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**NFL PLAYERS TO BE HONORED
WITH JB AWARDS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE
AT ANNUAL NFL PLAYERS GALA
TO BENEFIT SPECIAL OLYMPICS D.C.**

March 27, 2008 — On Friday, April 4, **James Brown**, host of “THE NFL TODAY” on CBS, along with “THE NFL TODAY” analyst and former Pittsburgh Steelers head coach **Bill Cowher**, will honor some of the NFL’s biggest heroes at the NFL PLAYERS Gala Featuring the JB Awards, an annual awards presentation benefiting Special Olympics District of Columbia. For the fifth consecutive year, the NFL Players Association (NFLPA) and NFL PLAYERS, the licensing and marketing subsidiary of the NFLPA, have partnered with Brown to recognize NFL players for their individual contributions to their communities with the JB Awards.

“I am privileged to once again join efforts with the NFLPA and NFL PLAYERS in their annual tradition of honoring NFL players for their off-the-field achievements,” said Brown. “It is a great honor to be involved in an event that brings together positive role models and makes a difference in the lives of the men, women and children of Special Olympics D.C.”

JB Award recipients were nominated by their teammates at the end of the season for their commitment to achieve excellence off the field through building better communities and stronger families. Out of the 32 players nominated (one per team), Brown personally selected the following 12 players to receive a *JB Award**: **Marques Douglas** (San Francisco 49ers), **Chris Draft** (St. Louis Rams), **Warrick Dunn** (Atlanta Falcons), **Braylon Edwards** (Cleveland Browns), **Israel Idonije** (Chicago Bears), **Kassim Osgood** (San Diego Chargers), **Matt Stover** (Baltimore Ravens), **Mack Strong** (Seattle Seahawks), **James Thrash** (Washington Redskins), **Kurt Warner** (Arizona Cardinals), **Brian Waters** (Kansas City Chiefs), and **Roy Williams** (Dallas Cowboys). As in years past, award recipients attending the Gala will participate in a panel discussion.

The surprise of the evening will be the presentation of the prestigious 42nd annual *Byron “Whizzer” White Award*, chosen from among the *JB Award* winners listed in the paragraph above. The winner will be selected by an independent celebrity panel of judges, which includes NEA President and CEO **Harriet Sanford**, Gatorade’s Senior Vice President of Sports Marketing **Jeff Urban** and **Rick “Doc” Walker**, host of SportsTalk 980’s “The Doc Walker Show” and Comcast SportsNet’s “Doc Walker’s ProView.” The “*Whizzer*” *White Award* is presented annually to the player who serves his team, community and country in the spirit of Byron Raymond “Whizzer” White. The late Supreme Court Justice was a scholar, athlete, patriot, humanitarian and public servant – the personification of the ideal to which professional football players aspire.

In addition to these award recipients, Brown will also present special *JB Awards* to recognize the personal accomplishments of others around the NFL. Honorees to receive individual *JB Awards* include **Dan Marino** (Hall of Fame) – *Lifetime Achievement*; **Derrick Brooks** (Tampa Bay Buccaneers) – *Empowering Youth*; **Amobi Okoye** (Houston Texans) – *Global Dedication*; and **Adrian Peterson** (Minnesota Vikings) – *Emerging Leader*.

“The recipients of these prestigious awards are a small representation of the hundreds of NFL players who donate their time, energy and resources to give back to their communities,” said Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association. “They are leaders in the locker room and role models for our youth.”

Special Olympics athletes will have the opportunity to join NFL player-honorees for a football clinic held the morning of the Gala. The clinic will feature more than 75 local Special Olympics athletes participating alongside NFL players in five friendly, non-contact football stations. The NFL players will interact with the athletes and help demonstrate a variety of offensive and defensive skills, including passing, receiving and kicking.

The Gala and surrounding activities will be filmed for a one-hour television special set to air this summer on CBS. Reebok is the presenting sponsor of the NFL PLAYERS Gala. Other major sponsors include AOL, Greater Washington Sports Alliance, John F. Turner & Company, Team Beans, Unisys, CBS Interactive, Inc., Brookfield Properties, GEICO, IBM Federal, Intelligent Decisions, Payden & Rygel, Press Pass and Comcast Corporation.

Since the awards banquet was founded in 1972, the NFLPA has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to many worthy causes. Special Olympics D.C. has received more than \$3 million since becoming the beneficiary of the Gala in 1993.

For additional information or to purchase a table, please contact Cassandra Nicaisse at 202-572-7485 or email Cassandra.Nicaisse@nflplayers.com.

**Teams listed are those that nominated the 2008 honorees*

ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

Special Olympics D.C. (SODC) is the sole provider of sports and fitness training, competition and health screenings for people with intellectual disabilities in the District of Columbia. SODC provides everything needed to deliver a high quality athlete experience while offering life-changing programs to some of the District’s most vulnerable citizens. The goal of SODC is to create opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. The NFLPA has significantly impacted the programs of SODC, with generous financial support for more than a decade.

ABOUT NFL PLAYERS:

Formed in 1994, NFL PLAYERS is the licensing and marketing subsidiary of the NFL Players Association. Representing more than 1,800 active and many memorable retired NFL players, NFL PLAYERS “takes the helmets off” the players and markets them as personalities as well as professional athletes. Through an exclusive sponsorship agreement between the organization and the NFL, players are integrated into NFL sponsor activation programs. In addition, under an exclusive agreement between NFL PLAYERS and the NFL, NFLPLAYERS.COM, the company’s official website, is part of the NFL Internet Network. Each year NFL PLAYERS negotiates and facilitates more than 4,000 player marketing opportunities for players. NFL PLAYERS activities include retail licensing, corporate sponsorships and promotions, special events, radio and television projects, publishing and internet. For more information, visit www.NFLPLAYERS.com.

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