



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO OWN JOE TILLER'S ROSE BOWL RING?

Thanks to the generosity of Arnette Tiller, you can be the next owner of Joe Tiller's Rose Bowl Ring or HIS Rose Bowl Watch or HER Rose Bowl Watch ... and of several other souvenir items and memorabilia from that glorious year of Purdue football in 2000.

Arnette, who now lives in Buffalo, Wyo., has donated about 30 items to the Tiller Chapter to auction for the purpose of raising funds for the Tiller Scholarship Endowment that is housed at the Community Foundation of Lafayette. The endowment, which has a goal of raising \$500,000 when completed, will fund the Tiller Chapter's scholarship program deep into the future.

Here are the details for the on-line auction and how you can participate ... Joe's Rose Bowl Ring will be on e-Bay beginning Nov. 20 with the auction ending at midnight on Dec. 10. All the other items listed below will be up for auction on a Facebook group of Purdue fans who have purchased items in the past. If you need information about how to join that group, please contact Tiller Chapter board member Young Lee at [young.k.lee1@gmail.com](mailto:young.k.lee1@gmail.com) for your chance to own part of Joe and Arnette's souvenirs. Young has coordinated past sales and auctions for the chapter, raising more than \$25,000 for the endowment and scholarship funds.

For verification of the professional evaluation by a Lafayette gemologist of the Rose Bowl Ring's gold and diamonds, see the story on page 7.



## BOWL ITEMS DONATED BY ARNETTE TILLER

- Joe's Rose Bowl Ring
- Joe's Rose Bowl Watch
- Arnette's Rose Bowl Watch
- Joe's Rose Bowl Tie
- Arnette's Rose Bowl Pendant
- Arnette's Rose Bowl Broach
- P pin with rose
- Pins (3)
- Joe's luggage tags (3)
- Arnette's luggage tags (6)
- Joe's name tag
- Arnette's name tag
- Framed panoramic photo
- Team photo plaque
- Game program autographed by Drew Brees
- 2000 season poster autographed by Joe, Drew Brees, Akin Ayodele, Jason Loerzel and Tim Stratton
- Purdue Alumnus
- Black hat
- White hat
- Sweatshirt
- Football-shaped sign
- Blanket
- Handmade cover for headset microphone with P and rose (booster gift)

## TYLER TRENT GOLF OUTING DONATES \$9,000 FOR CANCER RESEARCH

With its latest donation of \$9,000 to the Purdue Institute for Cancer Research in honor of Tyler Trent, the Joe Tiller Chapter has now provided \$57,000 for cancer research. That's part of the "good news" about the fifth version of the Tyler Trent Golf Outing, hosted by the Tiller Chapter on Sept. 5 at Coyote Crossing Golf Club.

Also, in the "good news" category is the fact that the 84 golfers appeared to have a great time and the 25 sponsors received positive exposure in exchange for their support. To those who participated and witnessed some of the "bad news" about this year's outing, the Tiller Advisory Council apologizes for running out of food for the late afternoon reception and for the inconvenience of the timing changes caused by the golf club scheduling three tournaments on the same day and then mishandling some of the administration of the event. Those deficiencies have been addressed and will not happen in next year's Tyler Trent Golf Outing.

Winning the day (besides the Institute for Cancer Research) on Sept. 5 were the follow:

- Team Standings – #1 Lafayette J&C, #2 Actalent Services, #3 Arni's Restaurants (pictured on next page)
- Longest Drive Contest – Travis Smith (Purdue For Life)
- Longest Putt – Jim Samuel (Mattix #1)
- Closest to the Pin – Jacob Berning (Actalent Services)
- Dixon Drawing – Bruce Kercheval (WLFI-TV)

Success of this event goes back to a different era. Earlier this century, the Ryan Kerrigan/12th Boiler Golf Outing at the Purdue Golf Complex was a combined effort between the NFF's Tiller Chapter and Purdue University's Trademarks Licensing Office, but, due to a number of reasons that were previously described, a new partnership became necessary.

In the spring of 2020, the chapter agreed to join forces with the Tyler Trent Family, the Elks Club of West Lafayette and the PICR to begin making plans for an event at the West Lafayette Golf Club in September of that year, but as COVID spiked in mid-summer, that event was postponed. Then, the following winter, the Elks Club voted to dissolve itself leaving the Tiller Chapter and the PICR to co-host the event. Coyote Crossing GC "stepped up" and negotiated a good price to become the site of the Tyler Trent Golf Outing on Sept. 3, 2021.

With 18 sponsors, 64 golfers, great weather and the cooperation of former Purdue quarterback great Jim Everett, the outing experienced terrific success, raising \$6,000 (which then became \$12,000 thanks to a matching gift program) for cancer research in honor of the legacy of Purdue "super-fan" Tyler Trent who passed away on the first day of 2019 after a news-making battle with osteosarcoma cancer.

The chapter's commitment to the Trent Family included two golf events in 2022, the Tyler Trent Golf Scramble coordinated as a class project by NFF student intern Triston Myers in April at the

Boilermaker Golf Complex and the Tyler Trent Golf Outing in September at Coyote Crossing. Together those events attracted 120 golfers and 38 sponsors and netted \$6,300 for what was then called Purdue's Center for Cancer Research.

The 2023, 2024 and 2025 Tyler Trent Golf Outings were again at Coyote Crossing in early September, featuring great weather and former Boilermaker QB Curtis Painter as "celebrity guest" for two of those years. Those three events attracted 242 golfers and 103 sponsors, while generating \$30,000 for Purdue's Institute for Cancer Research, lifting our total contribution to cancer research to more than \$57,000, including the early-year efforts prior to involvement with the Trent Family.

Seven years ago, the NFF Tiller Chapter helped introduce Tyler Trent to the world through its annual Honors Brunch. Diagnosed at age 15 with osteosarcoma, a rare and aggressive bone cancer, Tyler underwent multiple surgeries, tumor removal, chemotherapy, and bone-replacement procedures.

Despite his illness, he entered Purdue in 2017 as a full-time student—even camping out for football game seating hours after chemo session. Tyler became an honorary captain for the Purdue football team in 2018. His enthusiasm and spirit during the Boilermakers' memorable upset over No. 2 Ohio State that October captivated the nation.

Tyler raised more than \$1 million for pediatric cancer research, collaborating with the V Founda-

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# ASSURING TILLER'S LEGACY; PROMISING CHAPTER'S FUTURE

GOAL IS TO RAISE ANOTHER \$250,000 TO ENDOW  
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM & HONOR PLAYERS & COACHES

## WE NEED YOUR HELP ... HERE'S HOW

- DONATE TO SCHOLARSHIP FUND or
- ADD TO AN ENDOWMENT or
- TRANSFER YOUR R.M.D. AND SAVE ON TAXES
- DONATE THRU ZEFFY DEC. 2 FOR "DAY OF GIVING"
- CONSIDER BITCOIN DONATIONS
- JOIN THE CHAPTER and
- SERVE ON A COMMITTEE or
- ASK ABOUT BECOMING A SPONSOR (call 765-427-3303)

The NFF's Joe Tiller Chapter of Northwest Indiana asks you to help make Joe's legacy meaningful and everlasting by endowing scholarships into perpetuity and honoring Joe's dedication to recognizing the accomplishments of young scholar athletes.

On behalf of the chapter's Board of Directors, we launched "2025 Drive" in 2017 hoping to raise at least \$500,000 for the endowment in order to use the annual interest to cover the chapter's scholarship commitments far into the future. Can you help us financially or by making phone calls? Would you be interested in a paid fund-raising position? (See page 7.) Or, serving on a fund-raising committee?

Since receiving its charter in 2004, this 501 c-3 foundation (which was renamed the Joe Tiller Chapter of Northwest Indiana in 2007 in honor of Joe becoming Purdue's winningest football coach ever) has become the largest chapter in the state and, at one point, the second largest in the nation. It now ranks fifth among the NFF's 120 chapters.

In partnership with local media outlets, this chapter offers recognition for male and female scholar-athletes (nominated by their schools) after graduation from 70+ high schools in Northwest Indiana. In its first 21 years, this chapter has recognized 581 student athletes, awarding scholarships to many of them following high school for use during their second semester of college.

Also, each dues-paying NFF member receives a ballot in the selection process for the College Football Hall of Fame, a feature that helped elect five former Purdue All-Americans and two coaches to the HOF in the last 20 years. In addition, this chapter has successfully inducted 21 former Boilermakers and several area high school coaches and players into the Indiana FB Hall of Fame since 2012.

Since receiving its charter, the chapter has awarded \$407,000 in donations, honorariums, grants and scholarships (not including this year's scholarships). Fundraising to support these efforts is generated through sales of tickets, memo-

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## MY DONATION TO HELP MEET SCHOLARSHIP AND ENDOWMENT GOAL

I want to participate in the effort to reach the scholarship endowment goal for the National Football Foundation's Joe Tiller Chapter of Northwest Indiana (a 501 c-3 foundation) as part of its "Drive 2025" Campaign. My commitment is as follows:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ total = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in 2025; \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in 2026; \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in 2027

(Check is enclosed ; Send me an invoice ; Call me to discuss )

(You can also contribute electronically through ZEFFY ([click here or visit: https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/a11c4fe5-634a-4c1f-934f-2561c8dcedba](https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/a11c4fe5-634a-4c1f-934f-2561c8dcedba)), a free processing service for 501 c-3 foundations.) Please make donations payable to **National Football Foundation**. Indicate here  if you wish your donation to be listed as anonymous. **ALL DONATIONS WILL BE FOLLOWED WITH A RECEIPT.**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Jim Vrugink, Fundraising Coord.  
Joe Tiller Chapter of NFF  
3672 Farnsworth Drive  
West Lafayette, IN 47906  
PHONE: 765-427-3303



**T2 GOLF OUTING CHAMPS** – The foursome representing the Lafayette Journal & Courier and captained by Brad Chesterman (left), won this year's championship at the Tiller Chapter's fifth annual Tyler Trent Golf Outing at Coyote Crossing. Also, on the team (left to right from Chesterman) were Mark Wolf, Tanner Heatt and Ben Reno. Photos by Chad Krockover.



**RUNNER-UP FINISH** – Finishing second in the Sept. 5 outing was Actalent Services, led by Jacob Berning (second from left), along with teammates Chris Cieslarski, Kurt Schaefer and Eric Lonn.



**A CLOSE THIRD** – Finishing third in the T2 Golf Outing was Arni's Restaurants, captained by owner Brad Cohen (left), along with Arni's managers Dave Neal, Joe Delaney and Scott Eaker (left to right from Brad).

## T2 GOLF MOVING FORWARD

*Continued from pg. 1*

tion and the PICR. He founded Teens with a Cause, support groups for young cancer patients and their families and was deeply involved in the Purdue Dance Marathon. Along the way, during his final months of life, Tyler wrote a book "The Upset" and planned his own funeral.

After Tyler's passing on Jan. 1, 2019, Purdue established The Tyler Trent Cancer Research Endowment, fueling ongoing osteosarcoma studies along with The Tyler Trent Courage & Resilience Award, celebrating students who overcome adversity and a memorial at Ross-Ade Stadium's student gate bearing his name—the Tyler Trent Student Gate.

Proceeds from the Tyler Trent Golf Outing benefit cancer research through the PICR. Tyler has been a constant source of inspiration and motivation for cancer research happening at The Institute. From the start of his journey, Tyler was determined to make his fight against cancer impactful.

From becoming their first student board member to his selfless act of donating his tissues to cancer researchers, Tyler's mission to make an impact in cancer research is truly motivating.

The chapter will continue to help carry on Tyler's legacy in 2026 at the sixth annual T2 Golf Outing on Friday, Sept. 4, again at Coyote Crossing.



BRADEN SMITH (in practice gear and full beard) received his Drew Brees Mental Toughness Award prior to Purdue's basketball practice Oct. 15 outside Cardinal Court in Mackey Arena where he is joined by members of the Joe Tiller Chapter of the NFF. Passing above on the left with the All-American point guard are Kelly and Brooke Kitchel, representing their Everbowl business which sponsored the award. Passing with Braden in the photo on the right are Chapter President Alan Karpick, State Representative Sheila Klinker, Shelby Baugh and Chapter Executive Director Travis Baugh for the presentation of the Indiana State Proclamation. Photos by Shelby Baugh (left) and Jim Vruggink.

## SMITH HONORED WITH Brees AWARD & STATE PROCLAMATION

Since Purdue men's basketball star Braden Smith was unable to attend the NFF Honors Brunch "Celebrating Our Legends XXI" or the Tyler Trent Golf Outing earlier year to receive HIS awards from the Tiller Chapter, members of its Advisory Council went to Braden and made their presentations in Mackey Arena in mid-October.

Smith was selected as the recipient of the Drew Brees Mental Toughness Award for 2025 after leading the Boilermaker men's basketball team to the NCAA Sweet 16 and a 24-12 overall record. Smith was named winner of last season's Bob Cousy Award as the nation's top collegiate point guard after being named first-team All-Big Ten, the Conference Player of the Year and consensus All-American. Smith averaged 15.8 points, 8.7 assists and 4.5 rebounds last season. He is on the verge of becoming the first

player in NCAA history to accumulate 1500 points, 1000 assists and 500 rebounds.

In recognition of those accomplishments, Indiana State Representative Sheila Klinker, a member of the Tiller Chapter, authored a State Proclamation honoring Smith. That framed document was given to Smith by Rep. Klinker on Oct. 15 at Cardinal Court (Purdue's basketball practice facility) while the Drew Brees Mental Toughness Award was presented by Kelly and Brooke Kitchel who sponsored the award through their business, the Everbowl Craft Superfood Shop in West Lafayette. Everbowl is partly owned by former Purdue football star Drew Brees, for whom the award is named. Kelly Kitchel is a past president of the Tiller Chapter.

This year, Braden is one of three Purdue seniors -- the others being Trey Kaufman-Renn and Fletcher

Loyer -- who have been three-year starters and are now leading the Boilermakers as they start the 2025-26 season ranked among the top teams in the nation. Braden is a favorite to be this season's College Player of the Year and is a pre-season All-American along with Kaufman-Renn. Smith and Loyer have been Purdue's starting guards ever since their freshman year.

As sophomores they teamed with TKR and Zach Edey to lead Purdue to the Big Ten regular-season and post-season championships before advancing to the NCAA Championship Game in Phoenix and posting an overall 33-5 record, the best in Purdue history.

Also representing the NFF in the brief informal ceremony in Mackey were Chapter President Alan Karpick, Executive Director Travis Baugh and his wife Shelby, and Awards Coordinator Jim Vruggink.

The Tiller Chapter hopes to have a similar presentation this fall or winter to former Purdue basketball star Robbie Hummel, who is the winner of the Leroy Keyes Legends Award, sponsored by the Purdue For Life Office. Like Smith, Hummel was unable to at-

## ENDOWMENT FUNDING

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rabilia, advertising, sponsorship and donations. Unfortunately, those dollars have diminished due to changes in our economy and in IRS rules.

Other NFF chapters (like the Moose Krause Chapter near Notre Dame) have successfully established endowments to support future commitments. We are confident you will help us do the same for the Tiller Chapter.

Thanks to the generosity of Arnette Tiller, two former Purdue quarterbacks and the wife of our past-president Bob Hagen, we are nearly halfway to reaching our goal of \$500,000.

Will you help us permanently stamp the name of Joe Tiller in the Lafayette community and throughout Northwest Indiana by contributing your time or resources during the next few years? - Either providing a major gift in one lump sum or spreading it out over three years OR by helping us make some phone calls? We can even discuss an endowment that could fund an annual scholarship named for the donor.

If you have questions or wish to discuss by phone/email, please contact Jim Vruggink at 765-427-3303 or [jv@purdue.edu](mailto:jv@purdue.edu)

THE PURDUE FOR LIFE FOUNDATION CONGRATULATES

LERoy KEYES LEGENDS AWARD RECIPIENT

**ROBBIE HUMMEL**



THE PURDUE FOR LIFE FOUNDATION CONGRATULATES

LERoy KEYES IMPACT AWARD RECIPIENT

**MIKE CARMIN**



# AWARDS FOR JOE TILLER CHAPTER OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

## GOLD MEDALLION AWARD

This award is given on rare occasion and in special circumstances to recognize the career of a highly-successful person in this region. It recognizes an outstanding American and/or loyal Hoosier who has achieved significant career success while demonstrating integrity and honesty and bringing recognition to the local area covered by this NFF chapter.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2007 Honoree: Dr. Martin Jischke, President of Purdue University**

**2010 Honorees: Drew Brees, Len Dawson and Bob Griese - Purdue's Super Bowl Champion QB's**

**2011 Honorees: Neil Armstrong, Eugene Cernan and Jerry Ross – Purdue Astronauts**

**2013 Honoree: David Boudia, Olympic Gold and Bronze Medalist in diving**

**2017 Honoree: Morgan Burke, Purdue's Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, 23 years**

**2022 Honoree: Dr. Robert Hagen, Orthopedic Surgeon and Community Leader**

**2024 Honorees: Gene Keady and Matt Painter, leaders of Purdue basketball excellence for last 44 years**

## HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR-ATHLETE AWARD

This annual award is intended to provide recognition to a graduating high school senior football player who exemplifies excellence as a student, an athlete and a citizen. Scholarship money from the National Football Foundation is provided to the winner as long as he is not receiving full athletic aid to attend the college of his choice. He is not required to continue his career as a football player.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted in early winter from high school coaches and/or administrators in the counties covered by this NFF chapter. Nominations are evaluated by the Scholar-Athlete Committee, which recommends at least one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner. Other nominees will also be recognized at the Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2003 Honoree: %Clayton Richard of McCutcheon H.S.**

**2005 Honoree: William Bowman of Lafayette Jefferson H.S.**

**2006 Honoree: Brett Courtney of West Lafayette Harrison H.S.**

**2007 Honoree: James Wodicka of West Lafayette H.S.**

**2008 Honoree: Griffin Richeson of Lafayette Central Catholic H.S.**

**2009 Honoree: \*Matt Lancaster of West Lafayette H.S.**

**2010 Honoree: \*Daniel Wodicka of West Lafayette H.S.**

**2011 Honoree: Alex Hegg of Seeger Memorial H.S.**

**2012 Honoree: Dayton Snyder of West Lafayette H.S.**

**2013 Honoree: #Ryan Spesard of Carroll H.S.**

**2014 Honoree: \*Andrew Ralph of Chesterton H.S.**

**2015 Honoree: Joshua Brune of Belmont H.S.**

**2015 Honoree: Cody Colbert of Tri-Central H.S.**

**2017 Honoree: Jack DeGroot of Winamac H.S.**

**2018 Honoree: #August Schott of West Lafayette H.S.**

**2019 Honoree: #Jack Kiser of Pioneer H.S.**

**2020 Honoree: #Ayden Ayres of Carroll H.S.**

**2021 Honoree: Owen Smith of Clinton Central H.S.**

**2022 Honoree: #Brady Preston of Lafayette Jefferson H.S.**

**2023 Honoree: Kyle Turanchick of Oak Hill H.S.**

**2024 Honoree: Owen Smith of McCutcheon H.S.**

**2025 Honoree: Leo Dellinger of Twin Lakes H.S.**

**% Chosen Retroactively in 2014; \* Midwest Region S-A of Year; # State of Indiana S-A of Year**

## LEROY KEYES LEGENDS AWARD

This award is sponsored by the Purdue For Life Office to provide recognition to a person closely related to the game of football who has given tirelessly and effectively throughout his or her career for the betterment of the game and its participants, without being a player or coach. The recipient will have maintained a lifetime of interest in the football while exhibiting exceptional leadership qualities in his or her profession and bringing recognition to the local area covered by this NFF chapter.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2012 Honoree: Denny Miller, former head athletic trainer of Purdue University**

**2014 Honoree: Joe Rudolph, former executive director of Purdue Alumni Association**

**2015 Honoree: John Friend, former coach, athletics director, administrator in NW Indiana**

**2016 Honoree: Tom Spurgeon, former student manager, supporter, Trustee of Purdue U.**

**2017 Honoree: Roy Johnson, former "Voice of the Band" at Purdue for 43 years**

**2018 Honoree: Jeff Washburn, former sportswriter in Lafayette community for 40 years**

**2019 Honoree: Larry Clisby, play-by-play announcer for Purdue and local high schools**

**2021 Honoree: Leroy Keyes, "Greatest Player" in Purdue Football's First 100 Years**

**2022 Honoree: Tim Newton, play-by-play announcer for Purdue and emcee for events**

**2023 Honoree: Nancy Cross, Purdue administrator and ambassador for 46 years**

**2024 Honoree: Gene Keady, Purdue's winningest basketball coach, Hall of Fame, 25 years at Purdue**

**2025 Honoree: Robbie Hummel, Purdue alum, network commentator**

## PURDUE FOR LIFE IMPACT AWARD

This award, originally named "Purdue is Proud of You" Award, has been repurposed to provide recognition to a person or persons from Purdue who has made a major impact in the community and/or sports scene and who has provided positive exposure for Purdue through his or her efforts. Each recipient will have maintained a lifetime of interest in the football while exhibiting exceptional qualities in his or her profession or activity even beyond that game.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2011 Honoree: Drew Brees, Sports Illustrated Sportsman of the Year**

**2012 Honoree: Otis Armstrong, College Football Hall of Fame Selectee**

**2013 Honoree: MerrieBeth Cox, Miss Indiana and Purdue's Golden Girl**

**2019 Honoree: Rondale Moore, Purdue's first Consensus All-American as a Freshman**

**2020 Honoree: George Karlaftis, Purdue's Freshman All-American Defensive End**

**2022 Honorees: Alan Karpick, Boilers Inc., and Tom Schott, Purdue Communications**

**2023 Honorees: Charlie Jones and Aidan O'Connell, Purdue's Potent Pair**

**2024 Honorees: Zach Edey and Braden Smith of Purdue's Lethal Two-Man Game**

**2025 Honoree: Mike Carmin, stellar career in sports coverage in Northwest Indiana**

## BERNIE FLOWERS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO AMATEUR SPORTS

This annual award is intended to provide recognition to an individual whose efforts and activities support the goals of the National Football Foundation on the local level. The award identifies an individual who works tirelessly out of love for sports and a desire to help young people play the game. The award winner can be a league organizer, administrator, fundraiser, coach, doctor, athletic trainer, official or anyone who excels in representing and supporting the foundation's fundamental creed. The award is sponsored by Genre Hotels.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2005 Honoree: Kay Hunt of West Lafayette Little Gridiron Football League**

**2006 Honoree: John Robinson of Lafayette 56ers Youth Football League**

**2007 Honoree: Dr. Bob Hagen of Lafayette Orthopaedic and Sportsmedicine Clinic**

**2008 Honoree: Brad Smith of Attica and Indiana Football Coaches Association**

**2009 Honoree: Tom Kubat of Lafayette Journal & Courier Sports Department**

**2010 Honoree: Joe McConnell of Learfield Sports and Purdue Radio Network**

**2011 Honorees: Lane Custer and Jon Speaker of West Side Flag Football**

**2012 Honorees: Clay and Chris Oppy of Dream Season**

**2013 Honoree: Mark Ebelhar of West Lafayette Little Gridiron**

**2014 Honoree: Linda Rohrman of Lafayette**

**2015 Honoree: David M. Williams of Lafayette Area Little Gridiron**

# PLEASE NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR 2026 AWARDS

*Continued from pg. 4*

**2016 Honorees:** *Larry Leverenz, Eric Nauman and Tom Talavage of Purdue Neurotrauma Group*

**2017 Honoree:** *Darren Hicks of Lafayette Central Catholic Little Gridiron*

**2018 Honorees:** *Brad Cohen of Arni's and Orlando Itin of Bruno's*

**2019 Honoree:** *Tracy Brown of Harrison Youth Football*

**2020 Honoree:** *Rod Kochon of West Lafayette Little League*

**2021 Honoree:** *Young Lee of Merrill Lynch and Tiller Chapter of NW Indiana*

**2022 Honoree:** *Nate Barrett of Twin City Jeep and Tiller Chapter of NW Indiana*

**2023 Honoree:** *Mike Bauer of Lafayette Area Subway Shops*

**2024 Honoree:** *Sheila Klinker of Indiana House of Representatives*

**2025 Honoree:** *Rob Lear of Red Hawk Wrestling for his dedication to youth wrestling*

## **TODD CLARK AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING GAME OFFICIAL**

This is an annual award to provide recognition to an individual game official in our region as identified by the Western Indiana Officials Association. The award recognizes an individual who works tirelessly out of love for sports and the demands for fairness. The award winner can be an official of any sport who shares the values and goals of the National Football Foundation.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from WIOA members coordinated by NFF board member Max Bales, who also officiates. The WIOA's award recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2018 Honoree:** *Dr. Todd Clark of West Lafayette, Ind.*

**2019 Honoree:** *Todd Ransom of Frankfort, Ind.*

**2020 Honoree:** *Darren Haas of Crawfordsville, Ind.*

**2021 Honoree:** *Mark Maxwell of Crawfordsville, Ind.*

**2022 Honoree:** *Trent Johnson of West Lafayette, Ind.*

**2023 Honoree:** *James Marshall of Lafayette, Ind.*

**2024 Honoree:** *Don Rusk of Indianapolis, Ind.*

**2025 Honoree:** *Mark Beck of Lafayette, Ind.*

## **ARNETTE TILLER "SERVICE TO FOOTBALL" AWARD**

This award, which is sponsored and funded by the IFCA, is intended to provide recognition to a woman closely related to the game of football who has given tirelessly and effectively for the betterment of the game and its participants. The recipient will have exhibited exceptional service and dedication to a football program or programs covered by this NFF chapter.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and IFCA members and considered by the Awards Committee in conjunction with Mrs. Tiller and the NFF chapter, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. The presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch in the appropriate IFCA Region. It is recommended that this award be rotated between Region 1 and Region 4 (whenever possible).

**2012 Honoree:** *Arnette Tiller, wife of Coach Joe Tiller, Purdue U.*

**2013 Honoree:** *Jamie Marsh, wife of Coach Leroy Marsh, Munster H.S.*

**2015 Honoree:** *Sarah Lim, 7-year student manager, West Lafayette HS & Purdue U.*

**2018 Honoree:** *Jan O'Shea, wife of coach Frank O'Shea, mother of Kevin O'Shea*

**2021 Honoree:** *Marion Vrugink, 42 years of athletic training service to athletes*

**2022 Honoree:** *Sandra Dukes, long-time attorney and volunteer sports photographer*

**2023 Honoree:** *Elisheba VanWinkle, long-time sports events volunteer, Lafayette, Ind.*

**2025 Honoree:** *Adella Flowers, long-time fan and supporter of area sports*

## **PATRICK MACKEY COURAGE AWARD**

This award is given to provide recognition to an individual in our region who has exemplified great courage by surviving extreme personal hardship or difficulty OR who has assisted someone else in doing the same. The award-winner must be a high school, college or professional athlete, coach, administrator or avid supporter. The award is sponsored by Franciscan Health Sports Medicine.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted in early winter from members of this chapter. Nominations are evaluated by the awards committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch.

**2012 Honoree:** *Danny Anthrop of Lafayette Central Catholic H.S.*

**2013 Honorees:** *Cooper Fulmer of Winamac/Patrick Mackey of Lafayette Central Catholic H.S.*

**2014 Honoree:** *Jack Folkers of West Lafayette H.S.,*

**2016 Honoree:** *Josh Turanchick of Oak Hill H.S.*

**2017 Honoree:** *Riley Lowder of Delphi H.S.*

**2018 Honoree:** *Tyler Trent of Purdue University*

**2019 Honorees:** *Cody Payne/Drew DeBoer of Lafayette Jefferson H.S.*

**2020 Honoree:** *Isaiah Harris of Bowman Leadership Academy*

**2021 Honoree:** *Patrick Kiefer of Winamac H.S.*

**2022 Honoree:** *Wade Peters of Carroll H.S.*

**2023 Honoree:** *Ashlynn Brooke of Pioneer H.S./Kendal Rider of Laf. CC H.S.*

**2024 Honoree:** *Connor Benson of North Judson San Pierre H.S.*

**2025 Honoree:** *Aldo Robles of Harrison H.S.*

## **TYLER TRENT COURAGE & RESILIENCE AWARD**

This award is a tribute to Tyler Trent, a former Purdue student who valiantly battled cancer while fervently supporting "his" Boilermakers until the very end. He died Jan. 1, 2019, at age 19. The recipient receives a full scholarship at Purdue, funded through a combination of gifts. It is awarded to undergraduate students at Purdue's West Lafayette campus who have encountered serious physical or similarly daunting adversity in their pursuit of higher education.

Selection process: Nominations/applications are accepted by the President's Office throughout the year from Purdue students. The decision is made by the president and announced in the spring with possible recognition provided at the annual NFF Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch..

**2019 Honoree:** *Sean English of Northville, Mich.*

**2020 Honoree:** *Kamryn Dehn of Frankfort, Ind.*

**2021 Honoree:** *Kyle Albertson of Fowler, Ind.*

**2022 Honoree:** *Eric Magallanes of Lafayette, Ind.*

**2023 Honoree:** *Andrew Kinder of Fishers, Ind.*

**2024 Honoree:** *Annilee Hope Williams of West Lafayette, Ind.*

**2025 Honoree:** *Ava Flynn of Westport, Ct.*

## **CITIZEN/HERO AWARD**

This award, which is sponsored by the Lafayette Journal & Courier, provides recognition to an individual who has consistently excelled in three areas paramount to the National Football Foundation - academics, athletics and service - while maintaining an exemplary record of citizenship in his/her school and/or local community OR performed a heroic act.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from members of this chapter. Nominations are evaluated by the awards committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch.

**2011 Honoree:** *Kyle Adams of Purdue University*

**2012 Honoree:** *Kurt Lichtenberg of Purdue University*

**2014 Honoree:** *Rob Henry of Purdue University*

**2018 Honoree:** *David Blough of Purdue University*

**2019 Honoree:** *Aaron Lai of Purdue University*

**2023 Honoree:** *Nick Bostic of Lafayette, Ind.*

**2025 Honoree:** *Devin Mockabee of Purdue University*

## **DREW BREES MENTAL TOUGHNESS AWARD**

This annual award is intended to provide recognition to a college or professional athlete who exemplified exceptional mental attitude or toughness and who competed at some point in Northwest Indiana. Exceptional mental attitude includes displays of high academic achievement, superior leadership, dogged determination, tenacity, moral character, bravery, humility and concern for others, in addition to remarkable athletic accomplishments. The award is named in honor of its first recipient, who also assists in the selection process.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and Drew Brees and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch.

**2005 Honoree:** *Drew Brees of the San Diego Chargers*

**2006 Honoree:** *Rob Ninkovich of the Purdue Boilermakers*

**2007 Honoree:** *Rosevelt Colvin of the New England Patriots*

**2008 Honoree:** *Nick Hardwick of the San Diego Chargers*

**2009 Honoree:** *Akin Ayodele of the Miami Dolphins*

**2011 Honoree:** *Ryan Kerrigan of the Washington Redskins*

**2012 Honoree:** *Robbie Hummel of the Purdue Boilermakers*

**2013 Honoree:** *Ryan Grigson of the Indianapolis Colts*

**2014 Honoree:** *Cliff Avril of the Seattle Seahawks*

**2015 Honoree:** *Kyle Orton of the Buffalo Bills*

**2016 Honoree:** *Danny Anthrop of the Indianapolis Colts*

**2017 Honorees:** *Rosevelt Barnes & Caleb Swanigan of the Purdue Boilermakers*

*Continued on pg. 6*

# PLEASE NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR 2026 AWARDS

Continued from pg. 5

- 2018 Honoree: *Elijah Sindelar of the Purdue Boilermakers*
- 2019 Honoree: *David Blough of the Purdue Boilermakers*
- 2020 Honoree: *Raheem Mostert of the San Francisco 49ers*
- 2022 Honoree: *Aidan O'Connell of the Purdue Boilermakers*
- 2023 Honoree: *Zach Edey of the Purdue Boilermakers*
- 2025 Honoree: *Braden Smith of the Purdue Boilermakers*

## “HE PLAYED FOOTBALL” AWARD

This award is intended to provide recognition to a former football player in the geographic region of Northwest Indiana who went on to become highly successful in life-after-football. Emphasis is placed on individuals who were not necessarily stars of their teams but who built their later successes on their skills instead of their “football names.”

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner.

2014 Honoree: *Froncie Gutman, former Purdue player and director of Cleveland Eye Clinic*

2015 Honoree: *Carl Buergler, former Purdue walk-on, now COO of Jimmy Johns*

2016 Honoree: *Doug DeVos, former Purdue walk-on, now President of Amway Corp.*

2017 Honoree: *Mike Berghoff, former Purdue walk-on, now President of Lenon Steel and Chairman of Purdue's Board of Trustees*

## DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN AWARD

This award is intended to provide recognition to a citizen who has maintained a lifetime of interest in the game of football and who has exhibited enviable leadership qualities and patriotism while making a significant contribution to the betterment of amateur football or sports in general in the United States while bringing recognition to the local area covered by this NFF chapter.

Selection process: Nominations are accepted throughout the year from NFF chapter members and considered by the Awards Committee, which recommends no more than one recipient per year. This recommendation must be ratified by the Board of Directors and the presentation should be made at the annual Honors Dinner, Reception or Brunch.

2005 Honoree: *Gene Keady, emeritus basketball coach of Purdue University*

2006 Honoree: *Bob DeMoss, former football coach/administrator at Purdue*

## NOMINATION FORM FOR 2026 AWARDS

(Submit by March 31, 2026, to Jim Vruggink via phone at 765-427-3303, email at [jv@purdue.edu](mailto:jv@purdue.edu) or mail at 3672 Farnsworth Drive, West Lafayette, IN 47906)

Name of nominee \_\_\_\_\_

For which award? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/address of nominee \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for nomination \_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email \_\_\_\_\_

### University

2007 Honoree: *Henry Rosenthal, former play-by-play announcer/owner of WASK Radio*

2008 Honoree: *Bernie Flowers, former Purdue All-American, salesman extraordinaire*

2009 Honoree: *Joe Tiller, emeritus football coach of Purdue University*

2011 Honoree: *Leroy Keyes, former Purdue All-American/administrator*

2013 Honorees: *Noble Kizer and Noble Kizer, Jr., former football coach and athletic director at Purdue University and his son, Lafayette businessman*

2020 Honoree: *Drew Brees, former Boilermaker/current Saints QB*

## Upcoming Events in West Lafayette:

- June 14, 2026 – NFF Honors Brunch, Purdue Memorial Union
- Summer, 2026 – Possible NFF Champions Dinner/Auction Event
- Sept. 4, 2026 – Tyler Trent Golf Outing, Coyote Crossing Golf Club
- Sept. 5, 2026 – Purdue Football Home Opener vs. Indiana State, Ross-Ade Stadium

# PROPOSED NFF ADVISORY BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2026

- PRESIDENT: Alan Karpick
- PAST PRESIDENTS: Bart Burrell and Kelly Kitchel
- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Travis Baugh
- DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Tom Schott
- AWARDS & FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR: Jim Vruggink
- TREASURER: Paul Branham
- SECRETARY: Elisheba VanWinkle
- WEBMASTER: Baugh
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR & HISTORIAN: Vruggink
- NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Jonathan Gandolf
- PHOTOGRAPHERS: Chad Krockover

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (29 Voting Members): Max Bales, Nate Barrett, Tim Bobillo, Bart Burrell, Steve Clark, Don Coller, Nancy Cross, Tom Dienhart, Judy Hanna, Ethan Hanson, Austin Hoefling, Steve Hoffman, Orlando Itin, Eddie Keister, Kelly Kitchel, Chad Krockover, Matt Lancaster, Young Lee, Jeff Love, David McGaughey, Chris Pate, Clayton Richard, Jim Samuel, Janet Schweikher, Brad Smith, Jon Speaker, Ron Tipton, Rex Trautman and Elisheba VanWinkle

ADVISORY COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEMBERS (16): Terry Acree, Tom Blumling, Drew Brees, Patrick Crawford, Dwayne Greer, Joe Hernandez, Sam King, Adam Kuffner, Jaylyn Learnard, Leroy Marsh, Tim Newton, Mark Peterson, Andrew Ralph, Jeff Siedel, Chris Westgate and George Wodicka

- INTERNS (4): Connor Benson, Tate Drone, James Lathrop and Ethan Popp
- CO-CHAIRS: ASSIGNMENTS, DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES
- AUCTIONS & MEMORABILIA SALES: Lee & Schott
- AWARDS NOMINATIONS/SELECTIONS: Vruggink & Schott
- BY-LAWS: Karpick, Love & Vruggink
- COMMUNICATIONS: Karpick & Schott
- ENDOWMENT: Karpick, Branham & Vruggink
- HONORS BRUNCH: Baugh, Schott & Vruggink
- MEMBERSHIP: McGaughey & Keister
- NEWSLETTERS/PUBLICATIONS: Gandolf & Vruggink
- SPECIAL PROJECTS: Smith & Vruggink
- SPONSORSHIPS/ADVERTISING: Baugh & Vruggink

### CO-CHAIRS: UPCOMING EVENTS

- SEPTEMBER 4 – TYLER TRENT GOLF OUTING: Baugh, Hoefling & Vruggink
- SEPTEMBER 16 (Tentative) – GLC BUSINESS EXPO: Samuel & Hanna
- OCTOBER/NOVEMBER (Tentative) -- FOOTBALL ROAD TRIPS: Trautman & Hanna
- CHAPTER CONTACT: Baugh email: [travisjamesbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:travisjamesbaugh@gmail.com); ph: 765-404-9257



# News, Weather, and Sports Whenever You Need It.



# TILLER ROSE BOWL RING CONFIRMED TO HAVE REAL GOLD & DIAMONDS!

Joe Tiller's original 2001 Rose Bowl Ring is a hefty 39.5 gram 10 karat piece of history decorated with intricate, colorful enamel and sprinkled with a mixture of both imitation and natural diamonds. For an added touch, the ring has "Joe Tiller" engraved on the inside of the ring.

This evaluation was confirmed by gemologist Kristopher Kessler of Stall and Kessler's Diamond Center in Lafayette. Kris is passionate about working with our customer base to deliver excellence in every customer interaction. He is a graduate of Butler University.



Photo by Young Lee

The business, now located on the Courthouse Square in Lafayette, was started in 1953 by John M. Stall II as a small repair shop in downtown with an emphasis on quality and service that is known today as Stall & Kessler's Diamond Center. It is the premier trustworthy jewelry destination in Greater Lafayette who provides quality service and jewelry solutions with a focus on integrity with their choices, kindness to their customers, and humility with their attitudes.

## A MODERN TREASURY FOR CHAPTER'S FUTURE?

*Op-Ed By Paul Branham, Treasurer*

As we build our endowment, we face a fundamental question: How do we ensure our capital grows meaningfully for future generations? In a world of persistent inflation, traditional strategies often struggle to deliver the real returns we need. It's time we consider a modern approach for our idle cash, one that major corporations and nations are now embracing: incorporating Bitcoin.

While Bitcoin can seem volatile, it is rapidly maturing into a global, institutional-grade asset. Consider the facts:

**Wall Street Has Arrived:** The launch of spot Bitcoin ETFs in the US in January 2024 was a watershed moment. Today, giants like BlackRock and Fidelity manage over \$170 billion in these products, making Bitcoin a mainstream financial asset.

**Corporate America is Onboard:** Over 160 public companies now hold Bitcoin on their balance sheets, including S&P 500 firms like Block and Coinbase. This is no longer a niche experiment, but a recognized corporate treasury strategy.

**National Adoption is Here:** The U.S. government itself has begun building a strategic Bitcoin reserve, and landmark bipartisan legislation is creating a clear regulatory framework, signaling a new era of American leadership in digital assets.

### What This Means For Us

An analysis of our idle cash shows that a conservative strategy, simply receiving interest in Bitcoin without risking our principal, would have outperformed our mutual fund by over 9% in the last two and a half years. A more active strategy of converting just 2.5% at a time of our starting principal into Bitcoin at a constant monthly rate would have more than doubled our initial investment value over the same period. Furthermore, accepting donations via platforms like PayPal and Stripe is now seamless and easier than ever before.

### We Need to Hear From You

This is about strategic foresight, not speculation. We know Bitcoin has cycles, but for a long-term endowment, downturns are opportunities. That is why we must establish a plan soon. A formal, board-approved strategy will allow us to start conservatively and act decisively during market dips to maximize growth. For our endowment's long-term success, we need to "get off of zero."

Our Board of Directors considered four proposals in mid-November to incorporate Bitcoin into minor parts of our business model. Please email me at [nfftreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:nfftreasurer@gmail.com) with your thoughts. Are you in favor? Would you consider donating Bitcoin or other assets?

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR NFF  
MEMBERSHIP WHEN IT COMES DUE**  
(See pages 12 of this packet.)

## PART-TIME FUNDRAISING POSITION AVAILABLE AT JOE TILLER CHAPTER

The National Football Foundation's Joe Tiller Chapter of Northwest Indiana is one of the five largest chapters (among 120 nationwide) and the largest among the four chapters in Indiana. The chapter received its charter in Fall of 2004 and since then has enlisted more than 925 members (but less than 150 currently active) and donated nearly \$400,000 toward scholarships and charities.

The mission of the National Football Foundation is to promote and develop the power of amateur sports in developing the qualities of leadership, sportsmanship, competitive zeal and the drive for academic excellence in America's young people.

### POSITION AVAILABLE:

Coordinator of Fundraising will focus on soliciting money for the Joe Tiller Endowment, which has a goal of raising at least \$500,000 by the end of 2025. Nearly \$250,000 is already committed. This is a part-time position (average 2-3 hours per week with spring/summer being the busiest) for at least two years (with possible extension) and the coordinator is responsible for developing his/her own home office. Compensation to be negotiable but comparable to other officer positions within the chapter. He/she will:

- Aggressively pursue donations, sponsorships and three-year commitments primarily from Purdue supporters and former athletes, coaches and friends,
- Collaborate with Chapter President and Executive Director in refining chapter's list of potential donors and developing an effective strategy to raise funds,
- Provide a high level of customer service while supporting chapter sponsors and stakeholders,
- Assist the Coordinator of Sales in identifying potential advertisers or sponsors who might not be "ready" to donate to the endowment fund but might be interested in assisting in smaller ways,
- Assist, if time allows, with planning and execution of chapter activities,
- Attend semi-annual meetings of the Chapter's Advisory Council as a non-voting member,
- Utilize the availability of at least one student intern (Purdue student who is a former high school student-athlete) to assist him/her in meeting the objectives listed above and
- Other duties as assigned.

### SKILLS:

- Excellent communication skills,
- Ability to manage multiple priorities,
- Self-motivation.

### EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience required,
- Fundraising experience required,
- Knowledge and/or experience in intercollegiate athletics preferred.

### PLEASE MAIL OR EMAIL COVER LETTER WITH RESUME TO:

Jim Vrugink/NFF Tiller Chapter

3672 Farnsworth Drive

West Lafayette, IN 47906

Email: [jv@purdue.edu](mailto:jv@purdue.edu)

Cell: 765-427-3303



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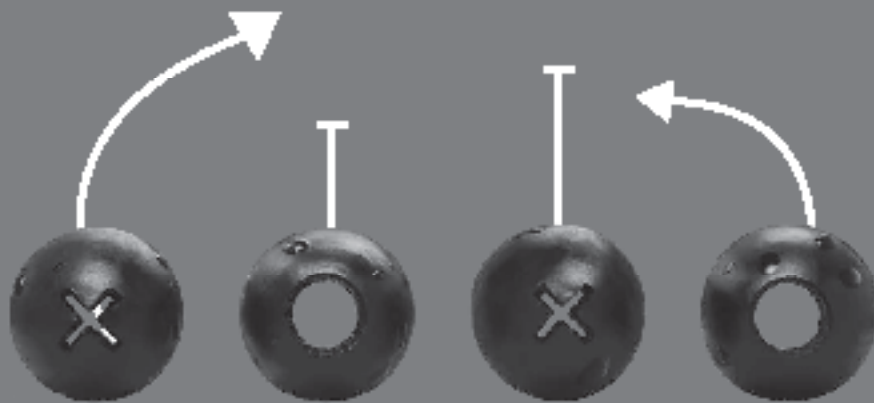
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[krockphotography.com](http://krockphotography.com)

**Visit Chapter Website:**  
[nfftillerchapter.org](http://nfftillerchapter.org)

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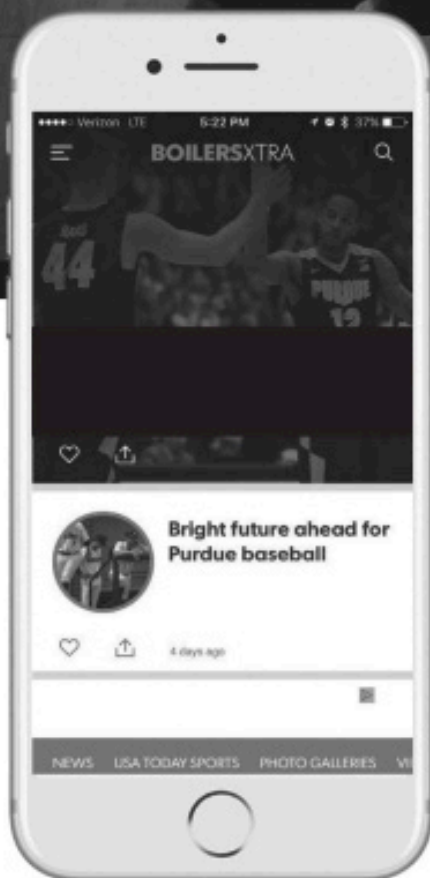
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# NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

433 Las Colinas Blvd. East, Ste. 1130  
Irving, TX 75039-5508

## Membership Application

I am a:  New Member  Renewing Member Date:

Chapter Name (if known): Member ID#:

Prefix & Full Name:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

E-Mail: Phone:

## Membership Level

### VARSITY CLUB

\$60  One-Year Membership

### ALL-CONFERENCE CLUB

\$150  Three-Year Membership

### HALL OF FAME CLUB

\$1,000  Lifetime Membership

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_made payable to The National Football Foundation.  
 Please charge my membership to my:  VISA  MASTERCARD  AMEX  DISCOVER

Credit Card Account #:

Exp. Date: Security Code:

(Please indicate cc billing address  
if different from above)

Signature:

**Please Mail to:**

*Membership Department  
The National Football Foundation  
433 Las Colinas Blvd. East, Ste. 1130  
Irving, TX 75039-5508*

**OR Submit via:**

*Email: [membership@footballfoundation.com](mailto:membership@footballfoundation.com)  
Fax: 972-556-9032*

