

NEWS RELEASE

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NFF Announces 2006 Draddy Trophy Semifinalists ***148 student-athletes vie for college football's most prestigious academic honor***

MORRISTOWN, N.J., October 17, 2006 – Selected as the best and the brightest from the college gridiron, The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame (NFF) today announced the 148 semifinalists for the 2006 Draddy Trophy, presented by HealthSouth, and the candidates for the NFF 2006 National Scholar-Athlete Awards.

One of college football's most sought after and competitive awards, the Draddy Trophy recognizes an individual as the absolute best in the country for his combined academic success, football performance and exemplary community leadership.

“The Draddy epitomizes everything right about college football,” said NFF President Steven J. Hatchell. “By recognizing this group, we highlight the countless hours and demands that each college football player must balance as they pursue their dreams of a higher education and their passion for football. The NFF has both the privilege and responsibility to pay tribute to this exceptional group of role models, who truly embody the term student-athlete.”

Nominated by their schools, which are limited to one nominee each, semifinalists must be a senior or graduate student in their final year of eligibility, have a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, have outstanding football ability as a first team player, and have demonstrated strong leadership and citizenship. Established to honor former NFF Chairman Vincent dePaul Draddy, a Manhattan College quarterback who founded the Izod and Lacoste brands, the award comes with a stunning 24-inch, 25-pound bronze trophy and a \$25,000 post-graduate scholarship.

With a 3.51 average GPA and majors such as biochemistry and zoology, the group includes 70 players who have earned all-conference recognition on the field and 94 captains. The offensive line produced the most nominees with 44. Defensive backs came in second with 24 candidates. Offense outscored the defense with 79 to 61 hopefuls. Eight special teams aspirants completed the contingent. Nominees hail from all NCAA divisions and the NAIA, including a record 64 contenders from Division I-A.

The NFF Awards Committee, comprised of former coaches, Hall of Famers and college administrators, will select and announce up to 15 finalists on Oct. 26. The winner, also selected by the committee, will be announced at the 49th NFF Awards Dinner on December 5 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. Each finalist will also be recognized that night as part of the 2006 National Scholar-Athlete Class, receiving an \$18,000 post-graduate scholarship.

Launched in 1959, the NFF scholar-athlete program became the first initiative in history to credit a player for both academic and athletic accomplishments. The Draddy, first awarded in 1990, adds to the program's mystique. Past Draddy winners, including two Rhodes Scholars, a Rhodes Scholar finalist, a Heisman winner and a 3.7 average GPA, are: Chris Howard (Air Force, 1990); John B. Culpepper (Florida, 1991); Jim Hansen (Colorado, 1992); Thomas Burns (Virginia, 1993); Robert Zatechka (Nebraska, 1994); Bobby Hoying (Ohio State, 1995); Danny Wuerffel (Florida, 1996); Peyton Manning (Tennessee, 1997); Matt Stinchcomb (Georgia, 1998); Chad Pennington (Marshall, 1999); Kyle Vanden Bosch (Nebraska, 2000); Joaquin Gonzalez (Miami, 2001); Brandon Roberts (Washington University-Mo., 2002); Craig Krenzel (Ohio State, 2003); Michael Munoz (Tennessee, 2004); and Rudy Niswanger (Louisiana State, 2005).

HealthSouth is one of the nation's largest providers of outpatient surgery, diagnostic imaging and rehabilitative healthcare services, operating facilities nationwide. HealthSouth can be found on the Web at www.healthsouth.com.

With 120 chapters and 12,000 members nationwide, The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame, a non-profit educational organization, runs programs designed to use the power of amateur football in developing scholarship, citizenship and athletic achievement in young people. Find more at www.footballfoundation.org.

