 while he opened holes for running backs Fred Russell and Jermelle Lewis, who combined for 1,937 rushing yards and 17 touchdowns. By the time Gallery finished his tenure in Iowa City, he was 325 pounds, which combined with his speed and agility made him a coveted NFL prospect.

The Raiders selected him as the No. 2 overall pick in the 2004 NFL Draft. He would start 103 of the 104 games in which he played for the Raiders and Seahawks. He was given the NFL’s Ed Block Courage Award in 2010. He now lives in Lake Tahoe with his wife — former Hawkeyes basketball player Becca McCann — and their three children.

“Goodness, I think my best memory was the grind of helping build a program and coming in there and being a nobody and just grinding,” Gallery said. “I owe a lot to those coaches. They knew how to work with guys and develop guys. And being around the locker room was fun.



When you get into a pro career, there’s pressure and stresses, and I don’t remember those in college. I just remember it being fun. Even during the tough times, college football was fun.

“Luckily there was no social media, but the work, day in and day out, the pleasure of working with the guys; I still talk with a lot of those guys. And having those successes and playing in the Orange Bowl and having some very successful seasons is a huge memory for me.”

ROBERT GALLERY: UP CLOSE

- Named a unanimous First Team All-American and claimed the Outland Trophy as the nation’s best interior lineman in 2003.
- Anchored an offense that led the conference in scoring in back-to-back years, averaging 32.6 points per game in 2001 and 37.2 in 2002.
- A three-time All-Big Ten selection, helping the Hawkeyes claim their first Big Ten title in more than a decade and the school’s first back-to-back top-10 finishes since the 1950s.
- Played for head coach Kirk Ferentz.
- Becomes the 11th Iowa player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



LaMICHAEL JAMES

University of Oregon • Running Back • 2009-11



LaMichael James was a blue-chip recruit who had offers from colleges all over the country. As an undersized back from Liberty-Eylau High in Texarkana, Texas, James leaned on a close group of mentors, particularly Jeff Wright, who worked at his high school and who had coached him in eighth grade.

“Do you want to be a big fish in a small pond, or do you want to be a small fish in a big pond?” James recalled Wright asking him. “I wanted to be the guy. I wanted to go and change the culture somewhere. Everyone goes to Oklahoma or Texas or Arkansas from my region, and I wanted to be different. That was a big thing to me.

“Don’t follow trends. Make something of yourself and go against the odds, so that people from East Texas see that you can go somewhere else and blaze your own path.”

Did he ever.

James chose Oregon, a strong program that would take off to historic heights during his time in Eugene. Now, he can call himself a College Football Hall of Famer — just the sixth former player in school history to make the Hall.

“Honestly, man, I still haven’t processed it,” James said. “It’s still surreal.”

The way James found out only added to the rush. Longtime Oregon administrator Jeff Hawkins reached out to James ahead of the announcement to ask for his address. Given Oregon’s ties to Nike, James thought perhaps Hawkins was shipping him some new shoes, so he asked if he could hold on to the package for when James flew in for a pre-planned visit the next day. Shortly after opening the package at his Dallas-area home — a package that included the commemorative football that each Hall newcomer receives — reality began to set in for James.

“That’s when it really hit me: You made the College Football Hall of Fame,” James said. “Then you see the names on the list, and that’s another reason why I was like, Wow, you made it with Reggie Bush and Tim Tebow and Eric Berry and just all of these great athletes. And it’s like, man, you’re a part of that group.

“Records can be broken, but you can never take your legacy away once you’re in the College Football Hall of Fame.”

James arrived in Eugene for the 2009 season, the same year that Chip Kelly began as the Ducks’ head coach, and the player and program took off. Oregon went 34-6 during James’ three seasons, winning three straight Pac-12 titles and making BCS bowl games in all three years, including the national championship game in the 2010-11 season.

Behind an innovative offense that took the nation by storm, James made an immediate impact, setting a Pac-12 freshman record for rushing yards with 1,546. He went on to amass 5,082 career rushing yards, 5,869 all-purpose yards, 53 rushing touchdowns and 26 games with 100 or more rushing yards — each mark good for second on the school’s all-time list.

James’ seven career 200-yard rushing games are a school record. The 5-foot-9 back became the Ducks’ first two-time consensus All-American (2010 and ’11), and he was the first unanimous All-American in program history in 2010. That same year — which ended in the BCS title game after a perfect regular season — saw James lead the nation in rushing, yards from scrimmage and touchdowns. He won the Doak Walker Award as the nation’s top running back, and he made it to New York as a Heisman Trophy finalist.

“Coach (Gary) Campbell is No. 1, without a doubt,” James said of his biggest football influence, referring to the legendary Ducks running backs coach. “When you look at everything else, it’s definitely your teammates. It takes more than one person for us to succeed. If my offensive line is not good, or if I don’t have good blockers at wide receiver, or if



the defense is not forcing turnovers, then there is none of this.”

James was drafted by the 49ers in the second round of the 2012 NFL Draft, and he spent two seasons with San Francisco before playing two more years for the Dolphins. He currently owns multiple Killer Burger franchises in the Oregon area.

“I didn’t even know where Oregon was,” James said of his initial recruitment, laughing. “I told Coach Kelly, I don’t want to play ball on the West Coast. He said, ‘Good thing we’re in the Northwest.’ I said I don’t know where it’s at, and he said, ‘It’s below Washington, next to California.’

“I said, ‘OK, I’ll check it out.’”

The Ducks were better for it.

LaMICHAEL JAMES: UP CLOSE

- Twice named a First Team All-American, including unanimous accolades in 2010 and finishing third in Heisman Trophy voting.
- Claimed the Doak Walker Award in 2010 as the nation’s best running back after leading the nation in rushing yards (1,731), yards from scrimmage (1,939) and touchdowns (24).
- Finished his career with 771 rushes for 5,082 yards and 53 touchdowns, adding 51 receptions for 586 yards and four touchdowns.
- Played for head coach Chip Kelly.
- Becomes the sixth Oregon player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

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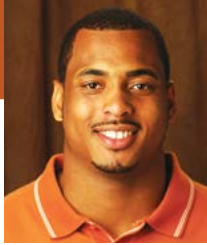
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HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



DERRICK JOHNSON

University of Texas • Linebacker • 2001-04



Derrick Johnson loved his pro career in Kansas City, but Austin was always home for him. No matter when the Chiefs' season ended, Johnson would be back in the capital of Texas the next day.

"I'm a Texan at heart, and being from Waco, my mom is still there, and Austin is only an hour, hour-and-a-half away, and I built a lot of rapport here," Johnson said. "And when you're a Longhorn, those fans teach you right. So, I got addicted to that."

So addicted that after stepping foot on campus as a freshman in 2001, he never looked back. Johnson charged ahead, making an impact from Day 1. He helped lift the Longhorns to an 11-win season during his freshman season, the first of three such campaigns during his time at Texas. The 'Horns went 43-8 across his four years, with Johnson upping his game each year. Johnson is now being recognized for that work in the most distinguished way possible, as a College Football Hall of Famer, the 21st former Texas player to receive the honor.

"I knew I had a very fortunate college career, but when you talk about the Hall of Fame, it's an elite class, a small circle of great players when it comes to how many ever played the game," Johnson said. "It's a big, big deal."

"I got the (commemorative) ball in the mail, and usually my wife opens up the mail, but this time it had my name on it. I didn't even read the letter, because I knew what the ball meant. I thank God that I was blessed to be chosen."

The linebacker was a two-time First Team All-American, consensus in 2003 and unanimous in 2004. His charmed senior campaign also saw Johnson win the Bronko Nagurski Trophy and the Butkus Award as the top nation's defensive player and top linebacker, respectively.

He had the highest finish among all defensive players in that year's Heisman Trophy voting (12th). He earned the Big 12's Male Athlete of the Year Award. And he also created his greatest Longhorn memory.

"My last game of the season against Michigan," Johnson said of his top moment, referring to the Rose Bowl. "I feel like every year we were pretty

good; we were a 10-win-a-season type of team when I was there. It's not like we weren't ranked high, but my last year we got over that hump as the big dogs and we made it happen.

"When it came to finishing Top-5 in the nation and beating Michigan, that put us on the map. And the next year we obviously won a national championship. I wasn't there for that, but it was one of those things where I was a building block and helped the program get there."

Watching Texas beat USC in an epic Rose Bowl to win the national title the following year was nevertheless rewarding, given how close he was with most of that year's roster and Coach Mack Brown (a 2018 College Football Hall of Fame inductee) who helped recruit him.

"All those guy who won it, that was my senior class," Johnson said. "Only Cedric Benson and I didn't redshirt. My whole class redshirted. They all won, so that was special. It's bittersweet, but at the same time it's more sweet (than bitter) just because those guys built a rapport and camaraderie there that could never be broken."

Texas went 27-5 in Big 12 play during Johnson's time in Austin, and the program had three top-six finishes. Johnson is the Longhorns' all-time leader in tackles for loss (65), and his nine interceptions and 30 pass breakups are the best marks by a Texas linebacker. He posted 458 career tackles, 10.5 sacks, 39 quarterback pressures, 11 forced fumbles and five fumble recoveries. His nine forced fumbles in 2004 were an NCAA record.

The Chiefs drafted him 15th overall, and he became the franchise's all-time leading tackler (1,262) across his 13 years in Kansas City. Johnson is back on Texas' campus regularly, helping out with the program however he can.



His mother was a schoolteacher for more than 40 years, and her influence has inspired him to give back to children in need. He has five boys and one girl, and he is the director of the Defend the Dream Foundation, which provides low-income and inner-city youth with resources to better their lives. Johnson jokes that he now pours his life into three areas: his kids, his foundation and golf, which he likes to say is more stressful than parenting.

"I am loving it (in Austin), and it's a lifelong commitment when you go to the University of Texas, and that tradition runs deep and rich," Johnson said. "It's more comforting to be around Austin and have the platform I have here to impact others in a great manner."

DERRICK JOHNSON: UP CLOSE

- Named a two-time First Team All-American, consensus in 2003 and unanimous in 2004.
- Claimed the Butkus Award as the nation's top linebacker and the Bronko Nagurski Trophy as nation's top defender in 2004 while finishing 12th in Heisman Trophy voting and as a finalist for the Bednarik, Lombardi and Lott IMPACT awards.
- Tallied 458 career tackles, 280 solo tackles, 65 tackles for loss, 30 pass breakups, 10.5 sacks, 11 forced fumbles (including nine in 2004, which ties him for most in NCAA history for a single season), nine interceptions and five fumble recoveries.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame Coach Mack Brown.
- Becomes the 21st Texas player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



BILL KOLLAR

Montana State University • Defensive Tackle • 1971-73



Bill Kollar had never been on a plane until Joe Tiller convinced him to visit his future school. Kollar, then a standout player at Warren Harding High, knew that it probably would be best to get out of his native Ohio and attend college elsewhere. His father was a steel mill worker had wanted more opportunities for his son. Tiller, a Montana State grad-turned-MSU defensive line coach — and an eventual Big Ten coach of the year at Purdue — had made headway with a number of Ohio guys who would go on to call Big Sky country home.

“My mother and I flew out together and checked it out; I thought, ‘Well, this might be the place for me,’” Kollar said. “The Warren area back then was all steel mills, so it was pretty hard living, tough times and stuff there. My dad felt this would be a good chance to sort of get away from the area and go out there. It really turned out to be one of the best decisions I ever made.”

A half-century later, after a decorated career as a player and coach at multiple levels, Kollar can call himself the first Montana State player to ever make the College Football Hall of Fame as a player. (Alum Dennis Erickson made the Hall as a coach in 2019.)

Kollar dominated in Bozeman, twice earning All-America honors as a defensive lineman. He was named the UPI Big Sky defensive MVP in 1972.

A three-time all-conference honoree, Kollar’s No. 77 jersey is retired by his alma mater.

“Really getting in a new area of the country, making new friends; we won the Big Sky championship in 1972,” Kollar said of some of his best college memories. “And then I was lucky enough to get into some of those bowl games — the East-West Shrine Game and the Senior Bowl and won the (Senior Bowl) MVP which at that time was first defensive player to ever win the MVP. That turned out to be a heck of a deal.

“Anything that I have ever been able to do falls back on Montana State. I know everyone says things like that, but especially coming from a smaller school, people obviously are proud of the university. And when somebody can end up doing well like that, they appreciate the joy it brings. Just like with Jan Stenurud, who is in the



Pro Football Hall of Fame. He was at Montana State, went out there as a ski jumper and ended up kicking.”

The Bobcats didn’t begin recording defensive statistics until 1973, Kollar’s final season with the program, but the 6-foot-3½ inch linemen filled up the box scores during that campaign, tallying 107 tackles, three pass breakups, three fumble recoveries and one sack.

The Bengals drafted him 24th overall the following spring, making Kollar the highest pick in school history, a distinction he still holds today. Kollar had a nine-year career with Cincinnati and Tampa Bay, before he went into coaching — something he did not initially have a desire to do.

“I had always paid really good attention and answered questions that were posed in the defensive line meeting room,” Kollar said. “I had a great coach in Abe Gibron in Tampa for six years. I’d answer questions and he’d get ticked off and say, ‘Let someone else answer!’ When I

was done playing, I flunked my physical, I tore my ACL. I’m thinking, what else am I going to end up doing?”

“I said I’d love to get into coaching, and luckily that’s what I did. I helped Montana State that year, the Bucs called me back and asked if I’d like to come back for Coach John McKay (CHOF Class of ’88) in 1984 and I went back and that really sort of spring-boarded my career.”

That it did. Kollar coached for nearly 40 years at the college and pro level, before retiring from a full-time on-field role with the Broncos after the 2022 season. In Denver, he was part of the staff that won Super Bowl 50 in 2016. And now, he will forever be recognized for his time as a player.

“I say I’m getting elected into the Hall, but this is really for everybody that I’ve known and played with the whole time,” Kollar said of whom he attributes the Hall honor to. “I want them to be a part of it. I obviously couldn’t have done it any way in the world without everybody who backed me over the years.”

BILL KOLLAR: UP CLOSE

- Named a First Team All-American in 1973, Second Team All-American in 1972 and a three-time First Team All-Big Sky performer.
- Registered 107 tackles, one sack, three pass break ups and three fumble recoveries in 1973.
- Led the Bobcats to the 1972 Big Sky Championship and an 8-3 record as the 1972 Big Sky Defensive Player of the Year.
- Played for head coach Sonny Holland.
- Becomes the first Montana State player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



LUKE KUECHLY

Boston College • Linebacker • 2009-11



Luke Kuechly's dedication to the classroom indirectly led to his passion for college football at an early age.

"I grew up loving the game of football," Kuechly said. "I would play grade school football, and then I would get home, and I always played on Saturdays, and the first thing you do is turn on that noon football game. It's been a big part of my life for a long time.

"College football was my real first love, because it was the first thing I had the opportunity to watch. On Sundays I had to do homework, so I didn't get to watch more football. I watched college games from noon to the last SEC or Pac-10 game at night till midnight."

So, it only made sense that Kuechly would go to play at an academically elite school like Boston College, where he left after three years to become a Top-10 pick, then worked through several off seasons to earn his degree.

Classwork was always the non-negotiable part in the Kuechly household. That same disciplinarian approach took the linebacker to heights unseen, as he dominated at every level of football he played. Now, Kuechly can call himself a College Football Hall of Famer, becoming the eighth former Eagles player to enter the Hall.

"It starts really with your parents," Kuechly said of whom he credits for his success. "They set you up for everything from when you're a little kid, from driving you to practice to washing your gear, to making sure you're fed. Then, obviously, football is the ultimate team sport. I had great coaches at all levels. I had really good teammates everywhere: in grade school, high school, college and in the NFL. Football is the ultimate team game."

Kuechly starred at Cincinnati prep powerhouse St. Xavier, which was the alma mater of then-Boston College coach Tom O'Brien. The St. Xavier-to-BC pipeline included center Pat Ross and defensive ends Alex Albright and Nick Larkin — all of whom ended up serving as team captains during their time in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Just like Kuechly, who made a strong

impression from Day 1 as a college player, leading the ACC in tackles with 158, which was good for No. 2 nationally. He led the nation in tackles in both his sophomore and junior seasons. By the time Kuechly's BC career was over, he finished with the second-most tackles in NCAA history, with 532 — in just three seasons.

Despite BC having just 12 games during its bowl-less 2011 season, Kuechly finished just two tackles shy of the FBS single-season record of 193, which had been accomplished in 14 games.

"I just think the toughness and the effort that we played with at BC was really good," Kuechly said. "I don't think we were given much of a choice. You had to be tough. You had to show up. And effort wasn't something that was really talked about; it was expected."

A two-time First Team All-American, Kuechly won nearly every major national defensive award in 2011, earning the Bronko Nagurski Trophy, the Butkus Award, the Rotary Lombardi Award and the Lott IMPACT Trophy. He finished his BC career with seven interceptions, 10 pass breakups, two forced fumbles, four fumble recoveries and three sacks. He calls the BC brotherhood his best memory from his time on The Heights.

"The guys on the team, the buddies that I have," Kuechly said. "There's a group of seven or eight of us who talk on a regular basis. I don't know if 'proud' is the right word, but the guys who I played with are great friends. When I look back at that time, I can obviously share some games and different things (as memories), but the biggest was the guys I was fortunate to play with."

The Carolina Panthers drafted him No. 9 overall in 2012, the start of an eight-year career with one franchise that featured five Pro Bowl nods and an appearance in Super Bowl 50.



Kuechly's commitment to education continued, and by 2015 he earned his BC degree in business marketing during his NFL career. He retired in 2019, capping his career with a final Pro Bowl selection. He is currently a commentator for the Panthers' radio broadcast team.

"I love the game of football," Kuechly said. "I think it would be weird for me not to have it in there in some facet of my life. From fourth grade on, every year you do the same thing. You go to training camp. It's ingrained in my body."

LUKE KUECHLY: UP CLOSE

- Twice named First Team All-American, unanimous in 2010 and consensus in 2011.
- Made a "clean sweep" of national defensive honors in 2011, including the Bronko Nagurski Trophy, the Butkus Award, the Rotary Lombardi Award and the Lott IMPACT Trophy.
- Amassed a combined three-year total of 532 career total tackles, which ranks second in NCAA history, 14.0 total tackles per game, which places him No. 1 in NCAA history, and 7.87 solo tackles per game, which places him second in NCAA annals.
- Played for head coach Frank Spaziani.
- Becomes the eighth Eagles player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

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HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



JEREMY MACLIN

University of Missouri • Wide Receiver/Kick Returner • 2007-08



Gary Pinkel's favorite memory of Jeremy Maclin was when Maclin committed to Missouri. That's not because Maclin peaked in high school — far from it. But because Maclin was everything that everyone thought he would be, giving the Tigers the instant shot of credibility that Pinkel needed to build his program on and off the field.

"When he committed to us over Oklahoma, all of a sudden it was OK to go to Missouri," Pinkel said. "And the trickle down of that would be significant at the highest level, so it worked in many, many ways."

It worked out as well as humanly possible. Maclin helped lead Missouri to one of the greatest runs in program history, and he can now call himself a College Football Hall of Famer, becoming the eighth Mizzou to claim the title. He also joins Pinkel, his coach, who made the Hall last year for his work on the sidelines of Toledo and Missouri.

"I know several of my players eventually will be in it, but it was so neat when we found out Jeremy got in," Pinkel said. "It was so well deserved. What a great player. He was a great player in the NFL, and a guy that had a huge impact on our football program."

Maclin was a highly touted player out of Kirkwood High, just outside St. Louis. He had knee surgery the summer before his freshman year, so he took a redshirt in 2006. By the time he was finally ready to take the field in 2007, the anticipation had grown both internally and externally. And Maclin made good on that promise by amassing 227 all-purpose yards and two touchdowns — one receiving, one punt return — in a 40-34 win over rival Illinois in St. Louis' Edward Jones Dome, setting the tone for a special season to come.

"It gave me faith and confidence all over again," Maclin said of the performance in Steve Richardson's 2008 book, "Then Pinkel Said to Smith ...". "I did that in front of my home crowd, and it just made me enjoy football again. All my doubts went out the window."

Missouri ended up going 11-1 in the regular season, knocking off undefeated No. 2 Kansas in

the border showdown in Kansas City to become No. 1 in the AP poll for the first time since 1960, clinching a berth in the Big 12 title game. The Tigers lost to Oklahoma for a second time the following week, but went on to rout Arkansas, 37-8, in the Cotton Bowl, finishing 12-2 and at No. 4 in the AP poll.

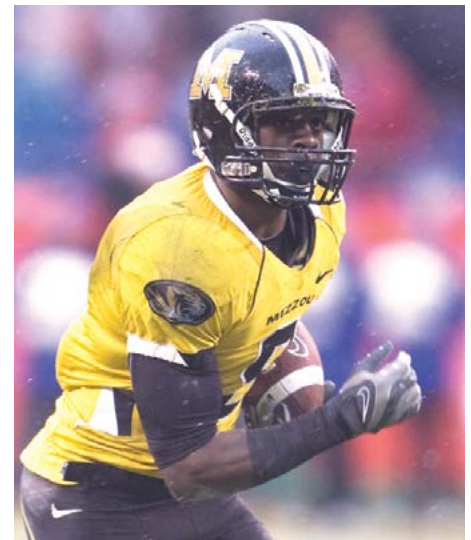
Missouri went 10-4 the following season, finishing 19th in the AP poll, with Maclin capping his college career by winning offensive MVP honors in an Alamo Bowl win over Northwestern.

Maclin is the only Missouri player to be named a two-time First Team All-American. His 2007 season is the stuff of legend, with his 198.3 all-purpose yards per game as a freshman setting an NCAA record. He had nine receiving touchdowns, four rushing touchdowns, two punt return touchdowns and one kick return touchdown, becoming the first freshman to score touchdowns in all four ways. His 202.4 all-purpose yards per game were an FBS high, and the fourth-most in a single season at the time.

Missouri won the Big 12 North title in both of Maclin's playing years.

"He was not hard to evaluate," Pinkel said. "It was not difficult. He went through our system like anybody else because I don't care if a guy will be a Heisman finalist or whatnot, but at the end of day, he had everything. He was a good person, very humble, phenomenal competitor, a guy who really is a good teammate. A captain. He's a guy who filled so many roles, but his impact that he had was huge for us getting the program back to a national level."

Maclin finished his college career with 182 receptions for 2,315 yards and 22 touchdowns, along with 91 carries for 668 yards and three



rushing scores. He had 48 punt returns for 577 yards and three touchdowns, plus 85 kick returns for 2,049 yards and two touchdowns. His career receiving yards rank No. 5 in school history, and he has nine of the top-20 single-game all-purpose yard performances in school history — despite playing for just two seasons.

The Eagles drafted Maclin 19th overall in 2009, and he spent nine NFL seasons across Philadelphia, Kansas City and Baltimore, making the Pro Bowl with the Eagles in 2014. Maclin is now the head football coach at Kirkwood, his alma mater, and he founded the J-Mac Gives Back charitable foundation, which supports underprivileged children.

"You throw it all together, and we are so all proud," Pinkel said. "The Missouri Tigers are so proud to see him go into the College Football Hall of Fame."

JEREMY MACLIN: UP CLOSE

- Only Tiger ever named a two-time First Team All-American, claiming consensus honors in 2007 and 2008.
- Holds the NCAA record for all-purpose yards as a freshman (198.3 ypg in 2007) and led the FBS in all-purpose ypg (202.4) in 2008.
- Broke school records for all-purpose yards in a career (5,609), single season (2,833 in 2008), finishing career with 182 receptions for 2,315 yards and 22 touchdowns, adding 91 career rushes for 668 yards and three touchdowns on the ground while returning 48 punts for 577 yards and three touchdowns and 85 kickoffs for 2,049 yards and two touchdowns.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame Coach Gary Pinkel.
- Becomes the eighth Mizzou player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



TERANCE MATHIS

University of New Mexico • Wide Receiver • 1985-87, 1989



If Ben Griffith had not left his offensive coordinator role at Georgia Southern to take a similar job at New Mexico, Terance Mathis may not have had the opportunity to play Division I-A football as an offensive player. And if Mathis had not played for the Lobos, the college football world might have missed out on one of the most dynamic playmakers in the sport's history.

"I think New Mexico is where I was supposed to be," Mathis said. "God intended for me to be there. I received letters from a lot of schools all over the country. A lot of schools looked at me as a defensive back. I didn't see myself playing in the SEC at that time at my size as a defensive back, especially when all my life I had been an offensive guy.

"It was great that I had an offensive coordinator who believed in me, and a head coach who saw me as more than a quarterback. I was a football player, an athlete, and they utilized my abilities to the best of their ability."

"Football player" may best describe Mathis' role on the field. And that jack-of-all-trades distinction is what has helped him become the second former New Mexico player to make the College Football Hall of Fame — and the first offensive Lobos player to make it.

Mathis went to New Mexico as a quarterback, and he was immersed in all of the QB meetings as a freshman. He was far down the depth chart, as most first-year players were, but head coach Joe Lee Dunn insisted on finding a way to get Mathis on the field as quickly as possible. The staff ran a run-and-shoot offense, and it tried Mathis out in the slot receiver role. He made enough of a first impression as a pass-catcher that wideout became his primary position — not that a position could truly define what Mathis brought to the table.

"I never went to a wide receiver meeting; I was always in the quarterback meeting room," Mathis said. "And that's where I learned to be as, you put it, as dynamic as I could be, because I was learning the defense and I knew what everybody on offense was doing.

"So, I was taught a lot by Coach Griffith at that time. And when (new head coach)

Mike Sheppard came in, he just took it to a different level."

A multi-sport star out of Redan High in Stone Mountain, Georgia, Mathis had been unfamiliar with his eventual college destination, a place where he would also end up playing on the hardwood for a brief period. More than a half-dozen school records later, Mathis became synonymous with New Mexico.

"The only thing I knew about the state, the school and the city was The Pit, the world-renowned basketball arena," Mathis said. "I didn't know much more about the state at all, the area or the school. But after doing research I became familiar with it and fell in love with the area."

He later added, laughing: "During the first semester I was really homesick, and I used to call my mom collect almost every day. And after awhile she said, 'Stop calling me collect. You're wasting my money. Get it together and grow up.'"

Mathis is the only player in school history with at least 250 receptions, 4,000 receiving yards and 6,000 all-purpose yards. He ended his college career as the NCAA career leader in receptions and receiving yards.

The Jets drafted Mathis in the sixth round of the 1990 NFL Draft, the start of a 13-year career across three teams. He made the Pro Bowl with the Falcons in 1994 and caught a touchdown in Super Bowl XXXIII.

Mathis remains in the Atlanta area, where he is active in both the football and the charity community, as he has coached at both the high school and college level and has been a partner in several events to benefit the Emory ALS Center.

"I've said it many times: I couldn't have done



this by myself," Mathis said. "There's no way I could've done this by myself. There have been so many people in my life — family-wise, friends-wise, teammates-wise. My teammates were phenomenal. They made sure that I played at a high level. And I felt like I owed them to play at a high level because they expected it from me.

"From the administration to students to players and athletes from other sports, it's about them. I want them to be proud of not what I've done, but of the University of New Mexico."

TERANCE MATHIS: UP CLOSE

- Named a 1989 consensus First Team All-American and a Third Team All-American in 1987 (making him both the Lobos' first consensus and first two-time All-American).
- Finished his career as the NCAA's all-time leader in career receptions (263) and receiving yards (4,254) and also set NCAA records for most games with a touchdown reception (26) and kickoff returns for a touchdown (3).
- Became the first player in NCAA history with more than 200 receptions, 4,000 receiving yards and 6,000 all-purpose yards in a career.
- Played for head coaches Joe Lee Dunn and Mike Sheppard.
- Becomes the second player in Lobos history to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



BRYANT MCKINNIE

University of Miami (FL) • Offensive Tackle • 2000-01



Bryant McKinnie remembers getting breakfast with his family the morning after Miami had snapped its five-year losing streak to rival Florida State. While browsing one of the local newspapers, McKinnie’s family was thrilled to see that he was highlighted as one of the standout offensive players from the game, along with Ken Dorsey and Jeremy Shockey.

“That was my moment where people say I may have arrived,” McKinnie said. “Because I was kind of under the radar. You didn’t really know who I was. This was my first big challenge.”

McKinnie had redshirted the previous season, after transferring from Lackawanna College in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Before long, the college world would become intimately aware of him. Especially opposing defensive linemen.

Fast forward to that season’s Sugar Bowl, and McKinnie impressed against Florida standout pass rusher Alex Brown in a Hurricanes win. That week also featured some FSU flavor, albeit indirectly.

“It’s the only time I ever cheered for Florida State that season,” McKinnie said. “If they won (in the Orange Bowl), we would’ve split the national championship. However, we didn’t.

“That’s why we don’t rely on them,” he added, laughing.

McKinnie could joke about it, as he helped Miami win its fifth national championship just one year later, in the 2001 season. Now, he has become the ninth former Hurricanes player to make the College Football Hall of Fame.

McKinnie’s stat line is legendary — a rarity for a left tackle. He did not allow a single sack during his Miami career. He won the Outland Trophy in 2001 and finished eighth in the Heisman Trophy voting. Miami went 23-1 during McKinnie’s two years of playing. The program never finished a season lower than No. 2. His offense averaged 5.3 yards per carry during the historic 2001 season.

“I played with a lot of offensive linemen throughout my career, and he’s hands-down the best,” former Miami running back Jarrett Payton said. “You talk about what you look for out of a teammate and what you’re looking for

as a friend, he was always there for me. We were very close when I was at Miami — me, him and Vernon Carey. If you saw one of us, you saw all three of us together. So, I got a chance to know him as a person. I watched him work to be just so dominant on the left side. He didn’t give up a sack back then; it’s insane to think about for him, as a guy playing left tackle.

“But he not only worked so hard, he also was a guy that kind of brought everybody together. Being such a towering human being over everybody, he always had a real kind heart and made sure that everybody was on the same page, and I think that’s what made him special not only as a football player, but also as a leader and as a friend.”

McKinnie credits his teammates and coaches for his success, recalling the hype in the lead-up to a game against fellow Hall inductee Dwight Freeney and Syracuse in 2001. A national magazine had done a spread dubbing Freeney the “Sack Master,” featuring an illustration of Freeney carrying a Santa-like bag with helmets of opponents whose quarterbacks he had sacked. McKinnie stayed late for film study with Mario Cristobal, then a graduate assistant with Miami, and the message was simple: Either McKinnie gives up a sack, or he doesn’t. With ESPN’s “College GameDay” in town, McKinnie and Miami were flawless in a 59-0 win.

The Vikings drafted McKinnie No. 7 overall the following spring, and he made a Pro Bowl (2009) and won a Super Bowl (XLVII) across a 12-year career with three different teams. McKinnie founded the B Major Foundation, which provides resources to single-parent households and promotes AIDS awareness among youth. He is also the COO of the translation company LetzChat, and the lessons from the gridiron have guided his business sense in the boardroom.



“I’ve been on teams in college and in the NFL that have made it to the highest levels, and I ask what did we do in both situations? What’s in common?” McKinnie said. “There’s been a lot of camaraderie outside the sport. Off the field, everyone gets along great and has each other’s back. When you get in there, you don’t want to let the person down next to you. You want to hold up your end of the bargain. I apply that to business.”

BRYANT MCKINNIE: UP CLOSE

- Named a unanimous First Team All-American in 2001, claiming the Outland Trophy as the best interior lineman in the nation.
- Anchored an offensive line that averaged 5.3 yards per rushing attempt and 43.2 points per game in 2001.
- Never allowed a single sack during his entire college career, playing a key role on an offensive unit that ranked No. 2 in 2000 and No. 3 in 2001 nationally in total offense.
- Played for head coaches Larry Coker and Butch Davis.
- Becomes the ninth Hurricane player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

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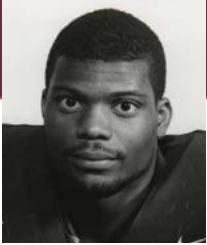
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HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



COREY MOORE

Virginia Tech • Defensive Lineman • 1997-99



Before Virginia Tech became the Virginia Tech that dominated the East Coast for the better part of two decades, the Hokies were an upstart program needing to do more with less to succeed. They needed to take chances on recruits who may have slipped through the cracks elsewhere, and they needed to develop those recruits into legitimate pro prospects.

In short, they needed guys like Corey Moore, a 212-pound defensive lineman who caught the eye of assistants Bud Foster and Charley Wiles. Without Moore, there might not be a run to the national title game. Without Moore, the Hokies might not land in the ACC a few years later. Without Moore, who knows if Coach Frank Beamer's program becomes the symbol of excellence the nation remembers it as today?

Moore arrived at Virginia Tech in 1996. He left Blacksburg as one of the most decorated players in program history. And he can now call himself a College Football Hall of Famer, becoming the fifth Hokie player to make the Hall.

"I take a lot of pride in that," Moore said of helping to build Virginia Tech into the brand it became. "That's something that my former teammates and I talk about all the time. But prior to arriving there, I could sense that it was a program on the rise, and that's kind of how Coach Wiles sold it to me.

"I saw them play a couple times here and there. I was familiar with the program a little bit, but Coach Wiles could sell anything. He felt like it was about to be a gold mine there, and they were definitely on the rise. He saw me fitting into what they did defensively. He just made me feel like one of the guys."

Moore was more than just that. He became the Big East's first two-time Defensive Player of the Year. He won both the Bronko Nagurski Trophy and the Lombardi Award in 1999, given to the nation's best defensive player and best lineman, respectively.

He redshirted in 1996, then across the next three years amassed 166 tackles — including 58 for loss — to go with 35 sacks, six forced fumbles and three blocked kicks.

Most importantly, he made Virginia Tech nationally relevant, leading the Hokies to their first perfect regular season in 81 years, as the program made it all the way to the Sugar Bowl for the national title game against Florida State.

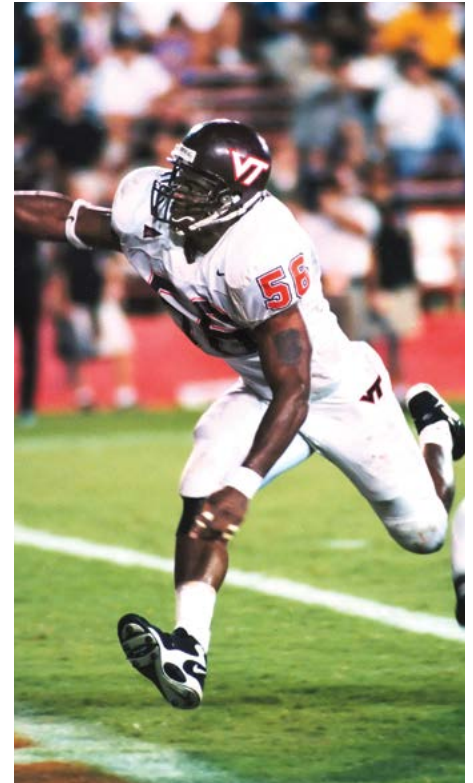
"We felt like we had what it took to go undefeated and contend for the national championship," Moore said. "You had Michael Vick as your starting quarterback; we felt like defensively if we shut teams down, we were going to be able to win this game, because teams weren't going to be able to score with us.

"So, I would say the Clemson game (a 31-11 early season win) was definitely one when I realized, OK, we could run the table with this. And I think when we got Syracuse at home and drilled them (62-0) — as I like to say, took them to the woodshed — that was another game where I said, OK, if we stay focused and take it one game at a time, we've got this."

Virginia Tech retired Moore's No. 56 jersey in 2010, an honor he could not have seen coming when he was a kid growing up and playing ball in Brownsville, Tennessee.

"I thought back a little bit to all of my mentors," Moore said, reflecting on his latest distinction as a Hall of Famer. "I thought back to my high school coaches who pushed me to play, because I was just a kid playing because my friend group played sports, so I played sports. But I was always the academic one, the smart one or whatnot, so I thought of that.

"I thought of Coach Charley Wiles, because without Coach Wiles my time at Virginia Tech doesn't take place. He was the first coach who believed in me and went to bat for me, and was the reason why I went to Virginia Tech. He believed in me all the way through, and we still have a great, great relationship to this day.



Coach Foster, Coach Beamer, they all took a liking to me and eventually they believed in me and trusted Coach Wiles."

Moore is currently the assistant dean for academic advising and student success at the University of Kentucky's college of nursing, having spent nearly his entire adult life working in higher education.

"Once I started working with college students, I was like, OK, I kind of like this. This is kind of cool, and I like the flexibility. And I like the college environment, so I just stuck with it," Moore said.

COREY MOORE: UP CLOSE

- Named a two-time First Team All-American, including unanimous honors in 1999 while also earning Big East Defensive Player of the Year honors twice.
- In 1999, became the first player in history to claim both Lombardi Award and Bronko Nagurski Trophy in the same season.
- Finished his career with 166 tackles, 58 tackles for loss, 35 sacks, four pass breakups, three fumble recoveries (including one returned for a touchdown), six forced fumbles and three blocked kicks.
- Played for Hall of Fame Coach Frank Beamer.
- Becomes the fifth Virginia Tech player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



MICHAEL STONEBREAKER

University of Notre Dame • Linebacker • 1986, 1988, 1990



Michael Stonebreaker was always regarded as an instinctual football player, a guy who knew what the offense was going to run better than the offense itself. He could hit hard, yes, but what gave the linebacker a leg up was his understated intensity, a mind that was always working and a gifted body that was always keeping up.

If you ask Stonebreaker, though, he was simply the product of strong football influences. His father, Steve, played in the NFL for seven years. His high school coach, J.T. Curtis, is the second-winningest high school coach in American history and a guy who has coached 14 NFL players. And his defensive coordinators in college, Foge Fazio and Barry Alvarez (who would later enter the College Football Hall of Fame for his accomplishments as a head coach at Wisconsin), were two of the best defensive minds of their time.

“Fundamentally sound football,” Stonebreaker said of his gridiron education.

Sometimes it’s as simple as that, which explains why Stonebreaker can now call himself a College Football Hall of Famer, becoming the 49th Notre Dame player to make the Hall, which is the most of any school. And Stonebreaker accomplished the honor as a member of the Irish’s last national title team, to boot.

Stonebreaker’s father played for the Saints, so the family made New Orleans their home. Stonebreaker grew up watching LSU more than any other program, and the Tigers recruited him hard. Fazio had recruited him while he was the defensive coordinator at Pitt, and Pete Cordelli recruited him while Cordelli was an assistant at Minnesota under Lou Holtz (a 2008 College Football Hall of Fame inductee). All three of those coaches ended up at Notre Dame in 1986, and the Irish eventually won Stonebreaker over on his visit.

Even then, though, he was joining a program that was coming off a losing season, which led to a coaching change and the hiring of Holtz. Everything changed quickly for the Irish. In Stonebreaker’s third year, he made 104 tackles for the school’s 1988 national championship

team. He finished third in the voting that year for the Butkus Award, which is given to the nation’s best linebacker.

“My greatest memory from my time at Notre Dame? I would say that after being there a couple years, you kind of get to know the feeling of what it is to play at Notre Dame, and then being able to turn the program to a winning program and seeing the amount of fans and support you have across the country,” Stonebreaker said. “Because whatever stadium we went to seemed like a home game for us, because the Notre Dame community travels so strong and it’s nationwide.”

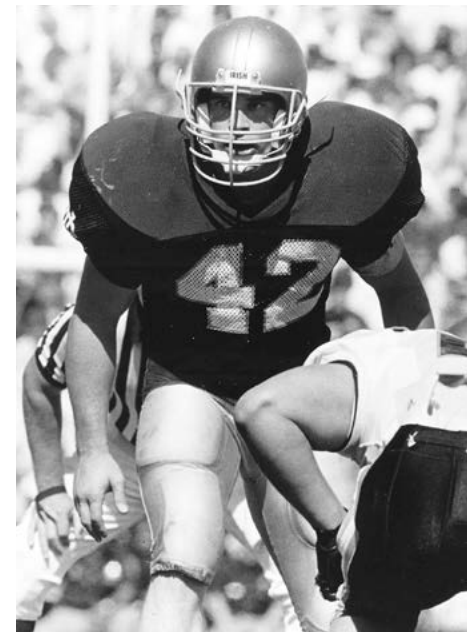
Stonebreaker led Notre Dame in tackles in 1990, a year that saw the Irish make the Orange Bowl. He came up with clutch takeaways in three different wins over ranked teams that season: an interception against No. 4 Michigan, a pick against No. 24 Michigan State and a fumble recovery against No. 2 Miami.

“Back then Notre Dame was on TV every Saturday,” Stonebreaker said. “You didn’t have all the exposure that you have now in college sports, so we were the big ticket coming to town. So, we always knew that no matter what team we played we were going to get their best game.”

A unanimous All-American that season, Stonebreaker exited South Bend, Indiana, with 220 career tackles, eight pass breakups, five interceptions and one touchdown.

“When I got to Notre Dame, I was prepared for the college game,” he said, referring to his high school, Louisiana’s John Curtis Christian.

Stonebreaker spent three years in the NFL before joining the Frankfurt Galaxy of the World League in 1995. Since 2005, he has owned and operated N.O. Brew Coffee, which is distributed to grocery stores nationwide.



He is a parent of four, so making it back to Notre Dame isn’t always so easy. But he keeps tabs on the Irish from afar, and the memories have all come flooding back for him as he reflects on the accomplishments that netted him the Hall of Fame honor.

“I think at every level you have people that are older and more experienced than you that you come in contact with,” Stonebreaker said. “On my high school team, I stuck with linebackers. Troy Wetzel and Darren Marlborough were starters ahead of me, so you watched them. At Notre Dame, Mike Kovaleski was the starter. He took me under his wing a little bit and helped me navigate things. So, you find people like that who help you in those early stages, and it’s your job to develop and understand the system. Barry Alvarez was helping you understand the defense, and then you figure it all out.”

MICHAEL STONEBREAKER: UP CLOSE

- Named a First Team All-American twice, earning consensus honors in 1988 and unanimous laurels in 1990.
- Finished third in the Butkus Award voting in both 1988 and 1990.
- Registered 104 tackles, the second most on the 1988 national championship team, tallying 220 career tackles, eight pass breakups and five interceptions, including one returned for a touchdown.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame Coach Lou Holtz.
- Becomes the 49th Notre Dame player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



TIM TEBOW

University of Florida • Quarterback • 2006-09



Tim Tebow was in work mode, the way everyone else on the ESPN set seemed to be on the afternoon of the College Football Playoff national championship game. The pregame show took a brief break from previewing that night's TCU-Georgia tilt to unveil the upcoming class for the NFF College Football Hall of Fame, as has become tradition on the last day of the season.

Eighteen of this year's inductees had already heard the good news, most of them through the shipment of a commemorative football that had arrived in the mail days earlier informing them of their selection and urging them to keep quiet. Tebow was the 19th inductee. And he was in the dark.

"The singularly most impactful college football quarterback of the last generation, but perhaps ever to play," ESPN host Joe Tessitore said on the air. "Two national championships. A Heisman Trophy. 'Timmy, congratulations.'"

And with that, NFF president and CEO Steve Hatchell appeared on the SoFi Stadium field to deliver Tebow his own football, informing the Florida great of his inclusion with this year's class of Hall of Famers.

"Being there with colleagues and the surprise, I think that was really special," Tebow said. "I think it's also special because it's not something that I was thinking would even come at a time like that. And then just to be honored among so many amazing players, friends of mine, peers, people who I look up to. I love the way they play. I think it's just really special."

Tebow may have been the only one surprised by the news. He is, as Tessitore said, a defining player for an entire generation of college football fans across the country. Whether it was his passionate "promise" speech in the aftermath of a loss to Ole Miss — a moment that ended up setting the course for a national title run — or his iconic garnet-stained jersey amid a win at rival Florida State later that same season, Tebow captivated the sport from the start of his career till its very end, a journey that statistics — bold as his are — fail to truly encapsulate.

Tebow was a two-time team captain with

the Gators, setting 28 school records and 14 SEC records. He was a three-time conference offensive player of the year, a three-time Heisman finalist and a two-time Maxwell Award winner. Then, of course, there were those two national championships and his Heisman Trophy win in 2007, when he became the first sophomore to win the award. And yet, Tebow points to another moment as his greatest memory from his time in Gainesville.

"I could give a lot of different games, but I think if I were just to give you one, I would probably say running out of the tunnel my senior year for the last regular season game and my last game at the Swamp against probably our biggest rival in Florida State — I hate even saying their name," Tebow said, laughing. "And I just remember running out of the tunnel and running to go see Coach (Urban) Meyer, my parents, my teammates — several of them I had been with all four years. It was just an emotional day because you had 90,000 people and a lot of them were crying and I was crying. I get to go hug (Brandon) Spikes, (Riley) Cooper and one of the Pounceys, but we just had such a special team bond."

The lefty's off-field accomplishments may even outnumber his on-field triumphs, as Tebow won the William V. Campbell Trophy — known as the academic Heisman — in 2009. He is just the fourth Campbell Trophy recipient to make the Hall, and just the 10th former Florida player.

He established the Tim Tebow Foundation in 2010, with the charity focusing on special needs ministries, orphan care and prevention, children with medical needs and anti-human trafficking. Tebow still scratches that gridiron itch through his current role with ESPN, where he has become an integral part of the network's college



football coverage, and where he continues to use his platform to spread his message.

"I love what I get to do," Tebow said. "I love being in the environments and the atmospheres. I love getting to interview and be a part and share my heart and passion and love for the game. But then it's also fun when I get to have one-on-one conversations behind the scenes with players and just encourage them because I've been in their shoes; not stuff that even makes it on camera. But the pressure that's on them and just be able to support them and care for them, I love that as well."

TIM TEBOW: UP CLOSE

- Named a consensus First Team All-American in 2007, claiming the 2007 Heisman Trophy, repeating as a Heisman finalist in 2008 and 2009, and twice winning the Maxwell Award.
- Led Florida to two BCS National Championships and a 48-7 career record while personally setting five NCAA, 14 conference and 28 school records.
- Threw for 9,285 yards and 88 touchdowns while also rushing for 2,947 yards and 55 touchdowns in his career, becoming the first player in NCAA history to rush and pass for at least 20 touchdowns in a season.
- Played for head coach Urban Meyer.
- Becomes the 10th Gator player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



TROY VINCENT SR.

University of Wisconsin • Defensive Back • 1988-91



Troy Vincent learned how to win in life by losing on the football field.

That may sound like an oxymoron, but to understand how Wisconsin became the power program that it is today, one must return three decades when Vincent and his cohorts began ushering in a culture change that resulted in Madison, Wisconsin, becoming a gridiron hotbed. The wins for the Badgers came later, not long after Vincent left his mark. And now he can call himself one of 12 former Wisconsin players to make the College Football Hall of Fame.

“Immediately I just go back to the recruiter, Bob Babich at Wisconsin; he was my recruiter under the Don Morton Era till Coach (Barry) Alvarez came in,” Vincent said of his reaction to learning he had made the Hall. “And I started thinking about Coach Alvarez and the teachings, and you just start thinking about who impacted my life at that particular time: my teammates.

“We weren’t a very good football team. And when I read the press release afterward, it’s like, ‘This kid won nine football games in four years, OK?’ It was a special time in my life because I learned how to win in losing, if that makes any sense. Coach Paul Jette, if not for him I’m not sure where I would be as a college football player. He was my position coach during that era that just turned my performance around. That’s what I thought about; through that time it’s just been all of the individuals that have touched my life during that time period.”

Vincent became the first player under Alvarez, who was inducted into the Hall for his coaching accomplishments in 2010, to earn First Team All-America honors, in 1991. He was the Big Ten’s Co-Defensive Player of the Year, too. He amassed 192 tackles, 31 passes defended and four interceptions across four college seasons, and he tallied 773 punt return yards and three touchdowns on special teams.

The defensive back bridged the Morton era to the Alvarez era. And when Vincent sees all that Wisconsin football accomplished in wake of his career — a Rose Bowl win in 1993 served as a breakthrough point — he feels a great deal of pride.

“When we think of Badger Culture today in the modern era, it underscores the values of leadership, character, tenacity, teamwork,” Vincent said. “And that reputation precedes any athlete post their playing experience at the University of Wisconsin. Doesn’t matter. When you leave from there and you happen to play pro, whether it’s basketball, football, hockey, baseball, track, that reputation of leadership, they’re coachable, they’re high-character kids, tenacity, they’re tough, resilient, they’re team players, that precedes all of us. And that’s what I learned.

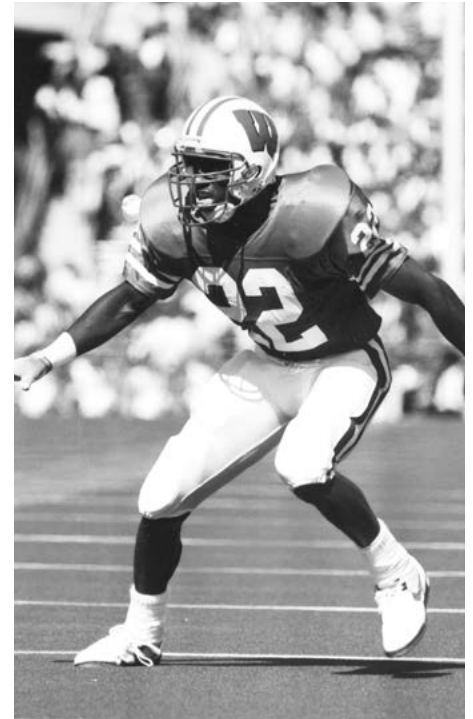
“Many would say: ‘He was a much better pro than he was college (player).’ No, I was a dynamic college player. We didn’t score many points, we weren’t the Wisconsin of today, but man, I’m a better father because of the Wisconsin culture. I’m a better leader today because of Coach Alvarez.”

Vincent recalled Alvarez’ ability to get his teammates to change their mindset, saying he would tell them: “I want you all to look on the board. This is how we dress today for practice. Everyone looks alike. Everyone dresses alike.

“It was the first time I ever heard the word primadonna. ‘We have no primadonnas here. We will not accept primadonnas. Primadonnas will not be tolerated.’ [Alvarez told us.] OK, Coach. What does primadonna mean? And that was team.”

Vincent dominated on the NFL stage, making five Pro Bowls and winning the 2002 Walter Payton Man of the Year award during a 15-year career that spanned four teams. His influence on the game continues through his current role as the executive vice president of football operations for the NFL, after serving as president of the players association.

He and his wife, Tommi, have five children, and the family started Love Thy Neighbor, a



foundation that is dedicated to positive change in young people’s lives. Vincent says football has given him more than he could ever give back. He is most proud of his family, and the role and platform that athletics has given them. He recalls laughing to himself at the Ohio State banquet of his son Taron, who played on the Buckeye defensive line from 2018-22, as it reminded him of how far his family had come.

“They’re talking about the class of 2018 under Coach (Urban) Meyer and they said, ‘Hey, if you’re in this room as a parent your son was 55-7,’” Vincent said. “I said, ‘Hello, I was 9-35.’ So, throughout this time I’ve just been thankful for the university in particular. That wasn’t the Wisconsin that we see today. It was the years after I left they start rolling people up.”

TROY VINCENT SR.: UP CLOSE

- Named a First Team All-American, Big Ten Co-Defensive Player of the Year and Jim Thorpe Award runner-up in 1991.
- Amassed 192 tackles, 31 passes defended and four interceptions during his time in Madison.
- Recorded 66 punt returns for 773 yards and three touchdowns and returned 22 kickoffs for 485 yards.
- Played for head coaches Don Morton and Hall of Fame Coach Barry Alvarez.
- Becomes the 11th Wisconsin player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



BRIAN WESTBROOK

Villanova University • Running Back • 1997-98, 2000-01



Brian Westbrook rewrote the job description for running backs. He wrote the Villanova record books while in college, too. So it is no surprise to see that Westbrook has now become the first former Wildcats player to make the College Football Hall of Fame, joining former coach Andy Talley as the other program member to make the Hall.

“It means an awful lot to me,” Westbrook said of being the first Villanova player to earn Hall honors. “Howie Long is a Villanova great. Brian Finneran is a Villanova great. Those guys are not in. So, for me to be the first from a program that has great players like those guys is super special to me, and super special to the Villanova community.”

“When you go there you understand it is a community. It’s truly an environment that allows young people to grow and be educated, but also on the sports side to flourish. And because of that, I was able to become the player that I became.”

What Westbrook became at Villanova was one of the most decorated players in college football history, at any level. In 1998, he became the first player in college history to finish with 1,000 rushing yards and 1,000 receiving yards in a single season. He was the Wildcats’ first three-time First Team All-American. He won the Walter Payton Award in 2001 as the nation’s top FCS player.

Westbrook amassed 9,512 career all-purpose yards, an NCAA record for any division. Reaching the single-season 1,000-yard mark in both rushing and receiving was a goal for Westbrook. So, too, was reaching 1,000 return yards on top of that, a feat he almost accomplished by tallying a combined 836 kick and punt return yards.

“It was special to me,” Westbrook said of his accomplishments. “But those things certainly were not all Brian Westbrook. It was me with the ball in my hands and catching it, but so many people went into those achievements that it’s almost hard to thank everyone, because so many people put me in position to succeed.”

A Fort Washington, Maryland, native, Westbrook was heavily recruited during his junior prep campaign at DeMatha High before

he tore his ACL. This was 1996, not 2023, and information was not readily available in recruiting circles. And ACL recovery was not what it is now.

So, a lot of schools had soured on Westbrook. But not Richmond, Maryland or Villanova, whose lead recruiter on Westbrook happened to be Stan Drayton, now the head coach at Temple. (And his first offensive coordinator with the ‘Cats was Dave Clawson, the current Wake Forest head coach.)

“Villanova came to see me play basketball and was very interested,” Westbrook said. “I understood that it was a great academic school. I was going to be able to get my business degree. I also knew they had a great alumni network, and I would have job opportunities after school.”

Westbrook wouldn’t need to tap into that network for quite awhile, as the jack-of-all-trades was drafted by the Eagles in the third round in 2002. He spent eight seasons in Philadelphia, plus one in San Francisco, making two Pro Bowls and earning a first-team All-Pro nod in 2007.

“For me to be able to not only go to school there but understand the passion of Villanova fans, which in turn helped me to understand the passion of Philly fans for teams and players, it was super special,” Westbrook said. “I’m from D.C., but because I went to Villanova and stayed home to play (in the NFL), they accepted me as their son. That was part of it.”

“Not only as a player there, but as a beloved son of the city. Even when I’m there now it’s extra special because I have the opportunity to be around the most passionate and knowledgeable fans who will love you for a lifetime, and that



continues to shine through even though I haven’t played in quite some time.”

Westbrook has remained active in the sports media space and is managing director of Athlete Entrepreneur Network, which helps athletes bridge the gap from retirement to the real world, a process that he stresses begins much earlier than actual retirement. That process began on and off the field at Villanova, where he got on-the-job training, carving out his own unique path.

“If I go to a bigger school, I’m probably being handed the ball an awful lot because they have All-Americans at every other position,” Westbrook said. “At Villanova, I was blessed to get the opportunity to understand coverages and all the different things that make an offensive player better, understand what defenses are expecting and how to counteract that defensively. I was able to get things at Villanova that I probably would not have been able to get otherwise.”

BRIAN WESTBROOK: UP CLOSE

- Named a First Team All-American three times while also claiming the 2001 Walter Payton Award as the best Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) player in the nation.
- Broke the NCAA All-Divisions record with 9,512 career all-purpose yards and became the only player in the history of college football at any level to rush for 1,000 yards and receive for 1,000 yards in the same season (1,046 rushing, 1,144 receiving).
- Rushed for 4,298 yards and 54 touchdowns in his career, averaging 6.2 yards per carry and also amassed 2,582 receiving yards (averaging 11.7 yards per catch) and 30 receiving scores while adding 2,289 yards and five touchdowns on kickoff and punt returns.
- Played for College Football Hall of Fame Coach Andy Talley.
- Becomes the first Villanova player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



DeANGELO WILLIAMS

University of Memphis • Running Back • 2002-05



DeAngelo Williams chose Memphis over bigger programs elsewhere because the Tigers told him what he needed to hear as a teenager — not what he wanted to hear. That message?

“Coach (Tommy) West told me, ‘I know you have Division I talent, but I’m not going to tell you that you can come here and star,’” Williams recalled. “‘What I’m telling you is you can come in here and re-write history if you live up to the potential that we think you have. I know we haven’t been to a bowl game in 32 years, but you can help change that with the potential you have. You can go to all these other schools and be part of history, but you can come to Memphis and make it.’”

Those words proved to be prescient — Williams was part of a recruiting class that helped revive the Tigers’ program, and he is now the first former Memphis player to make the College Football Hall of Fame. Not bad for a kid from Wynne, Arkansas, whose decision to spurn the SEC drew plenty of question marks at the time.

“It’s wild,” Williams said of being the first Memphis Hall of Famer. “Because when I think back in the history of the University of Memphis, you see guys like Isaac Bruce. But when you think about the guys who went on from the college level to the NFL, you just expected that they threw up incredible, awesome numbers in college, and that’s not always the case.

“I think that’s what it is in this situation. We don’t peak in college; we peak in the National Football League. That’s a great thing. Every once in awhile, like myself, we come around. I thought I peaked in college, so it’s interesting,” he added, laughing.

Williams is the all-time leading rusher in Memphis history, having amassed 6,026 career yards on the ground, which ranked fourth in FBS history at the time. His 7,573 career all-purpose yards marked an FBS record then, too.

Memphis went 24-13 across the final three years of Williams’ career, a remarkable turnaround after a stretch of eight straight losing campaigns. The Tigers went 9-4 and won the New Orleans Bowl in 2003, which ended the aforementioned

bowl drought and set off a stretch of three straight seasons that ended in a bowl game, which was a first in the program’s history.

“I chose Memphis because I loved the coaching staff,” Williams said. “Coach West, (offensive coordinator) Randy Fichtner. I loved everything about Memphis.”

Funny enough, Williams’ career may have been stuck on the defensive side of the ball if not for the help of his childhood friends. His introduction to football came through schoolyard games among buddies that involved tackling, which was so terrifying to the then-8-year-old Williams that he saw no other path to avoid getting hit but to simply run away from opponents as fast as he could.

When he started out in pee wee football, Williams was relegated to a reserve defensive end role. He finally saw the field after several other kids ahead of him were hurt or left the team, and he recorded so many sacks that his coaches couldn’t take him off the field.

“Another guy on the team I was on was like, ‘Hey, Coach, I don’t know why you’re playing him at defensive end. At school we can’t catch him. You need to put him at running back,’” Williams said with a laugh.

The rest, as they say, is history. Williams earned MVP honors of the 2005 Motor City Bowl and the 2006 Senior Bowl. He finished his career with five Conference USA records, and he was a three-time league player of the year. The school retired his No. 20 jersey in 2006, and it renamed the team MVP award to the “DeAngelo Williams MVP Award” in 2012.

The Panthers drafted him 27th overall in 2006, and he spent nine of his 11 NFL seasons in Charlotte, where he calls home today. He led the NFL in touchdowns in 2008 and 2015. A father



of four, Williams started the DeAngelo Williams Foundation in honor of his late mother, Sandra, and four of his aunts who died from breast cancer. Sandra Williams was sick when he was in college, and he cherished the chance to play so close to home.

“I credit all of that success to my mom, only because I wanted better for her,” Williams said. “And as a result of me wanting better for her, it made me better, too.”

DeANGELO WILLIAMS: UP CLOSE

- Named a First Team All-American in 2005 and a three-time Conference USA Offensive Player of the Year.
- Concluded his career as the FBS record holder in all-purpose yards (7,573) and set an NCAA record with 34 games of 100-plus rushing yards, averaging 178.55 yards per game in 2005.
- Totaled 969 rushes for 6,026 yards (ranking fourth in NCAA history at the time) and 55 touchdowns while adding 70 receptions for 723 receiving yards and five touchdowns and returning 60 kickoffs for a 22.3 average.
- Played for head coach Tommy West.
- Becomes the first Memphis player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



MONTE CATER

Head Coach • Lakeland College (WI) (1981-86), Shepherd University (WV) (1987-2017)



As a two-way player in high school, Monte Cater looked up to head coach Merle Chapman. By the time Cater enrolled at Millikin College as a defensive back, Chapman was the Big Blue's defensive coordinator. And once Cater was ready to transition from the high school to the college coaching ranks, Chapman was the guy who took a chance on him as a Millikin offensive line coach. More than half a century later, those humble beginnings have landed Cater in the College Football Hall of Fame.

Cater is the first person affiliated with the Lakeland University (WI) or the Shepherd University (WV) programs to make the Hall, a testament to a 37-year head coaching career across the NAIA and Division II levels.

"I knew early on that I wanted to stay in football in some way," Cater said. "And after discovering that size and speed and a lot of things were going to keep me out of the NFL, coaching was going to be what I wanted. College is what you hope to eventually get to, and (Coach Chapman) gave me that chance."

Cater turned around the Lakeland program, ushering the Muskies out of a 4-13 start his first two years and winning at least a share of the Illini-Badger Football Conference in three of his final four seasons. He went 30-24-1 in six years at the Plymouth, Wis., school. From there he went to Shepherd, where his 31-year run featured 11 postseason appearances and 16 seasons that ended with a national ranking. Cater's 2015 Shepherd team made it all the way to the national title game, falling to Northwest Missouri State.

"I would say one of the biggest wins was having a chance to beat Grand Valley State and get to the national championship, where we got our bottoms spanked," Cater said. "Northwest Missouri State had great success — they've won six national championships — but they showed us what the pinnacle was.

"But to have a chance to get a win like that and to get that (GVSU) win at home was huge. You remember a lot of losses; that's one of the things coaches have a tendency to remember

more than wins sometimes. But that had to be the pinnacle of at least what I had a chance to be involved in."

By the time Cater retired after the 2017 season, he was the winningest active coach among all NCAA levels, posting 275 victories and winning more than 70 percent of his games. He coached 24 first-team All-Americans, was named conference coach of the year 13 times, won at least a share of 17 conference titles and had six undefeated regular seasons.

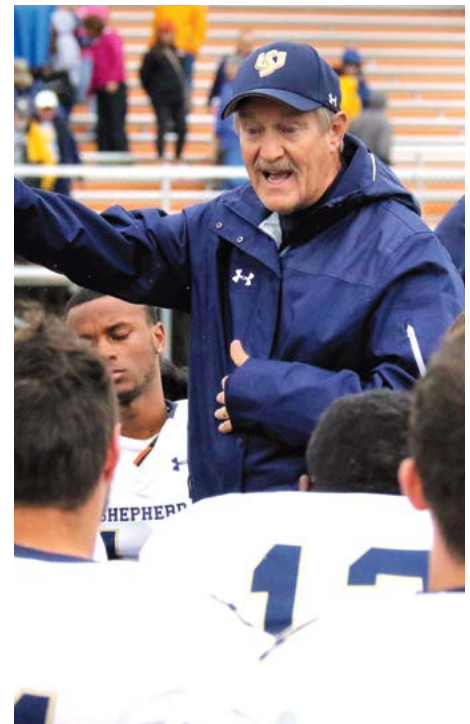
"It's very humbling, especially when you go ahead and look at the people that make up this class, and all classes," Cater said of the Hall honor. "This year has got its great ones in there, too, as far as the players and other coaches. John Luckhardt, one of the coaches that went in last year, called me. We played against each other when he was at California University of Pennsylvania.

"Just to be around them, those are people you would love to have an opportunity to talk with, let alone go in the same class as they are. It's a great situation."

Named conference coach of the year 13 times during his career, he won at least a share of 17 conference titles (13 WVIAC and 4 MEC), giving him the most victories and coaching titles in West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WVIAC) history. His teams went undefeated in conference play 11 times, and he coached 182 First Team All-Conference players.

As Cater reflects on his Hall of Fame career, he thinks of the devotion of his wife, Bonnie, whom he met when he was at Lakeland, along with his two children, whose sacrifices along the way helped pave a career path that is now officially etched in college football history.

"There are so many people that you think



about that you're involved with," Cater said. "Not just players — there are so many great, great players and that's why you do this stuff. But the people who are around the players and coaches, too. And if you've got great administrators — I was pretty lucky in that situation, too — to have those types of things be part of what you're doing professionally is special."

Cater has been inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame (2020), Shepherd Hall of Fame (2007) and the Millikin Athletics Hall of Fame (1999). He served as Shepherd's athletics director from 1993-2004, and he served as a member of the NCAA Division II Football Committee and the AFCA Board of Coaches.

MONTE CATER: UP CLOSE

- Overall Record: 275-117-2 (70.1%), including 245-93-1 at Shepherd and 30-24-1 at Lakeland.
- Retired as the nation's winningest active football coach among all NCAA levels.
- Led his teams to 13 postseason appearances, 16 entries in the final national rankings and a berth in the Division II championship game, finishing as the national runner-up in 2015.
- Coached 24 First Team All-America and 182 First Team All-Conference players, claiming honors as the conference coach of the year 13 times and the Vince Lombardi Foundation Coach of the Year in 2015.
- Becomes the first person from either Lakeland University (WI) or Shepherd University (WV) to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.



HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



PAUL JOHNSON

Head Coach • Georgia Southern University (1997-2001), United States Naval Academy (2002-07), Georgia Tech (2008-18)



Paul and Susan Johnson were driving out to Arizona with their golden retriever when Georgia Tech athletic director J Batt texted to ask Paul if he had a few minutes to talk. Batt had just taken over as the Yellow Jackets' AD, and who better to tap into for insight on the place than Johnson, winner of four ACC Coastal division titles during his time in Atlanta?

"I didn't put two and two together," Johnson said of the call's timing. "He called me that morning and talked about all of my accomplishments, and I'm thinking, this is weird. And he goes, 'Well it certainly sounds like a Hall of Fame career to me.' And then it kind of hit me."

Johnson is officially a member of the College Football Hall of Fame, becoming the fourth former Yellow Jackets, the fifth Navy and the first Georgia Southern coach to make the Hall.

"Once you retire and have been out of it for a year or two, you think about those things, but not while coaching," Johnson said of his legacy. "It's a tremendous honor, and it's something I could have never dreamed of when I first started coaching. I was so fortunate to be around so many good people. Not only did I have the opportunity to work with a lot of good coaches and players, but good people."

Johnson went 62-10 at Georgia Southern, making the FCS playoffs in all five years and winning two national titles. But Statesboro was hardly the only place where Johnson made a lasting impact.

At Navy, he took over a program that had gone 1-20 in its previous two seasons and went 45-29, posting winning seasons in the final five of his six seasons there. The Midshipmen finished ranked No. 24 in both major polls in 2004. And in 2007, his final year, Johnson led Navy to a triple-overtime upset over Notre Dame, snapping a 43-game losing streak against the Irish. Perhaps most importantly, he went 6-0 against Army.

Johnson went 82-60 in 11 years at Georgia Tech, finishing ranked three different times. The Jackets finished No. 8 in the AP poll in 2014 after winning the Orange Bowl.

"On the field, probably my first national

championship as a head coach at Georgia Southern," Johnson said of his best memories. "If you take one at each of the schools I was the head coach, at Navy it would be a tossup between going 11-1 against the other two academies when I was the head coach there; we never lost to Army. And also breaking the streak against Notre Dame. I can remember that day in South Bend. And then at Georgia Tech it would be winning in Athens and then winning the Orange Bowl (in 2014)."

Posting nearly 200 college victories via his triple-option offense, Johnson's high school ran the wishbone, although the future coach actually drew his offensive inspiration from his time on the defensive side of the ball. He was a 140-pound nose tackle in high school, and he did not play in college. He had coached the defensive line during his first stint at Georgia Southern, and he found the option as the hardest offense to defend against. He became the Eagles' offensive coordinator two years later, and his offense evolved from there, although those teams threw the ball much more than traditional option teams.

Johnson was inspired to get into coaching by Elmer Aldridge, his high school coach, who hired Johnson right out of Western Carolina. He saw the influence that Aldridge had on other people's lives, and Johnson wished to pay that forward.

"I got a lot of phone calls and a lot of texts," Johnson said of former players reaching out once he made the Hall. "That's special. You lose touch with some, but for years I thought the



neatest thing about coaching was that you get a text or a call out of the blue and somebody says, 'Coach, I wanted to call you. I had my first child and was thinking about you.' That's what makes it worth doing. That's way more important than wins and losses."

With his trademark humor and blunt honesty, the 66-year-old Johnson is enjoying retired life now. He recalls a moment on the golf course with Clemson coach Dabo Swinney recently at the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl Challenge as the perfect contrast between being in the thick of coaching these days and being relatively stress-free.

Said Johnson: "We were on the cart and he has two phones and I've got a range finder, and I said, 'Which one of us is the retired guy?'"

PAUL JOHNSON: UP CLOSE

- Overall Record: 189-99-0 (65.6%), including 82-60 at Georgia Tech; 45-29 at Navy and 62-10 at Georgia Southern.
- Led the Yellow Jackets to final national rankings in 2008 (No. 22), 2009 (No. 13), and 2014 (No. 8), nine bowl games and three ACC Championship games.
- Transformed a Navy program, which went 1-20 in the previous two seasons, to a 45-29 team the next six seasons while earning five bowl berths, a 6-0 record against Army and a victory over Notre Dame for the first time in 43 years.
- Won two FCS national titles, made five FCS playoff appearances, and won the Southern Conference every year while heading the Georgia Southern program.
- Coached 11 First Team All-Americans and was named ACC Coach of the Year three times, Southern Conference Coach of the Year twice and the AFCA NCAA Division I-AA National Coach of the Year twice.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



ROY KRAMER

Head Coach • Central Michigan University (1967-77)



Roy Kramer has had such a decorated career in so many sectors of athletics that it may be easy to overlook his time as a football coach.

“I suspect a lot of people didn’t know I had been a coach,” Kramer said. “But I was a high school coach for 12 years, and it was one of the most enjoyable periods of my entire life.”

He was a college coach, too, for 11 seasons at Central Michigan, and a darn good one. So good, in fact, that he is now entering the College Football Hall of Fame, becoming just the second Chippewas coach to make the Hall.

“It is a great honor,” the nonagenarian said proudly. “The Hall of Fame has been a signature part of college football for so long that it has a very special feel to it, and certainly my coaching years were some of the best parts of my entire involvement with intercollegiate athletics.”

Kramer may be known to a wider audience as the longtime SEC commissioner who was responsible for landmark achievements such as conference expansion, the creation of a league football championship game, and the implementation of the BCS. His 13-year run atop the premier conference in college football was preceded by 13 years as the athletic director at Vanderbilt as well.

But Kramer’s time on the sideline was perhaps his most impactful period in sports, as he won 71.8 percent of his games at Central Michigan from 1967-77, earned a Division II national title in 1974, and shaped countless lives along the way.

“Obviously you owe an awful lot to your players,” Kramer said. “I was fortunate to have a tremendous group of men who were very dedicated to the game and dedicated to achieving the best that they could.”

“One of the great rewards of coaching is those young men stay a part of your family for the rest of your life. I think your thoughts go to them, first of all, because they’re the ones who played the game, who scored the touchdowns, who made the tackles. Coaches are just directors from the sideline.”

Herb Deromedi is the other Central Michi-

gan coach who has made the Hall (2007), and together, he and Kramer were honored before a 2022 game against Bucknell, when the school named its football field Kramer/Deromedi Field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium. Both coaches have statues on campus as well.

Kramer led the Chippewas to consecutive Interstate Intercollegiate Conference Championships in 1967 and ’68, and in 1975 he helped with the transition from Division II to Division I-A.

“I think the fact we were able to lift that program from a Division II program to a Division I program to become a member of the Mid-American Conference, to strive to be the best we could possibly be,” Kramer said of some of his fondest memories. “I think the building of a stadium (in 1972), the unique community that became involved.

“One of the unusual things about the 1974 season when we won the Division II national championship was that I think we had some 70 players on that squad, and every single one of them hailed from the state of Michigan. There was a feeling of pride, a feeling of commitment that we were all a part of. I think that carried over to the community as well as to the entire state, and it set a stage of recognition, so to speak, that was hard to match.”

The feeling of camaraderie that comes with being part of a team is a memory that Kramer reflects on fondly, regardless of level.

“That experience is unique to anything else, that’s what sets coaching aside so much, even with the issues today with NIL and the transfer portal and everything else, there is still that relationship that you have to build between the player and coach,” Kramer said. “The level of trust, discipline, understanding and the type



of commitment it takes to play the game is a unique experience.

“Being in a locker room at 2 p.m. on a Saturday or at 7 p.m. on a Friday is an experience I wish all young people could have, because you sit in that locker room and you realize you can’t say, ‘What are these people going to do for me tonight?’ The obvious question has to be, ‘What can I do to help make this group of men successful and win a game?’ And that’s an experience you don’t have in almost any other setting throughout your life.”

ROY KRAMER: UP CLOSE

- Overall Record: 83-32-2 (71.8%) at Central Michigan.
- Won the 1974 Division II National Championship, guiding the Chippewas to a 12-1 record and earning NCAA National Coach of the Year honors.
- Twice led the Chippewas to IAC titles in 1967 and 1968.
- Coached one First Team All-American, three First Team Academic All-Americans and 38 First Team All-Conference selections
- Inducted into the Central Michigan Athletics Hall of Fame (1987); Vanderbilt Athletics Hall of Fame (2008 as an inaugural member); Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame (1989); and the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame (2003) while claiming the NFF Distinguished American Award in 1998.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

INDUCTEE PROFILES



MARK RICHT

Head Coach • University of Georgia (2001-15), University of Miami (2016-18)



He may have become a head coach more than two decades ago, back in the days of the BCS and fax machines, but Mark Richt has kept the same phone number all these years later.

Richt led the programs at Georgia and Miami from 2001-18, and through that journey, keeping relationships with his former players and assistants has always been a priority. Sometimes a player will call and invite him to a baptism or wedding. Other times a player will call on Father's Day, as a thank-you for Richt's influence on his life.

"It's very gratifying to have that kind of relationship with so many players," Richt said.

Richt's impact on the game and on so many of those who played it can be hard to measure — unlike his actual coaching career. That's because the former longtime coach can now officially call himself a College Football Hall of Famer, based on his sideline performance with the Bulldogs and Hurricanes.

"We're very humbled by it," Richt said. "Quite frankly, we're thrilled, Katharyn and I. We always considered ourselves a team, and she's as much a part of this as I am. But it's a blessing. We shed tears together."

Richt is the fifth former Georgia coach to make the Hall and the fifth former Miami coach to earn the moniker. Richt was hired by Georgia ahead of the 2001 season, immediately making an impact. He became one of only four coaches in FBS history to win 135 or more games in his first 14 seasons. He won nearly 72 percent of his games at Georgia and Miami, and he made a bowl game every season.

Richt led the Bulldogs to SEC titles in 2002 and 2005, earning conference coach of the year awards both years. Georgia made five SEC championship game appearances overall, and his teams finished in the top-10 of the coaches' poll eight times.

At Miami, his alma mater, Richt led the Hurricanes to a 26-13 mark, including their first ACC Coastal division title in 2017, a year that ended in the Orange Bowl, the program's first major bowl game appearance in more than a decade. He

earned ACC and Walter Camp coach of the year honors that year, too.

Though it's hard for Richt to pinpoint a best memory from his time on the sidelines, he remembers his first big win — the 2001 comeback at Tennessee in the infamous "Hobnail Boot Game" — as the start of something special.

"It was a game that gave us as a staff some validation, that maybe these guys can coach," Richt said. "I think it helped validate us with our team and with each other as a staff, and with the media and the administration and just the Georgia fans in general, that we knew what we were doing.

"It was a landmark victory in my coaching career, but there were many, many others."

The 63-year-old Richt likes to joke that he would have been voted least likely to coach when he was a quarterback at Miami, and he even tried his hand at a number of different jobs after graduation, including bartending.

Bowden eventually hired Richt as a graduate assistant to work with Seminoles' quarterbacks. Shortly afterward, quarterbacks coach Art Baker was hired as East Carolina's head coach, and Bowden decided to fill the staff opening by promoting Brad Scott to tight ends coach, leaving Richt as the main guy in charge of the signal callers.

"He kept an eye on things, but I handled the meetings and I was coaching them as a first-year GA coach," Richt said. "So, it was kind of a miraculous start to my coaching career, to be at a Power 5 school and all of a sudden you're the QBs coach at age 25."

Now an ACC Network analyst, Richt earned his first "full-time" job as East Carolina's offensive coordinator in 1989, before returning to FSU



a year later. A devout Christian, Richt credits his conversion to a speech that Bowden gave his team shortly after offensive lineman Pablo Lopez was shot and killed in 1986.

In 2016, Richt was named the first honorary coach for the AFCA Good Works Team. He and his players were active with H.E.R.O. for children, Habitat for Humanity, Camp Sunshine and other community causes. As Richt reflects on the Hall honor, one person is on his mind.

"The most important person to thank besides God is my wife. She helped me through the toughest times I had as a coach," Richt said. "One of the toughest times I ever had as a coach was my one year at East Carolina in 1989. I was a first-time coordinator and I didn't feel adequate to do the job, and I was struggling. But she was there for me then and she was there for me in the good times as well. But everything I've ever accomplished is critically attributable to her love and support."

MARK RICHT: UP CLOSE

- Overall Record: 171-64 (72.8%), including 145-51 at Georgia and 26-13 at Miami (FL).
- One of only five coaches in FBS history to record 145 or more wins in their first 15 seasons.
- Led Georgia to 15 consecutive bowl appearances, including three New Year's Six bowls, and Miami to three consecutive bowl berths, including another New Year's Six Bowl.
- Guided Georgia teams to 11 appearances in the Top 25 rankings, including seven Top 10 finishes, and Miami teams to two more Top 20 finishes.
- Led Georgia to two SEC titles and five SEC championship games and Miami to the ACC Coastal Division title.
- Named the 2002 and 2005 SEC Coach of the Year and the 2017 ACC Coach of the Year.

HALL OF FAME ON-CAMPUS SALUTES

PRESENTED BY FIDELITY INVESTMENTS*



The National Football Foundation is pleased to announce the schedule for the 2023 NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes, presented by Fidelity Investments*.

The NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes, which began with the inaugural College Football Hall of Fame Class in 1951, have become a hallowed tradition, and to this day, the singular events remain the first of numerous activities in each electee's Hall of Fame experience.

During the NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes, each member of the 2023 College Football Hall of Fame Class will return to his respective school to accept a Hall of Fame plaque that will stay on permanent display at the institution. The events take place on the field during a home game, and many Hall of Famers cite the experience as the ultimate capstone to their careers, providing them one more chance to take the field and be recognized in front of their home crowd.

"Induction into the College Football Hall of Fame is the ultimate achievement in our sport, and the NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salute tradition allows us to bring each inductee back to their alma mater for a truly memorable experience," said NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. "We look forward to

celebrating the storied careers of the 2023 Hall of Fame Class with the tens of thousands of fans who will witness an on-campus salute this year."

"Fidelity Investments is honored to be part of the NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes program, and have taken great pride in celebrating the College Football Hall of Fame inductees throughout the years," said Sangeeta Moorjani, head of Tax-Exempt and Retirement Solutions at Fidelity Investments. "These athletes are of great importance to their schools, their fellow classmates and the college football community, and deserve this distinct recognition for their achievements."

The 2023 College Football Hall of Fame Class will be officially inducted during the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas on Dec. 5 at the ARIA Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. Click here for more information on the event.

Fidelity Investments has served as the national presenting sponsor of the NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes since 2010. The salutes are one component of a multi-year initiative between the two organizations to celebrate the scholar-athlete ideal and a joint commitment to higher education.

NFF HALL OF FAME ON-CAMPUS SALUTES SCHEDULE, PRESENTED BY FIDELITY INVESTMENTS

- Sept. 2: Derrick Johnson, Texas (vs. Rice)
- Sept. 14: Coach Mark Richt, Miami [FL] (vs. Bethune-Cookman)
- Sept. 16: Terance Mathis, New Mexico (vs. New Mexico State)
- Sept. 23: LaMichael James, Oregon (vs. Colorado)
- Sept. 23: Michael Stonebreaker, Notre Dame (vs. Ohio State)
- Sept. 30: Robert Gallery, Iowa (vs. Michigan State)
- Sept. 30: DeAngelo Williams, Memphis (vs. Boise State)
- Oct. 7: Jeremy Maclin, Missouri (vs. LSU)
- Oct. 7: Troy Vincent Sr., Wisconsin (vs. Rutgers)
- Oct. 14: Eric Berry, Tennessee (vs. Texas A&M)
- Oct. 21: Coach Paul Johnson, Navy (vs. Air Force)
- Oct. 21: Bryant McKinnie, Miami [FL] (vs. Clemson)

- Oct. 26: Coach Paul Johnson, Georgia Southern (vs. Georgia State)
- Oct. 28: Coach Paul Johnson, Georgia Tech (vs. North Carolina)
- Oct. 28: Brian Westbrook, Villanova (vs. Stony Brook)
- Nov. 3: Dwight Freeney, Syracuse (vs. Boston College)
- Nov. 4: Coach Monte Cater, Shepherd [WV] (vs. East Stroudsburg [PA])
- Nov. 4: Bill Kollar, Montana State (vs. Northern Arizona)
- Nov. 11: Coach Mark Richt, Georgia (vs. Ole Miss)
- Nov. 11: Michael Bishop, Kansas State (vs. Baylor)
- Nov. 18: Corey Moore, Virginia Tech (vs. NC State)
- TBD: Reggie Bush, USC
- TBD: Luke Kuechly, Boston College
- TBD: Tim Tebow, Florida



DERRICK JOHNSON was honored during Texas' home game against Rice on Sept. 2. (L-R, Front Row): Fidelity Investments Senior Vice President **JOE CICCARIELLO**, NFF COO **MATTHEW SIGN**, Johnson, son **JAGGER**, son **DEUCE**, family friend **BRITTANY SHORTS**, Texas Vice President and Athletics Director **CHRIS DEL CONTE**. Back Row: wife **BRITNI** and son **SIMON**.



Coach **MARK RICHT** was honored during Miami's home game against Bethune-Cookman on Sept. 14. Pictured, L-R: Fidelity Senior Vice President **BRUCE WHITE**, NFF Board Member and Miami Dolphins Vice Chairman, President and CEO **TOM GARFINKEL**, Richt, wife **KATHARYN** and Miami Vice President and Athletics Director **DAN RADAKOVICH**.



NFF CORPORATE PARTNERS

BRANDS THAT RECOGNIZE THE VALUE IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL AND THE NFF'S MISSION



Delta Air Lines serves as the official airline of the National Football Foundation, and it offered special airfares to attendees of the NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas.



Fidelity Investments®, a leading provider of workplace savings plans in higher education, serves as the presenting sponsor of the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Class, NFF Faculty Salutes and NFF Hall of Fame On-Campus Salutes. Fidelity donates \$5,000 to support the academic support services for student-athletes at each school with an NFF National Scholar-Athlete.



The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA), the marketing arm for the city of Las Vegas, is the presenting sponsor of the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas.



Catapult Sports is the official host of the NFF's extensive video library. Learn more at CatapultSports.com/solutions/licensing.



Hanold Associates Executive Search, a retained executive search firm with a focus on recruiting HR and Diversity & Inclusion leaders, and diverse Board Directors, is a proud partner of the NFF. Learn more at hanold-associates.com.



The historic New York Athletic Club serves as the official home of the William V. Campbell Trophy®.



Sports Business Journal is a media partner of the NFF in promotion of the annual SBJ Intercollegiate Athletics Forum, which is set for Dec. 6-7 at the ARIA Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.



Jostens is the official, exclusive supplier of NFF rings and awards, including rings for the College Football Hall of Fame inductees, recipient of the Campbell Trophy® and NFF Leadership Hall of Fame inductees.



Riddell specializes in football sports equipment and advancing the sport through game-changing innovations in helmet technology and protective equipment. Riddell is the official helmet of the NFF.



Presenting sponsor of the NFF Hatchell Cup, the name "Bob's" has been synonymous with a best-in-class steakhouse experience since 1993 in Dallas, Texas.



The Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation, whose primary purpose is to preserve, protect and enhance the Rose Bowl Stadium, is a presenting sponsor of the NFF National High School Excellence Awards. Learn more at RoseBowlLegacy.org.



CHICK-FIL-A COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

APPROACHING A DECADE AS A NATIONAL EPICENTER FOR CELEBRATING COLLEGE FOOTBALL



The Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame is in downtown Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park District.

The kickoff of the 2023 college football season marked the ninth anniversary of the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. Located in the heart of the sports and entertainment district, and steps from Centennial Olympic Park, Mercedes Benz Stadium and State Farm Arena, the Hall of Fame continues its legacy as a national icon built to inspire and entertain by celebrating the passion and traditions of the game and its greatest players and coaches.

"Downtown Atlanta has proven to be an ideal setting for the Hall. From the artifacts to the interactives to the hallowed third floor, the College Football Hall of Fame is a magnet for football fans who want to experience all that is great about the game," said Archie Manning, chairman of the National Football Foundation, which founded the Hall in 1951 and partnered with Atlanta Hall Management to fund, construct, and open the Hall in 2014.

Reimagining the idea of a traditional museum through immersive technology, the 95,000 square foot, one-of-a-kind Hall of Fame pays worthy tribute to the game's greatest heroes while inspiring and entertaining fans with unique and compelling exhibits and events. Fans kick off every visit by lighting their school's helmet on the three-story wall representing the more than 772 colleges and universities with football programs.

Powered by RFID technology, once guests light their helmet and begin their tour, they are continuously greeted with a customized experience

tailored to their team. The RFID-enabled interactive exhibits are nestled between curated displays of priceless artifacts representing more than 150 years of college football.

"Hundreds of thousands of fans from across the country visit the Hall each year and their overwhelmingly positive reactions continue to exceed our expectations," said A.J. Robinson, chairman of the AHM Board of Directors, which oversees the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame. "The Hall is an iconic national platform for college football and a showcase for Atlanta."

The non-profit Hall of Fame continues to grow and thrive under the leadership of the Board and President & CEO Kimberly Beaudin. Through the generous support of donors and corporate partners, the Hall is updating and expanding the experience ahead of its 10th anniversary in 2024, and it continues to distinguish itself as the prime location for significant events in college football, including the ESPN College Football Awards Show and SEC Football Media Days. Additionally, the venue hosts more than 200 corporate and private events each year.

From the first class inducted in 1951 to today, being immortalized in the College Football Hall of Fame represents the highest level of achievement for players and coaches. The Hall in Atlanta is integral to the National Football Foundation's mission as the experience celebrates the history of the game in a way that inspires young individuals to pursue excellence throughout their lives.



CHICK-FIL-A COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

APPROACHING A DECADE AS A NATIONAL EPICENTER FOR CELEBRATING COLLEGE FOOTBALL



The Hall's entrance welcomes visitors with iconic memorabilia, a three-story helmet wall and a mural showcasing the 150-plus years of college football.



The Hall's playing field transforms into an enchanting private event space for an elegant dinner.



A young enthusiast attempts a field goal at the College Football Hall of Fame on the 45-yard Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl Field.



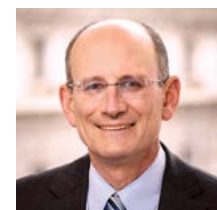
Visitors interact with vivid videos and striking photographs of the legendary players immortalized on the third floor in the Hall.

GET TO KNOW THE HALL

- The first class was inducted in 1951, including legends Red Grange (Illinois), Knute Rockne (Notre Dame), Duke Slater (Iowa), Amos Alonzo Stagg (four schools) and Jim Thorpe (Carlisle [PA]).
- 320 schools are represented by at least one Hall of Famer.
- More than 5.62 million have played or coached the game.
- Less than .02% have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- Including the 2023 Class, only 1,074 players and 230 coaches have been selected by the NFF for induction.
- The Hall of Fame archives contain more than one million artifacts dating back to 1869.



KIMBERLY BEAUDIN
Hall of Fame
President & CEO



A.J. ROBINSON
Atlanta Hall
Management Chairman



2023 CAMPBELL TROPHY® SEMIFINALISTS

201 OF THE BEST SCHOLAR-ATHLETES IN THE COUNTRY

A record-breaking 201 semifinalists for the 2023 William V. Campbell Trophy® represent the best all-around football scholar-athlete for their respective institutions. Each of them can take great pride in knowing they were nominated for an award won by 33 of the greatest all-around scholar-athletes to ever grace the college gridiron.

The NFF will announce 12-15 finalists on Oct. 25 with each receiving an \$18,000 postgraduate scholarship as a member of the 2023 NFF National Scholar-Athlete Class Presented by Fidelity Investments. One of the finalists will be named the winner of the 34th Campbell Trophy® during the 65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas on Dec. 5 and have his postgraduate scholarship increased to \$25,000.

FOOTBALL BOWL SUBDIVISION (FBS)

Alabama - Seth McLaughlin
Appalachian State - Bucky Williams
Arizona - Kyle Ostendorp
Arizona State - Michael Matus
Arkansas - Hudson Clark
Auburn - Tyler Fromm
Boise State - Riley Smith
Bowling Green State - Demetrius Hardamon
Brigham Young - Ben Bywater
Buffalo - Alex McNulty
California - Matthew Cindric
Central Florida - Jason Johnson
Central Michigan - Robi Stuart
Cincinnati - Malik Vann
Clemson - Sheridan Jones
Duke - DeWayne Carter
East Carolina - Jeremy Lewis
Eastern Michigan - Tanner Knue
Florida - Ricky Pearsall
Florida State - Preston Daniel
Fresno State - Levelle Bailey
Georgia - Ladd McConkey
Georgia State - Seth Glausier
Georgia Tech - Gavin Stewart
Illinois - Isaiah Williams
Indiana - Trey Walker
Iowa State - Easton Dean
Kansas - Mason Fairchild
Kansas State - Cooper Beebe
Kentucky - Alex Raynor
Louisiana - Ben Wooldridge
Louisiana State - Josh Williams
Louisville - Bryan Hudson
Marshall - Logan Osburn
Maryland - Taulia Tagovailoa
Memphis - Jacob Likes
Miami - Jalen Rivers
Michigan - Zak Zinter
Michigan State - Maverick Hansen
Mississippi - Isaac Ukwu
Mississippi State - Ryland Goede
Missouri - Brady Cook
Nebraska - Brian Buschini
Nevada, Las Vegas - Amanaki Fahina
North Carolina - Spencer Rolland
North Carolina State - Timothy McKay
Northern Illinois - James Ester
Northwestern - Bryce Gallagher
Notre Dame - JD Bertrand
Ohio - Bryce Houston
Ohio State - Cody Simon
Oklahoma - Drake Stoops
Oklahoma State - Alex Hale
Old Dominion - Michael Flores

Oregon - Bo Nix
Oregon State - Isaac Hodgins
Penn State - Olu Fashanu
Pittsburgh - Shayne Simon
Purdue - Gus Hartwig
Rice - Luke McCaffrey
Rutgers - Mayan Ahanotu
San Jose State - Tre Jenkins
South Carolina - Kai Kroeger
Southern Mississippi - Swayze Bozeman
Stanford - John Humphreys
Syracuse - Garrett Shrader
Temple - Jordan Magee
Tennessee - Jacob Warren
Texas A&M - Nik Constantinou
Texas at El Paso - Andrew Meyer
Texas at San Antonio - Lucas Dean
Texas Christian - Chase Curtis
Texas Tech - Jaylon Hutchings
Toledo - Judge Culpepper
Troy - Clayton Ollendieck
Tulane - Michael Pratt
U.S. Air Force Academy - Caleb Rillos
U.S. Military Academy - Leo Lowin
U.S. Naval Academy - Eavan Gibbons
Utah - Devaughn Vele
Vanderbilt - Ethan Barr
Virginia - Paul Akere
Wake Forest - Michael Jurgens
Washington - Edefuan Ulofoshio
Washington State - Dean Janikowski
West Virginia - Zach Frazier
Western Kentucky - Austin Reed
Western Michigan - Boone Bonnema
Wisconsin - Maema Njongmeta

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP SUBDIVISION (FCS)

Alcorn State - Akeem McNair
Austin Peay State - Michael DiLiello
Brown - Justin Anagonye
Bucknell - Coleman Bennett
Butler - Bryan Bystol
California, Davis - Jordan Ford
Colgate - Zack Pelland
Columbia - Joey Giorgi
Cornell - Jake Stebbins
Dartmouth - Macklin Ayers
Dayton - Derek Willits
Delaware - Chandler Harvin
Eastern Illinois - Chad Strickland
Gardner-Webb - William McRainey
Harvard - Garrett Sharp
Holy Cross - Jacob Dobbs
Incarnate Word - Jayden Borjas
Lehigh - Christian Jablonski



University of Iowa linebacker **JACK CAMPBELL** won the 33rd William V. Campbell Trophy® in 2022 at the 64th National Football Foundation Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas.

Marist - Justin Iaccio
Montana - TraJon Cotton
Montana State - Nolan Askelson
New Hampshire - Max Brosmer
Nicholls State - Zack Bernard
North Carolina Central - Davius Richard
North Dakota - Ben McNaboe
Pennsylvania - Jack Fairman
Princeton - Jalen Travis
Richmond - Tristan Wheeler
Sacramento State - Jett Stanley
Samford - Chandler Smith
South Dakota - Brock Mogensen
Stonehill - David Satkowski
Stony Brook - Aidan Kaler
Tennessee at Chattanooga - Ailym Ford
Tennessee Tech - Bradley Clark
Towson - Jamal Gay
Western Carolina - Richard McCollum
William & Mary - Will Whitehurst
Yale - Wande Owens

DIVISION II

Ashland (OH) - Jake McLoughlin

Benedict (SC) - Loobert Denelus
Bentley (MA) - Jake Tarentino
Black Hills State (SD) - Ryder Blair
Colorado State Pueblo - Chance Fuller
East Stroudsburg (PA) - Daryn Blackwell
Henderson State (AR) - Shaq Robinson
Hillsdale (MI) - Michael Harding
Northern State (SD) - Bradyn Oakley
Ouachita Baptist (AR) - Riley Harms
Penn West, California (PA) - Jack Colecchi
Slippery Rock (PA) - Yuriy Hryckowian
Southern Arkansas - Jacob Berry
Wayne State (MI) - Drake Reid
Wingate (NC) - Trevor Grant

DIVISION III

Allegheny (PA) - Declan O'Brien
Augsburg (MN) - Justin Tverberg
Bates (ME) - Cole De Magistris
Birmingham-Southern (AL) - Conner Thornburg
Bowdoin (ME) - Andre Eden
Carnegie Mellon (PA) - Dustin Moss
Case Western Reserve (OH) - Marco Toth



2023 CAMPBELL TROPHY® SEMIFINALISTS

201 OF THE BEST SCHOLAR-ATHLETES IN THE COUNTRY

Central (IA) - Jeff Herbers
 Cornell (IA) - Sam Adams
 DePauw (IN) - Brevon Gude
 Gallaudet (DC) - Jonathon Waterman
 Hamline (MN) - Charlie Wilson
 Hampden-Sydney (VA) - George Langhammer
 Hardin-Simmons (TX) - Gaylon Glynn
 Hobart (NY) - Abdoulaye Diallo
 Ithaca (NY) - A.J. Wingfield
 John Carroll (OH) - Bricker Thiel
 Johns Hopkins (MD) - Luke Schuermann
 Lake Forest (IL) - Justin Albee
 Loras (IA) - Brett Bower
 Lycoming (PA) - Hunter Campbell
 Lyon (AR) - Karson Douglas
 McMurry (TX) - Malachi LeCadre-Grey
 Methodist (NC) - Brandon Bullins
 Middlebury (VT) - Tomás Kenary
 Millsaps (MS) - Conner Rucker
 Mount Union (OH) - Braxton Plunk
 North Central (IL) - Jarod Thornton
 Saint John's (MN) - Aaron Syverson
 Shenandoah (VA) - Noah Temme
 Springfield (MA) - DJ Brown
 St. Olaf (MN) - Ben Hestorff
 SUNY, Morrisville - Steve Frerichs
 Trinity (CT) - Darren Warren

Trinity (TX) - Tucker Horn
 Wabash (IN) - Liam Thompson
 Wartburg (IA) - Owen Grover
 Washington & Jefferson (PA) - Justin Johns
 Wesleyan (CT) - Jake Edwards
 Western New England (MA) - Joe Shea
 Westminster (PA) - Carter Chinn
 Wilkes (PA) - Billy Anderson
 Wisconsin Lutheran - Kyle Kubacki
 Wisconsin-Oshkosh - Kobe Berghammer
 Wisconsin-Platteville - Justin Blazek
 Wisconsin-Stout - Gervase Thompson
 Wisconsin-Whitewater - Egon Hein
 Wooster (OH) - Lake Barrett

NAIA

Dakota State (SD) - Cole Sylliaasen
 Doane (NE) - Ty Martinsen
 Evangel (MO) - Andreas Moeller
 Friends (KS) - Keegan Martin
 Indiana Wesleyan - Xander Stokes
 Montana Western - Tanner Harrell
 Peru State (NE) - Will Mueller
 Rocky Mountain (MT) - Dylan Beridon
 Southeastern (FL) - Shane McLaughlin
 Texas Wesleyan - Michael Bonner



CHRISTIAN WILKINS' 2018 Campbell Trophy at Clemson.



LEGACY FOUNDATION

Proud Supporter of the NFF National High School

Academic Excellence Awards



COLLEGE FOOTBALL LEADS TO DIPLOMAS

2,949 STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES ON ROSTERS THIS FALL



Nearly 3,000 student-athletes are playing college football this fall having already earned their undergraduate degrees, including: **COOPER BEEBE** (Kansas State and a 2023 Campbell Trophy® semifinalist), **RAY DAVIS** (Kentucky), **TOMMY EICHENBERG** (Ohio State), **LUKE McCAFFREY** (Rice and a 2023 Campbell Trophy® semifinalist), **SAM HARTMAN** (Notre Dame), **LADD McCONKEY** (Georgia and a 2023 Campbell Trophy® semifinalist), **SHILO SANDERS** (Colorado), **MICHAEL PENIX JR.** (Washington), **AL BLADES JR.** (Duke) and **JORDAN TRAVIS** (Florida State). (Photos courtesy of respective athletics departments.)

Before the season, the NFF released a list of 2,949 student-athletes who have already earned their undergraduate degrees and are playing college football this fall while pursuing additional diplomas. [Click here](#) to see the full list.

“For the better part of seven decades, the National Football Foundation has worked hard to fulfill its role as a leading voice in the promotion of the scholar-athlete,” said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. “And highlighting the nearly 3,000 student-athletes who have not only earned their undergraduate degrees but are now pursuing additional diplomas sends a powerful message about the doors that college football opens. These student-athletes have truly taken full advantage of the opportunities created by the game.”

The NFF compiled the list with the help of sports information directors from all divisions of the NCAA and NAIA who identified the players on their 2023 fall rosters who have already earned their undergraduate degrees. A total of 235 schools responded.

Notable players include Cooper Beebe (Kansas State and a 2023 Campbell Trophy semifinalist), Jayden Daniels (LSU), Tommy Eichenberg (Ohio State), Frank Harris (UTSA), Sam Hartman (Notre Dame), Devin Leary (Kentucky), Ladd McConkey (Georgia and a 2023 Campbell Trophy semifinalist), Joe Milton (Tennessee), Tanner Mordecai (Wisconsin), Bo Nix (Oregon and a 2023 Campbell Trophy semifinalist), Michael Penix Jr. (Washington), John Rhys Plumlee (UCF), Cam Rising (Utah) and Jordan Travis (Florida State). Also, of special note Trey Lowe (Liberty) and Elijah McAllister (Auburn) are believed to be the only two FBS players in the country working toward their doctoral degrees.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCAA granted an extra year of eligibility to all 2020 fall athletes. Many student-athletes have decided to take advantage of this, and they are returning to the field in 2023, leading to another high number of graduates this season.

The numbers include 1,840 players from 113 schools in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), 713 players from 62 schools in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), 265 players from 24 schools in Division II, 118 players from 32 schools in Division III and 14 players from four schools in the NAIA.

New Haven (CT), which plays in Division II, leads all schools nationwide with 36 players having already earned their degrees. Central Florida and Samford both are fielding 29 players, leading the FBS and FCS divisions, respectively.

Nearly every FBS school that responded reported a double-digit number of graduates, with the following schools joining Central Florida (29) with at least 20: Coastal Carolina (25), Charlotte (25), Northwestern (25), Cal (24), Duke (24), Notre Dame (24), Auburn (23), Florida Atlantic (23), North Texas (23), Texas State (23), Toledo (23), UMass (23), Washington (23), Arizona State (22), UCLA (22), West Virginia (22), Kent State (21), Ohio (21), Oklahoma State (21), Purdue (21), Rice (21), South Alabama (21), South Carolina (21), Arkansas (20), Cincinnati (20), Colorado (20), East Carolina (20), James Madison (20), Mississippi State (20), Missouri (20), Texas Tech (20) and Virginia (20).

Joining the FCS leader Samford (29) with at least 15 graduates on the roster this season are Montana (26), Campbell (22), Tennessee at Chattanooga (22), Towson (21), Southern (18), Elon (17), NC Central (17), Tennessee State (17), Youngstown State (17), North Dakota State (16), Sacramento State (16), Weber State (16), Austin Peay State (15), Indiana State (15), Sacred Heart (15) and Villanova (15).

The following Division II programs joined national leader New Haven [CT] (36) with at least 10 graduates on their fall rosters: Colorado School of Mines (27), Valdosta State, GA (20), Emporia State, KS (14) Benedict College, SC (13), Concordia-St. Paul, MN (13), Lock Haven, PA (13) Wayne State, MI (12), Indianapolis, IN (11) and Augustana, SD (10).

North Central (IL) topped all the Division III programs that responded with 10 graduates on its football roster while Trinity (CT) had nine and Case Western Reserve (OH) and Misericordia (PA) reported seven each. Southeastern (FL) listed five graduates to lead the NAIA respondents.

GRADUATES PLAYING COLLEGE FOOTBALL SINCE 2017

This season marks the sixth year the NFF has compiled the list of graduated players. The table below showcases the number of graduates playing college football each season since 2017.

YEAR	GRADUATES	SCHOOLS
2023	2,949	235
2022	3,113	261
2021	3,285	279
2019	1,452	251
2018	1,199	235
2017	971	213

Note: The NFF did not tally the number of graduates during the 2020 season.



NATIONAL FOOTBALL
FOUNDATION

invites you to the

65TH ANNUAL
AWARDS DINNER

presented by



DECEMBER 5, 2023
at 7:00 pm

ARIA RESORT & CASINO
Las Vegas, Nevada



TICKET
INFORMATION

Please visit

FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG/FEATURE/NFF2023

for more information and to register for the event.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact

Courtney Archer
at carcher@footballfoundation.com
or call 972-556-1000.



NFF HAMPSHIRE HONOR SOCIETY

SOCIETY SETS NEW HIGHWATER MARK IN 17TH YEAR



The NFF Hampshire Honor Society recognized an elite group of 1,762 players from 332 schools in 2023, setting a new record for the number of members in a single year during the program's 17-year history. The initiative has now honored 16,398 student-athletes since its inception. [Click here](#) for the 2023 list of members.

"We are pleased to honor another impressive group of athletes as part of this year's Hampshire Honor Society," said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. "For more than a decade, it has served as a powerful vehicle for schools to recognize their college football players who have distinguished themselves both academically and athletically, and we congratulate the schools and each of these young men for their commitment to excellence."

Designed to highlight football's unique ability to develop tomorrow's brightest leaders, the NFF Hampshire Honor Society honors the college football players from all divisions of play who each maintain a 3.2 GPA or better during their collegiate careers. Looking to build on his legacy in promoting the scholar-athlete ideal, NFF Chairman Emeritus Jon F. Hanson endowed in perpetuity the NFF Hampshire Honor Society through his real estate company, the Hampshire Companies, and its charitable arm, the Hampshire Foundation. Since its inception in 2007, 14,655 student-athletes have earned membership.

FCS university Harvard led all programs with 27 members in 2023, setting an all-time single-year mark for the most honorees from one school. California led all FBS programs with 18 members; New Haven (CT) was the Division II leader with 12 members; Pomona-Pitzer (CA) led Division III with 23 honorees; Morningside (IA) boasted 19 members, the most in the NAIA; and the Cornell Sprint Football team topped the Collegiate Sprint Football League with 19 honorees.

Fifty-seven schools had at least nine honorees in 2023, including Amherst (MA), Brigham Young, Brown, California, California (PA), Carleton (MN), Carnegie Mellon (PA), Case Western (OH), Castleton (VT), Chicago (IL), Columbia, Cornell (CSFL), Dartmouth, Dayton, DePauw (IN), Fordham, Gustavus Adolphus (MN), Harding (AR), Hardin-Simmons (TX), Harvard, Hobart (NY), Indianapolis (IN), Iowa State, Ithaca (NY), Johns Hopkins (MD), Kansas State, Kean (NJ), Macalester (MN), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Middlebury (VT), Minnesota, Morningside (IA), Navy (CSFL), Nebraska, New England (ME), New Haven (CT), North Central (IL), North Dakota, North Dakota State, Northwestern, Ohio Northern, Pomona-Pitzer (CA), Redlands (CA), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (NY), Rhodes (TN), Saint John's (MN), St. Lawrence (NY), St. Thomas, Trinity (CT), Tufts (MA), UCLA, Virginia, Wesleyan (CT), Wheaton (IL), Willamette (OR), Williams (MA) and Wyoming.

Twenty-four colleges and universities have had at least one player in all 17 years of the NFF Hampshire Honor Society (2007-23), including Brigham Young, Brown, Bucknell, Columbia, Dartmouth, Dayton, Iowa, Johns Hopkins (MD), Kentucky, Lafayette, Minnesota, North Dakota, North Dakota State, Northern Iowa, Penn State, Redlands (CA), Saint John's (MN), SMU, South Dakota State, Wayne State (MI), West Virginia, Wingate (NC), Yale and Youngstown State.

As NFF Chairman for 12 years, Hanson transformed the organization with new procedures for governance and management. His many initiatives included spearheading an endowment campaign for the NFF's prestigious National Scholar-Athlete Awards and opening up the College Football Hall of Fame to include players and coaches from the divisional ranks. In 2005, the NFF honored him with its Gold Medal, the organization's highest honor.



JON F. HANSON
NFF Chairman Emeritus

2023 NFF HAMPSHIRE HONOR SOCIETY

An elite group of 1,762 players from 332 schools qualified for membership in the Society's 17th year, including:



YAYA DIABY
Louisville



PARIS JOHNSON JR.
Ohio State



BO NIX
Oregon



DAVIUS RICHARD
NC Central



TYREE WILSON
Texas Tech



BRUCE YOUNG
Alabama

QUALIFICATIONS

Nominated by their respective schools, members of the NFF Hampshire Honor Society must be either:

- A senior player, who will graduate this spring/summer, and just completed his final year of playing eligibility in 2022; or
- A graduated player, who has been out of high school at least (3) years.

And must also have:

- Attained a minimum undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.2 (4.0 scale); and
- Been starters or significant contributors throughout the 2022 season.

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE IN THE

2023 NFF ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER PROGRAM

EVENT DATE: DECEMBER 5, 2023



Connect with decision makers in the collegiate athletics community and show support of the NFF and its efforts to promote and protect the game of football.

THE ANNUAL EVENT IS ATTENDED BY
REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOLLOWING:

**MORE THAN 140 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTED BY
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS, ATHLETICS DIRECTORS AND HEAD FOOTBALL COACHES**

15 CONFERENCE COMMISSIONERS

**OVER 50 RETURNING MEMBERS
OF THE COLLEGE FB HOF**

**13 ASSOCIATIONS/ORGANIZATIONS
INCLUDING CFP, NCAA,
LEAD1, NACDA, AFCA**

**OVER 25 MEDIA OUTLETS
INCLUDING CBS, ESPN AND FOX**

**12 BOWL GAMES INCLUDING EACH
MEMBER OF THE NEW YEAR'S SIX BOWLS**

**19 PROFESSIONAL SPORTS
ORGANIZATIONS AND TEAMS**

OVER 50 CORPORATIONS



CONTACT CLERRINDA QUEEN FOR MORE INFORMATION

336-473-3145 | Clerrinda.Queen@Learfield.com

NFF CAMPBELL TROPHY® SUMMIT INTUIT

FIFTH ANNUAL EVENT ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 200 OF THE NATION'S TOP SCHOLAR-ATHLETES

The fifth annual William V. Campbell Trophy® Summit took place July 27-29 at Stanford University, reinforcing the event's role as a powerful force for connecting more than 200 former Campbell Trophy® nominees with some of the nation's top CEOs and Silicon Valley entrepreneurs who imparted valuable life lessons to attendees at all stages of their careers.

Headline speakers at the 2023 event, which is proudly sponsored by Intuit, the global technology platform that makes TurboTax, QuickBooks, Mint, Credit Karma and Mailchimp, included Four-Star Admiral (Ret.) and NFF Vice Chairman William H. McRaven, Marshall University President (and former Intuit Chairman & CEO) Brad D. Smith, College Football Hall of Fame inductees Ronnie Lott (USC and NFF Board Member) and Steve Young (BYU and NFF National Scholar-Athlete), San Francisco 49ers General Manager John Lynch (Stanford and a Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee) and the former Utah and NFL quarterback Alex Smith. Campbell Trophy® winners Sam Acho (from Texas and currently an ESPN analyst) and Chris Howard (from Air Force and currently the Executive Vice President and COO at Arizona State) also took the stage.

"The Campbell Trophy® Summit has created a truly unique platform for connecting mentors and mentees around the lessons of leadership, who then return home to carry on the legacy of Bill Campbell in their respective communities," said NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. "The 2023 Summit represents a continuation of the NFF's work in promoting the scholar-athlete ideal that began more than seven decades ago and our commitment to highlight football's role in creating educational opportunities for those who play our sport."

Organized as a tribute to the late Bill Campbell, the award's namesake and the former CEO and Chairman of Intuit, the event serves as a vehicle for the many leaders impacted by Campbell to pass on his insights about success, leadership and personal growth. The 2023 event provided all past Campbell Trophy® nominees a unique chance to interact and learn from many of the nation's top entrepreneurs and Silicon Valley CEOs.

This year's attendees represented 155 colleges and universities from all divisions, and their current careers ranged from doctors, engineers, lawyers, physicists and business and civic leaders. They carried an average GPA in college of 3.65 and 59 percent have subsequently earned

advanced degrees. They currently hail from 42 different states, and more than half played Division I football, while another 20 percent played professionally. More than 55 percent have attended a previous Summit, and their ages run from the early 20s to 61 at an average age of 32.

Brad D. Smith, who currently heads Marshall University and was mentored by Bill Campbell during his tenure at Intuit, kicked off the three-day event with a tribute to the event's namesake and the attendees who gathered to carry on his legacy.

"There are so many talented individuals in this room, and you've have managed over the last seven and a half years to make the Campbell Trophy Summit the-must-attend-event in Silicon Valley, quite frankly, in the country," Smith said. "Now, I've shared this before, for those who heard me say it, but every single year we get phone calls from people, saying how can I buy a ticket to come and hang out with these individuals to hear these speakers. But that's what makes this event special. You can't buy your way into the Campbell Trophy Summit you have to earn it."

A three-day event, the 2023 Summit included leadership workshops, team building activities, and several other social networking activities designed to build relationships, including a non-tackle ultimate football game and a trivia challenge on the Jumbotron at Stanford Stadium. The panels covered a wide range of topics designed to foster leadership, personal growth and the career development of the attendees, including a workshop with Liz Wiseman, the author of The New York Times bestseller "Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter."

MWF Advisors CEO Mark Flynn, a former linebacker at Saint John's (MN) who was a volunteer coach for an eighth-grade boys-and-girls' flag-football team with Campbell, has played the lead role in organizing the event since its inception in 2017.

"The Summit is about a group of former student-athletes who have become great leaders and are willing to travel great distances to share and learn very important lessons about leadership, mentoring and paying it forward, all virtues and values espoused by Bill Campbell," said Flynn. "The Summit is a place where leaders sharpen leaders."

The Summit is open to all former nominees for the Campbell Trophy®, which has been presented since 1990, and the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Awards, which have been bestowed since 1959. The approach



NFF Vice Chairman and Four-Star Admiral (Ret.) **WILLIAM H. McRAVEN** shared numerous leadership insights during his session, quoting Pope Francis that "A shepherd should smell like his sheep."



DR. ALEXANDRIA WHITE, an expert on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, outlined the 50 questions inclusive leaders should ask.



The competitive juices flowed during the Ultimate Football game, a combination of flag football and ultimate frisbee.

NFF CAMPBELL TROPHY® SUMMIT INTUIT

FIFTH ANNUAL EVENT ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 200 OF THE NATION'S TOP SCHOLAR-ATHLETES

of inviting all the past nominees stretching back to 1959 has created a unique community of recent college graduates as well as professionals in the middle of their careers and retirees who can serve as mentors.

After Smith kicked off the event, a wide range of issues were tackled. Steve Young covered the difference between having a plan and a dream. John Lynch talked about the challenges in building a championship organization. Ronnie Lott inspired the audience talking about “why I have your back.” Sam Acho discussed why it’s ok to be vulnerable. Larry Miller, the chairman of the Michael Jordan brand at Nike, recounted his amazing rise to the boardroom after being incarcerated for murder.

Admiral McRaven spoke about numerous lessons from his experiences as a Navy Seal, reminding the audience that life is not fair and to get over it. Dr. Alexandira White, a senior vice president with ReBoot Accel and an expert on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, outlined the 50 questions inclusive leaders should ask. Ron Johnson, the former head of retail operations at Apple, told the story of how the tech giant approached reimagining the customer experience in launching the Apple retail stores. Dianne Flynn, the co-founder and CEO of ReBoot Accel, covered design thinking as a framework for accelerating innovation.

Acho, Hatchell, McRaven and Smith joined award-winning writer Ivan Masiel serving on a panel as part of a design thinking workshop with the attendees forming groups and pitching ideas on reimagining college football and addressing NIL (Name, Image and Likeness), the transfer portal and other issues. Liz Weissman, the best-selling author and executive advisor, conducted team exercises that challenged the attendees to be a multiplier. Alex Smith told his story of recovery after almost losing his leg and how he overcame self-doubt and adversity. Chris Howard gave a presentation, outlining his four “B’s” of leadership: Be Yourself; Be Emphatic; Be Accountable; and Be Courageous.

“The Summit is one of the best leadership and learning laboratories I’ve been exposed to in the last 10 to 20 years,” Howard said. “You get a cohort of like-minded scholar athletes, so it brings back memories of those glory days, but then you get this bevy of leaders in technology, business, sports, and life in general, that gives you those critical nuggets that inspire you, and then on top of all, that, you get this amazing network of your fellow scholar athletes, including the older generation who are going to be a network for you for the rest of your life.”



Attendees enjoyed the roof deck at Stanford Stadium and an opportunity for a photo with the trophy during the opening reception, L-R: **SEAN CULKIN** (Missouri), NFF Summit Chairman **MARK FLYNN** (Saint John’s-MN), **CHRIS POPPER** (Rowan-NJ), **MIKE GOLETZ** (Butler), **NICK THOMAS** (Wayne State), **BOBBY BAKER** (Georgia State). Back Row: **TOM JAMES** (San Jose State) and **PETER GAERTNER** (Delaware State).



Several high-profile panelists gather after their sessions for a photo, L-R: Marshall University President **BRAD D. SMITH**, Hall of Famer **STEVE YOUNG** (BYU), **JOHN LYNCH** (Stanford), Bay Area TV sportscaster **TED ROBINSON** and Hall of Famer **RONNIE LOTT** (USC).



Attendees pitched an all-panel on reforms to address the challenges facing college athletics, L-R: Admiral (ret.) **BILL McRAVEN**, Marshall President **BRAD D. SMITH**, NFF President & CEO **STEVE HATCHELL**, Campbell Trophy® winner **SAM ACHO** (Texas), award-winning journalist **IVAN MASIEL** and at the podium Campbell Trophy® winner **JIM HANSEN** (Colorado).



The Summit included a trivia night and sumptuous meal prepared by Stanford Executive Chef Terry Braggs on the field at Stanford Stadium.



FOOTBALL REMAINS STRONG

772 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OFFERING FOOTBALL

Football remains strong on campuses across the country as the number of four-year colleges and universities from all NCAA divisions, the NAIA and independents offering football currently stands at 772. The total number includes four college football teams that will take the field for the first time this season and 11 additional programs that will take to the gridiron in the next few years. There are also 123 junior college football programs, 17 collegiate sprint football teams and 19 colleges and universities offering women's flag football programs as a varsity sport.

"With more than one million high school students playing football, there is plenty of room for expansion of the game at the collegiate level," said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. "Many of these colleges clearly recognize that football can play an important role in encouraging students to continue their educations by tapping their passion for the game as an incentive to enroll."

"No other sport contributes more to the vibrancy of a college campus than football, and we are very pleased to highlight those schools that have added our great game," said NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. "University and college presidents clearly see the value of having programs on their campuses, and we applaud them for understanding the role football can play in the educational experience of all their students."

Since 1978, when the NCAA changed its method for tracking attendance figures, the number of schools playing NCAA football (FBS, FCS, Division II and Division III) has steadily increased by 181 schools from 484 in 1978 to 665 in 2023. Adding NAIA and independent schools playing football and schools launching programs in the coming years, there are now 772 four-year colleges and universities offering students an opportunity to play college football.

In the past decade alone (2013-2022), 58 football programs have been added by NCAA, NAIA or independent institutions. All 772 schools that offer football will be represented on the three-story helmet wall at the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.



Eastern University (PA) Coach **BILLY CROCKER** and his staff have built a roster of 120 young men who are competing in the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) this fall. In just its second game, Eastern University football earned the first victory in program history, scoring on a pair of long fourth-quarter drives to rally to a 30-23 win over Alvernia (PA) at historic Franklin Field in Philadelphia.

FOUR PROGRAMS LAUNCHED IN 2023



ARKANSAS BAPTIST COLLEGE
Little Rock, Arkansas
NAIA, Sooner Athletic Conference



EASTERN UNIVERSITY
St. Davids, Pennsylvania
NCAA Division III,
Middle Atlantic Conference



ANDERSON UNIVERSITY
Anderson, South Carolina
NCAA Division II,
South Atlantic Conference



CALVIN UNIVERSITY
Grand Rapids, Michigan
NCAA Division III,
Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association



CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA
Shreveport, Louisiana
NCAA Division III,
Conference TBD



JOHN MELVIN UNIVERSITY
Crowley, Louisiana
Gulf-Atlantic Christian Athletic Alliance



THOMAS UNIVERSITY
Thomasville, Georgia
NAIA,
Sun Conference



NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE
Henniker, New Hampshire
NCAA Division III, Great Northeast Athletic Conference



SIMPSON UNIVERSITY
Reeding, California
NAIA, California Pacific Conference

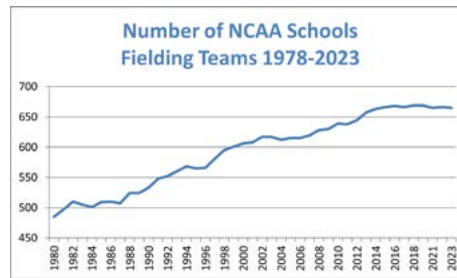
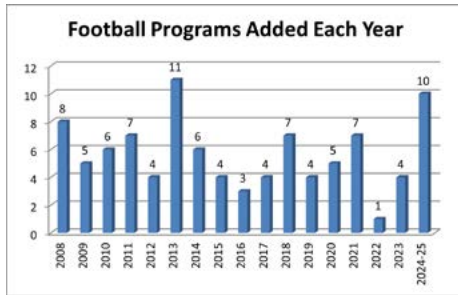


WILLIAM WOODS UNIVERSITY
Fulton, Missouri
NAIA, Heart of America Athletic Conference

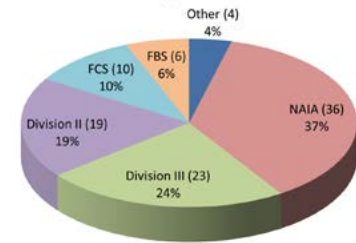


FOOTBALL REMAINS STRONG

772 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OFFERING FOOTBALL



New Schools by Division: 2008-25



Universities and colleges are adding football at all levels, and administrators have developed sound plans, ensuring the new programs address the unique financial, academic and long-term objectives of their respective schools.

The rationale for adding football varies at each institution, and all of the decision makers, who helped develop a plan for launching a program, explain that an in-depth study played a critical role in finding the right level of play and the proper financial balance. Small colleges may cite increasing enrollment and addressing gender imbalances while larger universities might highlight the role of football in raising the institution's profile and its ability to attract research grants. All mention creating a more vibrant on-campus community and connecting with alumni.

According to a 2015 study of five small universities published in *College Planning & Management* by Virginia Wesleyan University President Dr. Scott Miller and former Carlow University (PA) President Dr. Marylouise Fennell, adding sports teams and facilities, especially football and marching bands, can fuel an enrollment boost. The study found that each of the five institutions experienced a six-year increase of 26 percent or more, with one school doubling its enrollment during that period.

GROWTH IN SPRINT FOOTBALL AND WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL

Football has also seen continued growth at the collegiate varsity level in two other areas: sprint football and women's flag football.

Sprint football is a full-contact sport for players weighing 178 pounds or less with the same rules as regular college football. Since 1934, intercollegiate student-athletes on the East Coast have benefited from participation in the sport in the nine-member Collegiate Sprint Football League (CSFL).

The 2022 fall season saw sprint football expand to Middle America for the first time. The addition of the separate Midwest Sprint Football League (MSFL), with its own rules and championships, represented the largest single-year expansion of the sport in nearly 90 years. While NCAA and NAIA football emphasize strength and body weight, sprint football values speed and agility. As described by *The New York Times*, sprint football is known for its "quick players" and its "fast-paced style of play."

Six private colleges and universities in the Midwest and Upper South comprised the charter members of the MSFL: Bellarmine University (KY), Calumet College of St. Joseph (IN), Fontbonne University (MO), Midway University (KY), Quincy University (IL) and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (IN). Two additional schools, Oakland City University (IN) and Walsh University (OH), have joined the league for the 2023 season.

Eight of the six MSFL members do not currently sponsor varsity football in NCAA or NAIA competition. Quincy University and Walsh University also

have varsity football programs at the NCAA Division II level, and they have continued to sponsor teams at both levels of play.

The eight MSFL teams will play a nine-week regular season from Sept. 14 until Nov. 4. The 2023 MSFL playoff will consist of two semifinal games on Nov. 11 and the MSFL Championship Game on Nov. 18.

The NAIA women's flag football league, partnering with NFL FLAG, continues with impressive growth, almost doubling in size from 12 NAIA schools taking part last season to 23 this year. This past spring, the Atlanta Falcons hosted the NAIA Women's Flag Football Finals at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta for a third consecutive year, and Ottawa University (KS) defeated Thomas University (GA), 25-13, to claim their third consecutive Women's Flag Football Championship.

The Atlantic East Conference, in partnership with the NFL and RCX Sports, along with support from the Philadelphia Eagles, have announced plans to be the first NCAA conference to offer varsity female flag football, anticipating a start date of Spring 2025 with teams participating as a club sport this spring. Five schools will participate during the inaugural season: Centenary University (NJ), Cabrini University (PA), Immaculata University (PA), Marymount University (VA) and Neumann University (PA).

In the near future, the International Olympic Committee is expected to rule on whether men's and women's flag football will be among the sports added to the 2028 Summer Games in Los Angeles.

FIVE PROGRAMS LAUNCHING IN FUTURE SEASONS



MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY

Castine, Maine
NCAA Division III,
Commonwealth Coast
Conference



ROANOKE COLLEGE

Salem, Virginia
NCAA Division III,
Old Dominion Athletic
Conference



SCHREINER UNIVERSITY

Kerrville, Texas
NCAA Division III,
Southern Collegiate
Athletic Conference



UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Rio Grande Valley, Texas
NCAA Division I Football
Championship Subdivision,
Western Athletic Conference



WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Bekley, West Virginia
NAIA,
Conference TBD

NFF NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

GRUNDY CENTER HIGH SCHOOL (IA) NAMED THE WINNER OF THE 2022-23 NFF HATCHELL CUP

The NFF recognized 60 teams this past February as state winners of the 2022-23 NFF National High School Academic Excellence Awards Presented by the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation, recognizing them as the top academic football teams from each level of play within each state. From the 60 teams, Grundy Center High School (IA) was selected as the winner of the NFF Hatchell Cup, presented by “The Original” Bob’s Steak & Chop House, as top team in the nation for excellence in the classroom, on the field and in the community. As part of the honor of being named the Hatchell Cup winner, Grundy received a \$10,000 donation from Bob’s to support the football program.

“Academic and athletic success go hand-in-hand,” said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. “We are proud to recognize these 60 outstanding high school football teams as the top academic performers in their states. These schools, coaches, players and their families should all be incredibly pleased with their accomplishments. We hope by inspiring teams to compete in the classroom with the same competitive spirit that it takes to win on the field, we will better prepare high school football players for success later in life.”

The NFF announced the creation of the NFF National High School Academic Excellence Awards in 2021, with the Nebraska and Texas state high school coaches associations leading the initial effort. The initiative is designed to inspire and foster a culture of academic excellence on high school football teams throughout the nation.

Eligibility requirements for the awards include: a minimum cumulative team GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; superior academic application and

performance; and a successful football season. A total of 122 teams have been celebrated since the program’s inception after the 2021-22 season.

The individual state high school coaches associations select their respective state’s winners from a pool of nominees submitted by each school’s head coach. A selection committee, created by the NFF, is responsible for choosing the recipient of the NFF Hatchell Cup trophy, which was named in 2022 for longtime NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. The state winners and finalists are announced each February.

Led by Head Coach Travis Zajac, the Grundy Center team boasted an impressive 3.69 GPA while winning the Iowa Class A State Championship with a perfect 13-0 record. The 2022 state title marked the Spartans’ first win in four consecutive appearances in the Class A State Championship game, having finished as the runner-up in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

The team completed more than 250 hours of community service, including assisting at Kiwanis Club community breakfasts, the town festival (Felix Grundy Days), a preschool renovation project, a community garage sale, officiating at YSF flag football games and setting up the “The Wall That Heals,” a traveling Vietnam War Memorial. Numerous members of the team participated in band, choir and school musicals, while 24 of the 26 upperclassmen played at least one other sport, including several three and four sport athletes. The team featured seven sets of brothers.

For more information on the NFF National High School Academic Excellence Award or to learn how your state high school coaches association can participate next season, please contact the NFF at HSnominations@footballfoundation.com.



The NFF traveled to Iowa to formally present the inaugural Hatchell Cup trophy to Grundy Center High School, L-R: 2022 Iowa Football Coaches Association President **PAUL PATTERSON**, Grundy Center Head Coach **TRAVIS ZAJAC**, NFF Director of Membership **RON DILATUSH** and Grundy Center Principal **MICHAEL VOKES**.



As part of the celebration, Grundy Center’s accomplishments were also celebrated in Dallas at “The Original” Bob’s Steak & Chop House, which serves as the presenting sponsor of the award, L-R (Front Row): Grundy Center Principal **MICHAEL VOKES**, College Football Hall of Fame Coach **BOB STOOPS** (Oklahoma) and Grundy Center Head Coach **TRAVIS ZAJAC**. Back Row: Texas High School Coaches Association (THSCA) Assistant Executive Director **GLEN WEST**, THSCA Board of Directors President **LEE WIGINTON**, NFF President & CEO **STEVE HATCHELL**, Restaurateur **BOB SAMBOL**, NFF Board Member **MIKE MOE**, College Football Hall of Fame inductee **GARY REASONS** (Northwestern State).



While boasting an impressive-average 3.69 GPA, Grundy Center went a perfect 13-0 while winning the Iowa Class A State Championship.



NFF NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

PRESENTED BY ROSE BOWL LEGACY FOUNDATION

DELAWARE

- 1A – Charter School of Wilmington
- 3A – Middletown St. Georges Technical High School

FLORIDA

- 4M – Tampa Plant High School

ILLINOIS

- 1A – Forreston High School
- 3A – Robinson High School
- 4A – Geneseo High School
- 7A – Yorkville High School
- 8A – Lincolnshire Adlai E. Stevenson High School

INDIANA

- 1A – Indianapolis Lutheran High School
- 2A – Evansville Mater Dei High School
- 3A – West Lafayette High School
- 4A – Columbia City High School
- 5A – Whiteland High School
- 6A – Indianapolis Cathedral High School

IOWA

- A – Grundy Center High School

LOUISIANA

- 1A – Monroe Ouachita Christian High School
- 3A – Iowa High School
- 4A – Lafayette St. Thomas More Catholic High School
- 5A – New Orleans Brother Martin High School
- 5A – Geismar Dutchtown High School
- 5A – Benton High School

MICHIGAN

- 1 – Brighton High School
- 6 – Clinton High School
- 8 – Marine City Cardinal Mooney Catholic High School
- 8 Man (Div. 1) – Adrian Lenawee Christian High School

MINNESOTA

- 1A – Parkers Prairie High School
- 2A – St. Clair/Mankato Loyola High School
- 3A – East Grand Forks High School
- 4A – Benilde-St. Margaret's High School
- 5A – Mahtomedi High School
- 6A – Farmington High School
- 9 Man – Kittson County Central High School

NEBRASKA

- A – Kearney High School
- B – Elkhorn Mount Michael Benedictine High School
- C1 – Minden High School
- C2 – Malcolm High School
- D1 – Hemingford High School
- D2 – Elgin High School-Pope John Central Catholic High School (Coop)
- D6 – Hampton High School

OREGON

- 1A – St. Paul High School
- 2A – Oakland High School
- 3A – Warrenton High School
- 4A – Stayton High School
- 5A – Bend Summit High School
- 6A – Portland Jesuit High School

TEXAS

- 1A – Chester High School
- 2A – Tioga High School
- 3A – Spearman High School
- 4A – Boerne High School
- 5A – Lake Belton High School
- 6A – Tomball High School
- Private – Houston St. Thomas Catholic High School

WISCONSIN

- 1 – Appleton North High School
- 2 – Lake Geneva Badger High School
- 3 – Monroe High School
- 4 – Madison Edgewood High School
- 5 – Stratford High School
- 6 – Cuba City High School
- 7 – Eau Claire Regis High School
- 8 Man – Wabeno/Laona High School



The NFF Hatchell Cup Presented by “The Original” Bob’s Steak and Chop House is named in honor of NFF President and CEO **STEVE HATCHELL**. Since taking over the helm of the NFF in 2005, Hatchell has overseen numerous programs expanding the NFF’s reach and impact as it continues to promote the scholar-athlete ideal.



2023 NFF TEAM OF DISTINCTION

RECOGNIZING THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST FROM THE NFF CHAPTER NETWORK

From a pool of 3,500 scholar-athletes identified by a nationwide Chapter Network, the National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame (NFF) announced 79 members of the 2023 NFF Team of Distinction. As part of its mission to promote the scholar-athlete ideal, the initiative allows the NFF to honor the top high school scholar-athletes from around the country as the best and the brightest at the local level while highlighting the work of the NFF Chapter Network.

The members of the team all played their final high school football season during the 2022-23 school year. As part of the award, all of the honorees will be part of a permanent digital display at the Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.

Criteria to make the team include (but are not limited to) academic achievement, athletic accolades and community involvement. Each chapter is limited to one honoree, distinguishing them as the top scholar-athlete from all the high schools covered by the chapter.

This initiative allows us to shine a national spotlight on some of the most deserving high school student-athletes honored at the local level by our expansive Chapter Network," said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. "This honor is one of the most prestigious national awards that a high school player can receive. We would like to congratulate all 79 honorees for their success on and off the field, especially with the challenges caused by the pandemic during their senior year. We also want to salute all of our NFF Chapters who continue to play an important role in promoting football in their communities."



CAMERON HAMMOND, an all-district selection who played defensive end and linebacker at Colleyville Heritage (TX) High School and boasted a 5.22 GPA, was selected as the 2023 Scholar-Athlete of the Year award by the NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas, L-R: Former Wakeland Head Coach **MARTY SECOND**, **CAMERON HAMMOND**, Wakeland Head Coach **CHAN ISOM**, **COLIN PEEK** (2022 winner) and NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas President **GERALD BRENCE**.

EAST REGION HONOREES

- **Kwasi Bonsu** – RB/DL, Baldwin High School in Baldwin, New York. Submitted by the NFF Nassau County Chapter.
- **Vincent Cajano III** – QB/K/P, Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, New York. Submitted by the NFF New York Chapter.
- **Nolan Clayton** – TE/DE, Upper Merion High School in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Submitted by the NFF Philadelphia Chapter.
- **David Dias** – RB/DL, Harrison High School in Harrison, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF Essex County Chapter.
- **Jack Donahoe** – S, Archbishop Stepinac High School in White Plains, New York. Submitted by the NFF Westchester Chapter (NY).
- **Benjamin Manley** – QB/LB, Mahanoy Area High School in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. Submitted by the NFF Schuylkill-Pottsville Chapter (PA).
- **Andrew Miller** – WR/CB, Northport High School in Northport, New York. Submitted by the NFF Suffolk County Chapter (NY).
- **Stefano Montella** – FB/LB, West Morris Central High School in Chester, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF Greater Morris County Chapter (NJ).
- **Griffin Patridge** – WR/LB, Allentown Central Catholic High School in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Submitted by the NFF Lehigh Valley Chapter (PA).
- **Michael Poinsett** – FB/LB, Bordentown High School Bordentown, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF Delaware Valley Chapter.
- **Alex Scheuplein** – QB/DB, Wayne Valley High School in Wayne, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF Passaic County Chapter (NJ).

- **Michael Sears** – OL/LB, Cedar Creek High School in Egg Harbor City, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF South Jersey Chapter.
- **John Shuster** – TB/LB, Windber High School in Windber, Pennsylvania. Submitted by the NFF Central Pennsylvania Chapter.
- **Matthew Yascko** – QB, Edison High School in Edison, New Jersey. Submitted by the NFF Bill Denny-Rutgers FB Letterwinners Chapter.
- **Alan Zhao** – K, Marriotts Ridge High School in Marriottsville, Maryland. Submitted by the NFF Greater Baltimore Chapter.

MIDWEST REGION HONOREES

- **Sarah Ball** – WR/DB, Willowbrook High School in Villa Park, Illinois. Submitted by the NFF Chicago Metro Chapter.
- **Isaac Carter** – OG/NG, Grove City High School in Grove City, Ohio. Submitted by the NFF Columbus Chapter.
- **Zane Flores** – QB, Gretna High School in Gretna, Nebraska. Submitted by the NFF Nebraska Chapter.
- **Nicholas Hoying** – LB, Kings High School in King Mills, Ohio. Submitted by the NFF Greater Cincinnati Chapter.
- **Colton Lippe** – RB/LB, Mount Vernon High School in Mount Vernon, Indiana. Submitted by the NFF Southern Indiana Chapter.
- **Alexander Ravlin** – QB/S, Underwood High School in Underwood, Iowa. Submitted by the NFF Iowa Chapter.
- **Easton Reed** – OL/DL, Bremen High School in Bremen, Indiana. Submitted by the NFF Moose Krause Chapter (IN).

2023 NFF TEAM OF DISTINCTION NOTES

- 79 Honorees
- 35 States Represented
- 4.0 Average GPA
- 67 Team Captains
- 43 All-State Selections
- 5 Valedictorians
- 48 National Honor Society Members
- 9 National Merit Finalists and Honorees

- **Ryan Retzer** – C, Belle Plaine High School in Belle Plaine, Minnesota. Submitted by the NFF Minnesota Chapter.
- **Keenan Schartz** – QB, Manhattan High School in Manhattan, Kansas. Submitted by the NFF Coach Bill Snyder Family/Sunflower Chapter.
- **Nolan Schopp** – RB/LB, Kettle Moraine High School in Wales, Wisconsin. Submitted by the NFF Wisconsin Chapter.
- **Justin Selbert** – OL, Eureka Senior High School in Eureka, Missouri. Submitted by the NFF Tom Lombardo/St. Louis Chapter.
- **Allen Thomason** – OT, Pulaski Academy in Little Rock, Arkansas. Submitted by the NFF Arkansas Chapter.
- **Kyle Turanchick** – RB/LB, Oak Hill High School in Converse, Indiana. Submitted by the NFF Joe Tiller/Northwest Indiana Chapter.
- **Connor Walenzak** – RB/LB, Perrysburg High School in Perrysburg, Ohio. Submitted by the NFF Wistert-Toledo Chapter (OH).



2023 NFF TEAM OF DISTINCTION

RECOGNIZING THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST FROM THE NFF CHAPTER NETWORK

- **Trevor Weakley** – RB/LB, Western Boone High School in Thorntown, Indiana. Submitted by the NFF Central Indiana Chapter.

NORTHEAST REGION HONOREES

- **Dalton Bates** – OL/DL, Cuginchaug Regional High School in Durham, Connecticut. Submitted by the NFF Casey-O'Brien/New Haven Chapter (CT).
- **Andrew Ciarniello** – RB/S, North Kingstown High School in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. Submitted by the NFF Emo DiNitto/Rhode Island Chapter.
- **Kyle Colebourn** – OL/DL, Algonquin Regional High School in Northborough, Massachusetts. Submitted by the NFF Joe Mewhiney/Central Massachusetts Chapter.
- **Sean Curley** – WR, St. Joseph High School in Trumbull, Connecticut. Submitted by the NFF DeSantis-McDougall/Fairfield County Chapter (CT).
- **Connor Gresens** – LB, Irondequoit High School in Rochester, New York. Submitted by the NFF Rochester Chapter (NY).
- **Tristan Korfonta** – RB/LB, Christian Brothers Academy in Syracuse, New York. Submitted by the NFF Central New York Chapter.
- **Austin McCarthy** – C/LS, Catholic Memorial High School in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. Submitted by the NFF Jack Grinold/Eastern Massachusetts Chapter.
- **Joe Palisi** – S, Conard High School in West Hartford, Connecticut. Submitted by the NFF Doc Boisoineau/Northern Connecticut Chapter.
- **Alexander Provost** – WR/DB, Champlain Valley Union High School in Hinesburg, Vermont. Submitted by the NFF Vermont Chapter.
- **Conner Robidoux** – WR/DB, East Longmeadow High School in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Submitted by the NFF Western Massachusetts Chapter.
- **Zachary Robinson-Smey** – QB/S, Windham High School in Willimantic, Connecticut. Submitted by the NFF Southeastern Connecticut Chapter.
- **Elias Soehren** – QB/S, Oxford Hills High School in South Paris, Maine. Submitted by the NFF Howie Vandersea State of Maine Chapter.
- **Dylan Wrisley** – WR/S, Londonderry High School in Londonderry, New Hampshire. Submitted by the NFF Joe Yukica/New Hampshire Chapter.

SOUTH REGION HONOREES

- **Hunter Addison** – S, North Desoto High School in Stonewall, Louisiana. Submitted by the NFF S.M. McNaughton Chapter (LA).
- **Nolan Albright** – TE, Grimsley High School in Greensboro, North Carolina. Submitted by the NFF Corrigan/Faircloth Chapter (NC).
- **Caedmon Barron** – WR/DB, Lubbock High School in Lubbock, Texas. Submitted by the NFF Texas Tech Chapter.
- **Jake Carson** – QB, Dobyms-Bennett High School in Kingsport, Tennessee. Submitted by the NFF Mountain Empire Chapter (TN).



SARAH BALL, a wide receiver and defensive back on Willowbrook High School (IL) Flag Football Team was selected by the NFF Chicago Metro Chapter as the outpost's top scholar-athlete. Ball amassed a 4.5 GPA while leading the team to the inaugural Chicago Bears Girls Flag State Championship.

- **John Dorris** – WR, Athens Academy in Athens, Georgia. Submitted by the NFF University of Georgia Chapter.
- **Noah Flaskamp** – WR, Collierville High School in Collierville, Tennessee. Submitted by the NFF Memphis Chapter (TN).
- **Chase Goodwin** – QB, Houston Memorial High School in Houston, Texas. Submitted by the NFF Touchdown Club of Houston Chapter (TX).
- **Dya'Ron Grundy** – OL/DL, Springfield High School in Springfield, Tennessee. Submitted by the NFF Middle Tennessee Chapter.
- **Cameron Hammond** – DE/LB, Colleyville Heritage High School in Colleyville, Texas. Submitted by the NFF Gridiron Club of Dallas Chapter (TX).
- **Andrew Hollinger** – LB, DH Conley High School in Greenville, North Carolina. Submitted by the NFFCHOF Bill Dooley Chapter (NC).
- **Shaunak Joshi** – QB, Hillsborough High School in Tampa, Florida. Submitted by the NFF Tampa Chapter (FL).
- **Tyler Kuo** – TE/WR, Regents School of Austin in Austin, Texas. Submitted by the NFF Greater Austin Chapter (TX).
- **Max Lawrence** – QB, Westland Hialeah Senior High School in Hialeah, Florida. Submitted by the NFF Miami Touchdown Club Chapter.
- **Jackson Lewis** – OG/DE, Cathedral High School in Natchez, Mississippi. Submitted by the NFF Miss/Lou Chapter.
- **Dylan Nation** – TE/LS, Callaway High School in Hogansville, Georgia. Submitted by the NFF Touchdown Club of Atlanta Chapter.
- **Gavin Noe** – RB/LB, Anderson County High School in Clinton, Tennessee. Submitted by the NFF East Tennessee Chapter.

- **Brayden Slade** – S, Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Florida. Submitted by the NFF Brian Piccolo/Ft. Lauderdale Chapter (FL).
- **Brandon Torres** – LB, Barron Collier High School in Naples, Florida. Submitted by the NFF Collier County Chapter (FL).
- **Caleb Villarreal** – WR/DB, Hamshire-Fannett High School in Hamshire, Texas. Submitted by the NFF Golden Triangle Chapter (TX).
- **Mason Williams** – WR/DB, Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies in Metairie, Louisiana. Submitted by the NFF Allstate Sugar Bowl Chapter.

WEST REGION HONOREES

- **Zachariah Branch** – WR, Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas, Nevada. Submitted by the NFF Bill Ireland/Las Vegas Chapter.
- **Jack Brundage** – LB, Tesoro High School in Las Flores, California. Submitted by the NFF Orange County Chapter (CA).
- **Ryder Chapin** – TE/LB, Great Oak High School in Temecula, California. Submitted by the NFF Riverside County Chapter (CA).
- **Hunter Clegg** – TE/DE, American Fork High School in American Fork, Utah. Submitted by the NFF Utah Chapter.
- **Phil Cotton** – TE/LB, Walnut High School in Walnut, California. Submitted by the Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Chapter (CA).
- **Josh Dixon** – WR/DB, Harvard-Westlake High School in Los Angeles, California. Submitted by the NFF San Fernando Valley Chapter (CA).
- **Benjamin Lee** – OL/DL, Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland, California. Submitted by the NFF Northern California Chapter.
- **Myles Libman** – WR/PR, Pinnacle High School in Phoenix, Arizona. Submitted by the NFF Valley of the Sun Chapter (AZ).
- **Jay Mentink** – WR/DB, Sumner High School in Sumner, Washington. Submitted by the NFF Tacoma-Pierce County Chapter (WA).
- **Scott Nixon** – WR/RB/LB, Sheldon High School in Sacramento, California. Submitted by the NFF Sacramento Valley Chapter (CA).
- **Cristian Pando** – RB/LB, Willcox High School in Willcox, Arizona. Submitted by the NFF Southern Arizona Chapter.
- **Easton Peterson** – DB, Granite Hills High School in El Cajon, California. Submitted by the NFF Walter Zable/San Diego Chapter (CA).
- **Jackson St. Aubyn** – OL/DL, Palmer Ridge High School in Monument, Colorado. Submitted by the NFF Colorado Chapter.
- **Luke Talich** – QB/S, Cody High School in Cody, Wyoming. Submitted by the NFF Wyoming Chapter.
- **David Uzoma** – DE, Westchester High School in Los Angeles, California. Submitted by the NFF Los Angeles Chapter (CA).
- **Ben Winjum** – RB/LB, West Linn High School in West Linn, Oregon. Submitted by the NFF Oregon Chapter.



NFF HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASES OPEN COLLEGE DOORS

FREE EVENTS REACHED MORE THAN 1,000 HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN 2023

Organizers in Arizona, Houston, Southern California and South Florida all staged NFF High School Showcases in February 2023, giving more than 1,000 aspiring college football student-athletes a shot at earning their degrees and playing at the next level. They all plan to host events again in 2024.

The NFF High School Showcases, which are absolutely free to both participants and college recruiters, provide academically eligible high school seniors who did not sign an NCAA Division I letter of intent an opportunity to go through a series of drills in front of divisional college coaches from the NCAA Division II, NCAA III and NAIA levels.

The events in February collectively attracted representatives from more than 100 colleges covering 30 states, coupling them with more than 1,000 aspiring college players who subsequently landed millions of dollars in academic and participation scholarships.

“The leaders in these cities have done a tremendous job, creating a unique opportunity for seniors to find a new path to college with football opening the door,” said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. “Their passion has developed a completely free system, literally providing thousands of talented student-athletes the opportunity to continue their educations. It’s a huge difference maker, especially for those who did not sign at the Division I level but would love to still play college football and earn their degrees.”

Participants, who all have to meet minimum academic standards, compete in a series of athletic drills designed to let divisional college coaches assess each player’s potential, including a 40-yard dash and several agility and strength tests. The events allow the college recruiters an opportunity to evaluate a large number of qualified student-athletes in a short period while minimizing their travel costs.



The inaugural Arizona Senior Showcase was held at the State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona.



A participant flashed his speed during the 40-yard dash at the Houston Methodist Training Center in Houston, Texas.



Aspiring college student-athletes at the Orange Bowl Florida High School Football Showcase had opportunities to speak with coaches after the drills.



The 11th annual Terry Donahue Memorial California Showcase attracted more than 400 participants.

NFF HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASES OPEN COLLEGE DOORS

FREE EVENTS REACHED MORE THAN 1,000 HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN 2023

2024 SHOWCASES

The **16th Annual Houston Texans Senior Showcase**, presented by Gatorade, will take place Saturday, Feb. 10, at the Texans Methodist Training Center next door to NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas. The 2023 edition attracted more than 400 seniors, pairing them with recruiters from 45 colleges. The event in Houston was founded by Phil Camp, the former head football coach at Milby High School in Houston; Coby Rhoden, an academic coordinator at Houston Aldine High School; and Chris Vaughan, a board member of the NFF Touchdown Club of Houston Chapter. Backed by the Houston Texans, the event also receives significant support from Lonestar Sports and Entertainment General Manager, David Fletcher, who also serves on the board of the NFF Touchdown Club of Houston.

The **11th Annual Terry Donahue Memorial California Showcase** will take place Feb. 24 at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine, California. The event was launched in 2013 by College Football Hall of Fame Coach Terry Donahue, who passed away in July 2021, and the event was renamed in his honor. More than \$40 million in scholarships have been awarded to 1,100 participants since the event's inception, and more than 400 high school seniors will look to follow in their footsteps connecting with recruiters from more than 60 colleges at this year's event.

The **Eighth Annual Orange Bowl Florida High School Football Showcase**, presented by Baptist Health, will take place at St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens, Florida, in February. The 2023 South Florida event was headed under the leadership of Orange Bowl Committee, President & Chair Dr. Yvonne Johnson-Phillips, CEO Eric Poms and Showcase subcommittee chair and former University of Miami linebacker Tony Coley. More than \$8 million has been awarded to more than 400 participants over the event's seven-year history with another 300 seniors anticipated to take part in 2024.

The **Second Annual Arizona Senior Showcase** will be held Feb. 17 at Ottawa University in Sunrise, Arizona. The NFF Southern Arizona Chapter (NFFSAC), in collaboration with Glazier Clinics, has taken the lead in organizing the event with the support of former college coaches Tim Kish, Mike Hankwitz and former UCLA QB Jay Schroeder. Kish recently became the NFFSAC President. Organizers anticipate more than 200 participants and 20 colleges in 2024.

Schroeder, who played for Coach Donahue at UCLA and then in the NFL, including a stint with the Raiders, has been involved with events in Arizona, Houston and Los Angeles. This past year, he has been working to enlist the Raiders to stage a Showcase in Las Vegas as part of the 2024 events. In the past, NFF Showcases have also taken place in Atlanta, Detroit and Charlotte (NC).



The Orange Bowl Florida High School Football Showcase included long jump drills.



Greenville University, a Division III school from Illinois, was one of more than 60 colleges that set up tables at the California Showcase.



Orange Bowl Committee President & Chair **DR. YVONNE JOHNSON-PHILLIPS** speaks with the media about the powerful impact the Showcase has had in South Florida during the past seven years.



FOOTBALL BY THE NUMBERS

NFF HIGHLIGHTS THE KEY STATS IN THE GAME

Each year, the National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame collects the impactful numbers on the state of football, including key stats from the high school, collegiate and NFL levels.

“As thrilling and exciting as the action is on the football field, the NFF takes great pride in promoting the educational opportunities created by our sport,” said NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. “These numbers help us quantify some of those opportunities, and we hope the stats will inspire the next generation to take full advantage of the opportunities created by our sport. As it’s often said, college is not about just the four years in school but its impact on your career for the next forty.”

During the 2023 season, the NFF anticipates that more than one million students will take the field at 15,810 high schools and another 81,000 will play college football at 772 four-year institutions with another 11 colleges and universities having announced plans to add teams in the coming years.

Exceptional growth is also being experienced on several other fronts, and the *Sports Business Journal* has reported 474,000 girls between the ages of 6 and 17 played flag football in 2022, a 63% increase from 2019. Last season, 16 NAIA schools fielded varsity women’s flag football teams with a total of 19 teams playing in 2023. Flag football also debuted at the 2022 World Games and is in the mix as a potential Olympic sport. Sprint Football, which added the six teams to the mix in 2022, has added two more programs in 2023, bringing the total of colleges with sprint teams to 17.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION (EST. 1947)

120 chapters in 47 states representing more than 6,000 high schools and 600,000(+) players (est. 1957)

65th NFF Annual Awards Dinner Presented by Las Vegas at the ARIA Resort and Casino on December 5, 2023

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

15,800* high schools in the U.S. that sponsor football (as of 2021-22 season, National Federation of State High School Associations)

1.04* million high school football players in the U.S. (as of 2021-22 season, National Federation of State High School Associations)

7.8% of high school football players will play in college

2,584 high schools in the U.S. sponsor girls tackle football (as of 2021-22 season, National Federation of State High School Associations)

**Note: These numbers do not include private and/or parochial high schools that do not report to the state high school association*



Approximately 474,000 girls between the ages of 6 and 17 played flag football in 2022, a 63% increase from 2019.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL (EST. 1869)

772 colleges and universities playing football at all levels (FBS, FCS, Division II, Division III, NAIA and more)

81,000 (+) college football players in NCAA and NAIA

89 colleges and universities added football programs from 2008-22

16 colleges and universities will add football programs in 2023 and beyond

17 colleges and universities offering sprint football

19 colleges and universities offering women’s flag football as a varsity sport

123 junior colleges offering football

0.41% of college football players made NFL opening week rosters in 2023



More than one million students will play football at 15,810 high schools this year.



FOOTBALL BY THE NUMBERS

NFF HIGHLIGHTS THE KEY STATS IN THE GAME

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE (EST. 1920)

32 NFL teams

2,016 players on NFL rosters

297 rookies made NFL opening week rosters in 2022 (NFL)

259 college football players were drafted in 2023

672 college football players signed as undrafted free agents or received training camp invitations in 2023

3.3 years is an average NFL player's career (Statista)

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GRADUATION RATES

82% graduation success rate of Football Bowl Subdivision football student-athletes (NCAA)

70% graduation rate of general student body at Division I institutions (NCAA)

3,113 student-athletes on 2022 college football rosters had already earned their undergraduate degrees

5,863 football student-athletes have returned to school to earn their degrees since 2003 — the most among all NCAA Division I sports (NCAA)

NFF COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME (EST. 1951)

5.62 million college football players all-time (est. 1869)

1,074 players and 230 coaches inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame all-time

.02% less than two one-hundredths of a percent of all-time players have earned induction into the College Football Hall of Fame

22 coaches and players from 25 schools representing six different decades to be inducted into College Football Hall of Fame Class on December 5, 2023



This year 2,584 high schools in the U.S. are sponsoring girls' tackle football.

NFF SCHOLAR-ATHLETE PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

33 William V. Campbell Trophy® recipients recognized as college football's top scholar-athlete (est. 1990)

906 college football players from 273 schools honored as NFF National Scholar-Athletes all-time (est. 1959)

16,389 college football players all-time named to the NFF Hampshire Honor Society (est. 2007)

10 years of honoring faculty athletic representatives through NFF Faculty Salutes

81 high school football scholar-athletes recognized by NFF Team of Distinction

34 state high school coaches associations partnered on the NFF National High School Academic Excellence Awards

2 recipients of the NFF Hatchell Cup, presented to the nation's top all-around high school football program

FWAA, NFF PARTNER FOR NINTH YEAR ON SUPER 16 POLL

WEEKLY RANKING OF FBS TEAMS BY SPORTS WRITERS AND COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAMERS

The Football Writers Association of America (FWAA) and the National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame are partnering for the ninth year to conduct the FWAA-NFF Super 16 Poll, the organizations' weekly poll ranking the top 16 teams in the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

The results are being released by 12:30 p.m. ET each Sunday of the 2023 regular season. The last poll will be released Sunday, Dec. 3, the day after the conference championship games. There is no final poll after the bowl games, but the NFF will award its historic MacArthur Bowl National Championship Trophy to the winner of the College Football Playoff National Championship.

"We are proud to continue our partnership with the FWAA on the Super 16 Poll," said NFF President & CEO Steve Hatchell. "We believe that our voters offer an extremely credible set of opinions, and we hope that the combined respect of both our organizations will continue to provide a compelling reference point for fans to follow during the season."

The voters in the poll consist of FWAA writers and College Football Hall of Famers. The poll aims to draw on the vast knowledge of the nation's top journalists with extensive experience covering college football in combination with some of the greatest legends to have ever played or coached the game.

"We are extremely excited to continue the Super 16 Poll and partner with the National Football Foundation," said 2023 FWAA Executive Director Steve Richardson. "We have had a great experience with the poll, and we look forward to extending it for another year. Our poll includes some of the most knowledgeable and objective college football minds in the country, and we believe it has developed into a compelling instrument for ranking the best teams in the country."

The decision to conduct the poll was made by the boards of both organizations at the conclusion of the 2013 season and the end of the Bowl Championship Series, building on a relationship that stretches back to the 1940s when both groups were founded. The 2023 poll includes 57 voters (41 from the FWAA and 16 Hall of Famers), with their individual rankings again made public each week during the season.



Photo by Tony Walsh, UGAAA

NFF President & CEO **STEVE HATCHELL** (right) presented the MacArthur Bowl to Georgia head coach **KIRBY SMART** (left) and University of Georgia President **JERE MOREHEAD** (center) during a celebration at Sanford Stadium in Athens for a second consecutive year.

2023 FWAA-NFF SUPER 16 POLL VOTERS



Zach Barnett	FootballScoop.com
Tony Barnhart	TMG College Sports
Tom Beck	2004 College Football Hall of Fame Coach
Bill Bender.....	Sporting News
Mark Blaudschun	TMG Sports
Chip Brown	Horns247.com
Keith Byars	2020 College Football Hall of Fame - Ohio State
Brett Ciancia.....	Pick Six Previews
Dave Congrove	CollegeFootballPoll.com
Ross Dellenger	Yahoo Sports
Gene Duffey.....	Houston-Based Freelancer
Bryan Fischer	FOX Sports
Liam Fitzgibbon	SMU Student Writer
Pete Fiutak.....	CollegeFootballNews.com
Tom Fornelli	CBS Sports
Matt Fortuna.....	The Inside Zone
Mike Griffith.....	AJC/DawgNation
David Hale.....	ESPN
Eric Hansen.....	InsideNDsports.com/Rivals
Dan Harralson	Vols Wire/USA Today Network
Mike Hass	2023 College Football Hall of Fame - Oregon State
Steve Helwagen	Bucknuts Media Network
Ron Higgins	Shreveport-Bossier Journal
Bob Holt	Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Lou L. Holtz.....	2008 College Football Hall of Fame Coach
Johnnie Johnson.....	2007 College Football Hall of Fame - Texas
Barrett Jones	2012 Campbell Trophy* Recipient, Alabama
Cody Kellner	Cody Kellner Points Index
Rachel Lenzi.....	Buffalo News
Christina Long	Greenville News
Mark May	2005 College Football Hall of Fame - Pittsburgh
Kevin McGuire	Nittany Lions Wire/USA Today Network
Don McPherson	2008 College Football Hall of Fame - Syracuse
Mark Messner	2023 College Football Hall of Fame - Michigan
Max Olson	The Athletic - National Reporter
Randy Peterson	Des Moines Register
Kevin Reynolds	Salt Lake Tribune
Bill Royce	2016 College Football Hall of Fame - Ashland (OH)
Mike'l Severe	Big Red Wrap-Up
Dan Sileo	The National Football Show—Jakib Sports
Ayokunle Spencer	Sports Radio America
Phil Steele	Phil Steele Publications
Patrick Stevens	Baltimore/D.C. Freelancer
Andy Talley	2020 College Football Hall of Fame - Coach
David Teel	Richmond Times-Dispatch
Mel Tjeerdsma	2018 College Football Hall of Fame - Coach
Chris Vannini	The Athletic
John Wagner	The Blade, Toledo (Ret.)
Dick Weiss.....	Blue Star Media
David Williams.....	2005 College Football Hall of Fame - Illinois
Reggie Williams	2007 College Football Hall of Fame - Dartmouth
Justin Williams.....	The Athletic
Collin Wilson	Action Network
Scott Woerner	2016 College Football Hall of Fame - Georgia
RJ Young	FOX Sports
Chris Zorich	2007 College Football Hall of Fame - Notre Dame



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NFF ADDS AND RENEWS SPONSORS

COMPANIES SHARE A PASSION FOR NFF MISSION OF BUILDING LEADERS THROUGH FOOTBALL

The National Football Foundation has added several companies to its roster of sponsors in recent months.

Hanold Associates Executive Search, a retained executive search firm with a focus on recruiting HR and Diversity & Inclusion leaders, and diverse board directors, joined the list of NFF Sponsors this spring. Headquartered in Evanston, Illinois, the company is led by CEO Jason Hanold who recently joined the NFF Board of Trustees.

Riddell, based in Rosemont, Illinois, and specializing in football sports equipment, recently joined the NFF roster of sponsors. Dedicated to giving back to the football community while advancing the sport through game-changing innovations in helmet technology and protective equipment, Riddell recognized that the NFF provided a powerful platform for showcasing their commitment to protect the game for future generations.

The Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation, which works to preserve, protect and enhance the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, California, has lent its support as the presenting sponsor of the NFF National High School Academic Excellence Awards. The awards, which were first presented in 2021, recognize the top academic football teams from each level of play within each state.

“The Original” Bob’s Steak & Chop House became the presenting sponsor of the NFF Hatchell Cup, which is annually presented to the top

high school football team in the nation for its combined on and off the field excellence. Bob Sambol, the founder of restaurant, has been a longtime supporter of the NFF and its local chapters, and he wanted to expand his support on a national level.

Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority renewed its presenting sponsorship of the Annual Awards Dinner. This will mark the LVCVA’s third year as a supporter of the Dinner, “THE” place to connect for the college community.

Earlier this year, the NFF and the New York Athletic Club agreed to continue making the club’s landmark building overlooking Central Park the official home of the William V. Campbell Trophy®, college football’s premier scholar-athlete award. The relationship began in 2013, and the organizations partner every year to stage events to honor the annual recipient of the trophy. The NYAC also funds a prestigious NFF National Scholar-Athlete Award, honoring the recipient alongside the Campbell Trophy® winner.

“We are grateful to all our sponsors,” said NFF Chairman Archie Manning. “Their support plays such a critical role in our ability to protect and improve the game for future generations. We just wanted to give them an extra thanks for joining our team.”

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