

NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE 2011 CHAPTER LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

Five extraordinary individuals selected for their outstanding leadership and dedication to amateur football at the local level.

DALLAS, Sept. 15, 2011 – The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame (NFF) announced today the selection of five exceptional individuals as the recipients of the 2011 NFF Chapter Leadership Awards.

2011 NFF Chapter Leadership Award Recipients *(Full Bios Included)*

- **H. Freeman Belser** - South Region from the Midlands (S.C.) Chapter
- **Sean Gothier** - Midwest Region from the Minnesota Chapter
- **Stephen Joyce** - East Region from Westchester County (N.Y.) Chapter
- **Ed Schluntz** - Northeast Region from the Jack Grinold/Eastern Massachusetts Chapter
- **Dick Whitney** - West Region from the Orange County (Calif.) Chapter

The Chapter Leadership Awards, first presented in 1993, annually recognize five individuals, one from each region, for their commitment, generosity and leadership at the local level in fulfilling the NFF mission of developing leaders through football. Each of the five leadership award winners will be honored during the NFF Chapter Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, December 6, 2011, at the Waldorf=Astoria in New York City.

“These five honorees represent the best of our efforts to engage supporters at the grassroots level,” said NFF President & CEO **Steven J. Hatchell**. “The success of our chapter network could not survive without the commitment and leadership of these individuals. It’s our honor and responsibility to properly thank and honor them.”

With more than 12,000 members, the 120 NFF chapters reach more than 4,800 high schools and 400,000 football players each year. Collectively, the NFF chapters stage more than 1,000 annual events in 47 states, celebrating the game and its unique ability to teach the values of leadership, teamwork, and the drive to compete. The events include coaching clinics, leadership conferences, college nights, media days, and local awards banquets that recognize more than 3,300 scholar-athletes and distribute more than \$1 million in scholarships.

The Chapter Leadership Award recipients have spearhead their chapter’s efforts securing funds for scholarships, selecting the honorees and staging events to help benefit the young people who play football.

Their efforts ensure that future generations of players are inspired to achieve on and off the field. Also at the NFF Chapter Awards Luncheon, five student-athletes, selected from the more than 400,000 covered by the NFF Chapter Network, will be honored as the 2011 NFF National High School Scholar-Athletes.

For more information about the NFF Chapter Award Luncheon and to purchase tickets, please contact Ron Dilatush at 800.486.1865 or rdilatush@footballfoundation.com.

H. FREEMAN BELSER
South Region
Midlands (S.C.) Chapter

Freeman Belser's commitment to football and the NFF Midlands (S.C.) Chapter runs deep. A chapter high school scholar-athlete in 1997, Belser stood out nationally for his prowess on and off the field, and the national organization selected him as one of the five NFF National High School Scholar-Athletes that year. The experience left an indelible impression on Belser, and when he returned to the region to enter the field of law, he embraced the opportunity to lead the chapter as its president.

"When your playing days are over, and you make the transition from football player to fan, it can sometimes be easy to forget that the game of football is about much more than what just happens on game day," said Belser. "My involvement with the Midlands Chapter of the National Football Foundation reminds me that football can be a tool to teach essential values and set the foundation for a successful future."

An all-state linebacker and tight end at Heathwood Hall Episcopal High School in Columbia, S.C., Belser attended Davidson College in North Carolina and played linebacker for the Wildcats. Belser started three years and helped the 2000 squad post the best season in school history with a 10-0 mark. He received the Carolina Panthers Foundation's postgraduate scholarship as a senior in 2000, and he also won the Susan Wyatt Fagg Award for exemplary attitude and action from Davidson.

After graduating from Davidson with a bachelor's degree in history in 2001, Belser began law school at the University of South Carolina. Upon graduation in 2004, he became the fourth generation of the Belser family to practice law in Columbia, S.C. He holds seven years of experience as an attorney at Belser & Belser, a firm started by his great-grandfather Irvin Belser in 1906.

Belser won the NFF Midlands (S.C.) Chapter Outstanding Scholar-Athlete Award in 1997, and he was named an NFF National High School Scholar-Athlete later that year. He has held the role as NFF Midlands Chapter President since 2005. Belser quickly jump-started the chapter's membership and scholar-athlete program. Today the NFF Midlands Chapter recognizes 25 high school scholar-athletes and has distributed over \$10,000 in scholarships.

"Some people learn the essential values – teamwork, perseverance, and leadership skills – through other sports or interests. I enjoyed the gift of learning these values playing football," Belser said. "When our chapter recognizes the 25 outstanding scholar athlete football players in the Columbia area each year, I have the privilege of meeting the young men who have excelled on the field, in the classroom, and in the community, and I am able to see that the game of football continues to teach young men the essential values that it taught me."

In addition to his NFF duties, Belser is also a board member of the Columbia Museum of Art and the Columbia Kiwanis Club. A graduate of the Leadership Columbia Class of 2007, he is also a member of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce. He and his wife, Maryanne, have two sons.

SEAN GOTHIER
Midwest Region
Minnesota Chapter

The NFF Minnesota Chapter has flourished under the leadership of the Midwest Region's Chapter Leadership Award winner Sean Gothier. The chapter's annual scholar-athlete banquet, titled "Honoring Legends – Inspiring Leaders," is held at the University of St. Thomas each year, drawing a large crowd of football enthusiasts, including many area College Football Hall of Famers. The chapter recognizes 10 standouts and distributes nearly \$10,000 in scholarships each year.

"It is very fulfilling to honor those who embody the mission of the National Football Foundation and enrich the football traditions of Minnesota," Gothier said. "The mission of our chapter is to reward excellence to those who reflect high academic achievements, outstanding leadership, and commitment to community."

Gothier founded the NFF Minnesota Chapter in 2007, and he has served as the chapter's president since its inception. A tireless worker, Gothier has forged partnerships with businesses, sponsors, and the media across all levels of football in Minnesota. Through his efforts, the Minnesota Chapter reached charter status faster than any chapter in NFF history.

"Without the strong support of our members and partners, the chapter would not have the momentum to honor scholar athletes and inspiring leaders," Gothier said. "I am so blessed to be a part of the National Football Foundation in leading the Minnesota Chapter."

A four-year starter at defensive back for Bethel University in St. Paul, Minn., Gothier earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Bethel in 1991. He later received his master's degree in teaching and learning from St. Mary's University in Winona, Minn., in 1998. Gothier taught social studies and coached high school football for more than 10 years. Though no longer involved full-time in the football coaching community, Gothier remains connected. He serves as a bowl scout for the Capital One Bowl. He holds a spot on the selection committee for the Fred Mitchell Outstanding Place Kicker Award, presented to the top divisional placer kicker in the country, and he plays a leadership role in developing local youth football programs.

He currently works at Sunovion Pharmaceuticals, Inc., where he has been a sales specialist for the past year. Gothier is involved in numerous volunteer efforts and often speaks to high school students about the importance of giving back to the community. In 2008, he received the Minnesota Vikings Community Quarterback Award. He resides in the Twin Cities with his family.

STEPHEN JOYCE
East Region
Westchester County (N.Y.) Chapter

The Westchester County (N.Y.) Chapter has enjoyed a close relationship with the National Football Foundation since its founding in 1973. With the NFF's national headquarters previously located in nearby Larchmont, N.Y., then-NFF Chairman Vincent dePaul Draddy wanted to make sure that the area had a robust chapter, and Steve Joyce, a standout high school student-athlete at the time, had a front row seat at the chapter's inaugural scholar-athlete banquet.

Named to the chapter's first Golden Dozen Student-Athlete Team in 1973, Joyce developed a strong bond with the NFF, and he has become a leader in perpetuating his experiences as a high school scholar-athlete for future generations. He joined the chapter's board of directors in 1997, and he won the NFF Westchester Chapter Distinguished American Award in 1999. He became chapter president in 2005. He currently leads the chapter, which distributes more than \$20,000 in scholarships a year with an all-time total of more than \$400,000.

"The Westchester Chapter of the National Football Foundation is intensely focused on celebrating the concept of the Scholar-Athlete in today's society," said Joyce. "Over the past 37 years, we have honored more than 900 young men for their fantastic accomplishments on the football field and in the classroom, and have provided over 100 of these Scholar-Athletes with financial assistance in pursuing their dreams through a college education. We are extremely proud of these efforts."

Joyce led Harrison High School to an undefeated, sectional championship as a starter at tight end, strong safety and punt returner in 1973. He then attended Colgate University, where he played two years of defensive back behind former Washington Redskin and current Green Bay Packers President Mark Murphy. Joyce spent his final two years at Colgate broadcasting the Raiders games for the school's student radio station. Joyce graduated from Colgate Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in history in 1978. At Colgate, Joyce won a New York State Regents Scholarship, a Two/Ten Foundation Scholarship and was president of the KDR fraternity.

After college, Joyce worked for GE Capital for two decades, rising to CEO, president or executive vice president of several of its operating companies. In 1999, he left GE Capital to become managing director of CitiBank's internet banking business. Joyce has spent the past 10 years as president of Joyce Real Estate Corporation in Westchester County, New York.

Joyce also serves as the co-chairman for the Rye Turf Committee. The group raised over \$1 million in private funds to install an artificial turf field and lights at Rye High School's Nugent Field. He also conducts community service with United Way, Rye Youth Council, RPJ Scholarship Fund, Little League Baseball and CYO Basketball.

"I'd like to recognize and thank all of the members of our Chapter Board of Directors, both past and present" said Joyce. "None of our board members have a vocational tie to football; they are all ex-players and scholars who dedicate their time to the NFF out of their love for the game of football and their commitment to scholarship. I accept this award today on their behalf."

A resident of Rye Brook, N.Y., Joyce and his wife, Susan, have two sons.

ED SCHLUNTZ
Northeast Region
Jack Grinold/Eastern Massachusetts Chapter

With over half a century dedicated to the game of football, Ed Schluntz has left a permanent impact on interscholastic football in Massachusetts. His efforts to better the Jack Grinold/Eastern Massachusetts Chapter of the National Football Foundation make Schluntz a perfect selection for the Chapter Leadership Award for the Northeast Region in 2011.

"This is a very humbling experience," said Schluntz. "There are so many chapter members who contribute in so many ways that I feel as if I am receiving this honor on their behalf. Working as a team to support our efforts has the added benefit of keeping our sport important in the education process."

Schluntz graduated from Tufts University in 1951, and began his coaching career at Tufts in 1950. Upon graduation, he became a coach at Worcester Academy in 1951. He held positions with the football, basketball and baseball teams while teaching English. He moved to Brookline High School outside of Boston in 1954, working as a football coach and a teacher. Six years later, Schluntz became the school's head football coach, a position he held until 1982. He also served as Brookline's athletics director from 1970 to 1990. He left Brookline in 1990, becoming the head coach of the freshman football team at Harvard. Schluntz retired from coaching in 1994.

Schluntz's impact extended far beyond the schools he coached. He served as president of the Football Coaches Association in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. As president, Schluntz conceptualized and implemented the MIAA's playoff system and formula for determining playoff teams. He also served as president of the Gridiron Club of Greater Boston, the Suburban League and the Windsor Club in Newton, Mass. A member of the '33' Touchdown Club of Boston, Schluntz claimed the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award in February.

A 1986 inductee into the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Schluntz won the Charles Linehan Memorial Award from the Massachusetts State Coaches Association in 1967, the *Boston Globe* Football Coach of the Year Award in 1968, the Distinguished Service Award from the MFCA in 1979 and the Massachusetts Athletic Director of the Year award in 1980. He has also been honored by the Brookline Kiwanis Club, the Tufts Jumbo Club, Brookline Rotary Club, and won the New England Football Officials award in 1971.

A charter member of the NFF Jack Grinold/Eastern Massachusetts Chapter, Schluntz has served on the chapter's board of directors since its inception in 1976. He has coordinated the chapter's scholar-athlete awards, expanding the chapter's honorees from 11 to 33 scholar-athletes. Schluntz won the chapter's Contribution to Amateur Football Award in 1978, and the award was named in his honor since 2008. Schluntz also spearheaded the effort to name the chapter after its founder, Jack Grinold, in 2007.

"The NFF means a commitment on the part of schools to a strong, competitive football program and an equally challenging academic environment," Schluntz explained. "Honoring accomplishments in both the classroom and on the field as we do in our awards program serves our students and society best."

Schluntz resides in Waban, Mass., with his wife Gloria. The couple has two children.

DICK WHITNEY
West Region
Orange County (Calif.) Chapter

Few people are more dedicated to the purpose and mission of the National Football Foundation than Dick Whitney. With over a quarter-century of service to the NFF and leadership positions across two chapters, Whitney is a most deserving West Region Chapter Leadership Award honoree.

"As a player and coach for so many years you hope you can stay connected to the game in some way," said Whitney. "The NFF allows me to do that by giving something back and the scholar-athlete concept makes it extra special."

Whitney began his football career at Eagle Rock High School in Los Angeles, where he was an all-league wide receiver from 1950 to 1952. He enrolled at Glendale Junior College in Glendale, Calif., again playing wide receiver. In 1955, Whitney moved to Cal State – Los Angeles where he played

football and baseball for the Golden Eagles. He graduated from Cal State – Los Angeles with a bachelor's degree in physical education in 1959.

His first coaching job came at Franklin High School in Los Angeles that same year and lasted through 1977. During his tenure, Franklin amassed consecutive undefeated seasons from 1969 to 1971. In 1977, he moved to Kennedy High School in Los Angeles, coaching defense and special teams until 1989 and helping the school to multiple league championships. After retiring from coaching, Whitney served as Kennedy's athletics director from 1989 to 1995.

Whitney joined the NFF San Fernando (Calif.) Chapter in 1985, and served on its board of directors from 1990 to 1994, including three years as president. In 1995, he transferred to the NFF Orange County (Calif.) Chapter and has been the chapter's president since 2008. The chapter's annual scholar-athlete awards program honors more than 60 standouts and distributes \$26,000 in scholarships. More than \$276,000 has been given to date. The chapter also hosts an annual golf tournament to support its scholarship program.

"Being recognized for my efforts with two chapters for twenty-one years makes this award very special to me, my family & the men & women who served on those boards," Whitney said.

Whitney has served as president of the Los Angeles Coaches Association and on the Los Angeles Policy Determination Committee. Since retirement, he has been a six-year member of the Senior Community Board of Directors, including two years as president.

Whitney and his wife of 55 years, DeDe, have two children and four grandchildren. They reside in Huntington Beach, Calif.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION & COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Founded in 1947 with early leadership from General Douglas MacArthur, legendary Army coach Earl "Red" Blaik and immortal journalist Grantland Rice, The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame is a non-profit educational organization that runs programs designed to use the power of amateur football in developing scholarship, citizenship and athletic achievement in young people. With 121 chapters and 12,000 members nationwide, NFF programs include the College Football Hall of Fame, the NFF Scholar-Athlete Awards, presented by Fidelity Investments, Play It Smart, the NFF Hampshire Honor Society, the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Alumni Association, and scholarships of more than \$1.3 million for college and high school scholar-athletes. The NFF presents the MacArthur Bowl, the William V. Campbell Trophy, endowed by HealthSouth, and releases the Bowl Championship Series (BCS) Standings. For more information, please visit www.footballfoundation.org.