



Press Release

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CONTACT: Valerie Martinez

Juliette Funes
(909) 445-1001

NFL Awards 5 Golden Footballs to Whittier Union Schools as Part of Super Bowl 50 Celebration

WHITTIER, CA – As football fans around the world revel in the Denver Broncos' victory in Super Bowl 50, Whittier Union is celebrating five coveted Golden Footballs that four of its comprehensive high schools received from the National Football League to recognize distinguished alumni who participated in 10 Super Bowls and amassed eight championships.

Whittier Union schools earned a place in the NFL's Super Bowl High School Honor Roll for graduates and NFL greats: Joe Gibbs (Santa Fe High School '59); Jim Vellone (California High School '62); George Buehler (Whittier High School '65); Bob Chandler (Whittier High School '67); and Dave Dalby (La Serna High School '68).

"We are honored to commemorate our esteemed alumni, who are part of a rich history of Whittier athletics and have left a lasting imprint on the football community," Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson said. "In addition to gaining a first-rate education at our schools, these former students and NFL stars demonstrate the hard work, dedication and perseverance of our student-athletes."

In September 2015, the NFL announced the High School Honor Roll initiative as part of its Super Bowl 50 outreach program. The initiative links the past 49 Super Bowls to this year's game and honors the high schools and communities that have benefited the game of football. More than 2,000 high schools across the country and nearly 3,000 Super Bowl players and head coaches will receive commemorative Wilson Golden Footballs.

The NFL Foundation will provide the schools with a new character education curriculum and the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$5,000 to support and grow their football programs.

Below are brief profiles of the players and their athletic careers.

Joe Gibbs (Santa Fe '59): A star quarterback while at Santa Fe, Gibbs is an NFL Hall of Fame head coach who helmed the Washington Redskins from 1981-92 and 2004-07, leading them to nine playoff appearances, four NFC championships and three Super Bowl victories. Gibbs, who was offensive line coach at USC from 1969-70, winning the 1970 Rose Bowl, was the architect of the Redskins' stellar offensive line, nicknamed "The Hogs," and developed numerous strategies on offense. Under Gibbs, Washington appeared in four Super Bowls in 10 years, emerging victorious in Super Bowls XVII (27-17 over the Miami Dolphins); XXII (42-10 over the Denver Broncos); and XXVI (37-24 over the Buffalo Bills). After retiring from football, Gibbs became a NASCAR Championship team owner.

Jim Vellone (Cal '62): An All-American guard at Cerritos College, Vellone played two years at USC before being drafted by the Minnesota Vikings in 1966. He played five seasons for the Vikings, and was a starting lineman in Super Bowl IV. The Vikings lost the game to the Kansas City Chiefs, 23-7. Vellone's career was cut short by Hodgkin lymphoma. He died in 1977.

George Buehler (Whittier '65): While at Whittier, Buehler was CIF Southern Section Player of the Year in 1964, as well as a champion wrestler and track member. He attended Stanford and was drafted by the Oakland Raiders in 1969. Starting at right guard, Buehler anchored a strong offensive line from 1971-77, and played a key role in the Raiders' 32-14 victory over the Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl XI.

Bob Chandler (Whittier '67): At Whittier High, Chandler was All-CIF in football and basketball and was one of the top high school decathletes in the region. An exceptional wide receiver, Chandler attended USC and played in two Rose Bowl games; he was chosen Most Valuable Player in the 1970 Rose Bowl game – in which Gibbs was the offensive line coach – after USC's 10-3 win over Michigan. Drafted by the Buffalo Bills in 1971, he played nine seasons before moving to the Oakland Raiders and catching four passes in the Raiders' 27-10 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles in Super Bowl XV. Chandler is the uncle of La Serna High teacher and football coach Andy George. Chandler died in 1995.

Dave Dalby (La Serna '68): Dalby was a standout center for UCLA, where he was selected to the All-Century team and named a member of the UCLA Hall of Fame. Drafted by the Raiders in 1972, Dalby would not miss a game in 14 years, appearing in three Super Bowl victories – Super Bowl XI (with Buehler), Super Bowl XV (with Chandler) and the Los Angeles Raiders' 38-9 Super Bowl XVIII victory over Joe Gibbs' Washington Redskins. Dalby died in 2002.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement.
Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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9401 S. Painter Avenue, Whittier, California 90605-2798 ■ (562) 698-8121 ■ www.wuhsd.org