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**Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation
Announces Honorees for
2009 “Honoring Legends, Inspiring Leaders” Awards Dinner**
Legendary Coach John Gagliardi, NFL and College Football Hall of Famer
Randall McDaniel to Headline the Event

Minneapolis, MN, March 10, 2009- The Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame will honor 11 outstanding individuals from the world of professional and amateur football in Minnesota at the Chapter’s annual awards dinner on April 19. The event, which will be held at the University of St. Thomas, will feature a keynote address by St. John’s University head football coach **John Gagliardi** and a public interview with NFL and College Football Hall of Famer **Randall McDaniel**.

In addition to Gagliardi and McDaniel, the Minnesota Chapter will recognize Hall of Famers **John Randle, Jeff Siemon, Paul Wiggins**, and **Coach Jim Christopherson**. Numerous college football and NFL legends will be in attendance, and WCCO-TV news personality **Frank Vascellaro** will return as Master of Ceremonies.

The Minnesota Chapter will present the 2009 **Distinguished Minnesotan Award** to **Jim Malosky, Sr.**, former long-time University of Minnesota Duluth head football coach. The Distinguished Minnesotan Award honors an individual who has made a lifetime contribution to football in the state of Minnesota. A Crosby-Ironton native, Malosky, Sr., cultivated winning football programs at Morris and Morningside (Edina) High Schools before becoming the head coach at UMD from 1958 until 1997. Malosky’s teams won over 250 games during his 40-year tenure, including two MIAC conference crowns (1960, ’61), five NSIC crowns (1979, ’80, ’85, ’90, ’95, ’96), and a perfect 10-0-0 season in 1980. In his final 28 years as head coach, the Bulldogs had a win-loss record below .500 only twice. When Malosky retired in 1997, he was the winningest coach in Division II college football. Malosky was inducted into the UMD Athletic Hall of Fame in 1998 and the NSIC Hall of Fame in 2000. The stadium where the Bulldogs play today is named in his honor.

The 2009 **Courage Award** will be presented to **Ryan Goetzinger** of Caledonia, MN. The Courage Award is given to an athlete that has demonstrated the will to persevere through adversity. Goetzinger, a fullback and linebacker for Caledonia High School, has displayed tremendous strength and determination by achieving in the classroom and on the football field despite suffering serious burns from a barn fire as a child. Goetzinger has become a role model for his peers and plans to attend the University of Wisconsin LaCrosse or the University of Minnesota Mankato to study physical therapy and continue to play football. He is the son of Curt and Susan of Caledonia.

Lefty Yurek will be honored with the 2009 **Outstanding Officiating Award**. To earn the Outstanding Officiating Award, an official (active or retired) must have 25-plus years officiating at a high school, college, or professional level; officiated games at the local, regional, and national levels; must be highly respected by peers and coaches; has given back given back as a mentor to the officiating community. Yurek's work as an official satisfies these criteria and transcends them. According to the selection committee, "Lefty Yurek portrays the epitome of football officiating both on and off the field." Yurek officiated high school football games including State section, quarterfinal, semifinal, and championship games, for 39 years (1959-1997). He also served as a college football official in the NSIC and MIAC conferences for 26 years. In addition to his work on the football field, Yurek has officiated high school and college basketball and high school soccer, hockey, and fast-pitch softball. He was inducted into the NSIC Hall of Fame as a football and basketball official in 2001 and continues to serve the MSHSL as a committee leader and football official observer. He has been an instrumental part of the St. Paul Officials Association for 34 years.

Gary Smith is the 2009 recipient of the **Fred Zamberletti Award**. The award, named for the legendary athletic trainer for the Minnesota Vikings, honors an outstanding Minnesotan practicing athletic training. Smith, this year's honoree, has served an incredible range of teams. He was the head athletic trainer for the U.S.A. hockey team at the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, which earned him a place in the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame in 2003. Smith has also worked with the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Strikers soccer club, Minnesota Moose hockey team, the Minnesota Kicks soccer team, and was head athletic trainer for the Philadelphia Flyers in the early 1990s. In addition, he was the Sports Medicine Coordinator at North Memorial Hospital from 1983-1989. He was inducted into the Minnesota Athletic Trainers Hall of Fame in 2002. Smith tirelessly continues his work at Fairview's Institute for Athletic Medicine at Eden Prairie High School.

The 2009 **Play It Smart P.R.I.D.E. Award** will be presented to Mychal Frelix, a senior at St. Paul Central High School. He has exhibited exceptional leadership on the field, in the classroom, and among his peers. He was named to St. Paul City All-Conference team in 2008 and was selected to play in the 3rd Annual Urban Bowl (summer 2009). Frelix has been an instrumental part of Play It Smart, an educational program run by the National Football Foundation which aims to transform student-athletes' passion for sport into a force for greater good in their lives. Upon graduation, Frelix will continue his academic and football pursuits, possibly at the University of St. Thomas. Mychal is the son of Seleta of St. Paul.

In addition, six young men will receive recognition as outstanding high school **Scholar-Athletes**. These Scholar-Athletes, as nominated by their football coaches, were evaluated on their academic achievement (3.0 GPA or better), football ability, performance, leadership, and attitude, and the applicants' service to their community. Remarkably, the average GPA among the finalists was 3.97. The 2009 Scholar-athlete award winners include Edina High School stand-out quarterback **Anders Lee**, who was named 2008 Gatorade Football Player of the Year, 2008 Minnesota Vikings First Team All-State, and

2008 All-Metro Player of the Year, among other athletic awards. Lee also boasts an excellent academic record and serves as a role model to his peers and younger students through his community service and leadership activities. Lee plans to continue his education at Notre Dame. He is the son of Thomas and Lisa of Edina, MN.

As team captain, scholar-athlete award winner **Paul Berndt** of Mankato West High School helped lead his team to a victory in the 2008 Class 4A State Championship. A running back and linebacker, he was named Player of the Game in the championship showdown and earned All-State Honorable Mention. Berndt is also a member of the National Honors Society and active in numerous service organizations in his community. Berndt will attend Augustana College on an academic scholarship, majoring in Biology and studying Pre-Medicine. Berndt is the son of Jeff and Julie of Mankato, MN.

Award winner **Ryan Robinson**, a defensive end/outside linebacker from St. Thomas Academy, was named KARE-11 All-Metro, Second Team All-Metro by the *Star Tribune*, and First Team All-State by the *Pioneer Press*. Robinson was also voted Classic Suburban Conference Defensive Player of the Year in 2008. Robinson demonstrates exceptional academic achievement, including being named a National Merit Commended Scholar. In addition to playing basketball and lacrosse and serving on the student council and JROTC, Robinson has devoted 50 hours of service to the Minnesota Veterans Home. He is the son of Ryan and Kathy of Edina, MN.

Kyle Mulrooney, inside linebacker and scholar-athlete award winner from Andover High School, earned All-Conference (Northwest Suburban) honors twice and was named All-State by the AP and the *Pioneer Press* in 2008. He is a two-year member of the National Honor Society and in 2008 was named to the Academic All-State Football Team. Mulrooney has challenged himself with high-level Advanced Placement courses and has continued to earn top marks. He has served as a mentor to incoming freshman and volunteered in numerous youth sports organizations. Mulrooney will attend the University of St. Thomas on an academic scholarship and study business/finance. He is the son of Mike and Becky of Andover, MN.

As outside linebacker/tight-end for Totino-Grace High School, **Joe Novitzki**, led his team to a State Championship his junior year. He was voted team MVP in 2008 and earned All-Conference Honors (North Suburban). A three-sport standout in football, tennis, and hockey, Novitzki also shines in the classroom. He is a member of the National Honor Society and earned A-Honor Roll every semester of his high school career. Novitzki has been involved in several community service endeavors, including Meals on Wheels, Feed My Starving Children, and the Ronald McDonald House. He plans to attend the University of St. Thomas on an academic and Trustee's scholarship, studying biology. He is the son of Mark and Nina of New Brighton, MN.

Scholar-athlete award winner **Mike Seidel** of Woodbury High School excelled as an outside linebacker and on special teams. He was a team captain, three-year starter, and earned All-Conference Honors (Suburban East Conference) in 2008 and Honorable Mention in 2007. Seidel earned Minnesota Football Coaches Association Academic All-

State honors in 2008 and won a Woodbury At Your Service (W@YS) Award for Community Service for three consecutive years (2006-2008). He plans to study engineering at either Northwestern University or the University of Wisconsin Madison. He is the son of Tracy and Bill of Woodbury, MN.

The **2nd Annual “Honoring Legends, Inspiring Leaders” awards dinner** will take place on **Sunday, April 19, at 6:00 pm** on the campus of the **University of St. Thomas**. To purchase tickets to the event or to become a member of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation, please visit the Minnesota Chapter website (www.nffmn.org)

About the Minnesota Chapter:

The mission of the Minnesota Chapter of the NFF is to serve Minnesota and the nation by developing leadership, sportsmanship, competitive spirit, and academic excellence in America's youth through promoting amateur football. The Chapter aims to:

- Inspire excellence through Minnesota and College Football Hall of Fame player and coach role models
- Highlight the educational and character-building benefits of football through youth programs
- Honor, publicize, and financially support student-athlete football players

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