

ARMED FORCES



MERIT AWARD

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Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation named 2022 Armed Forces Merit Award Recipient

FORT WORTH, TEXAS - The [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#) has been selected as the 11th recipient of the [Armed Forces Merit Award](#) presented by the [Football Writers Association of America \(FWAA\)](#).

Coordinated by the staff at the [Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl](#), the [Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA](#) was created in June 2012 "to honor an individual and/or a group within the realm of the sport of football."

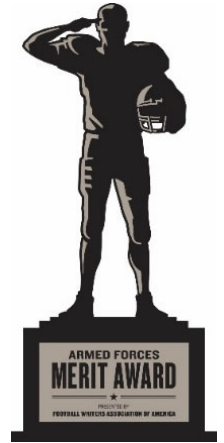
The "official" announcement of [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#) was made during a 12 p.m. (ET) Sports Center telecast Thursday followed by a teleconference at 1 p.m. with the foundation's leaders, Ohio State offensive tackle [Paris Johnson Jr.](#), and his mother Monica Daniels.

At the teleconference, Brant Ringler, executive director of the Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl, and David Ubben, 2022 FWAA President, congratulated the [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#) as the 2022 recipient of the [Armed Forces Merit Award](#) presented by the [FWAA](#).

The [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#) was selected from a list of 50 nominations (43 individuals and seven programs) as the 2022 recipient by a nine-person committee made up of FWAA members and Bowl officials.

"The foundation established by Paris and his mother is very unique where a student athlete and his family are actively involved with helping military veterans," said Ringler. "While playing a key role on one of the nation's top collegiate football teams, what Paris is accomplishing through his foundation is remarkable. We hope what Paris has created will catch fire and occur with at least one player on every college football program in the United States."

Ubben added: "The Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation provides much-needed assistance for the veterans. What makes Paris special is that he has taken the time to help so many in his community while playing college football and studying at The Ohio State University. We applaud him and his mother for the work that they are doing with the foundation."



The [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#), established by the ESPN midseason All-America, during his high school days in Cincinnati, has raised more than \$10,000 to assist veterans, student-athletes and the homeless.

As written on the group's website, the foundation "is dedicated to empowering and serving disabled veterans and disadvantaged student athletes with helpful resources that

benefit them. The [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#) is organized exclusively for charitable purposes as set forth in the pertinent provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code."

In a web article last May, Johnson said "I've always been passionate about veterans. I have so much respect for veterans. It's easy to say it, but words are just words. Our team tries to find a way to give back to those people who have arguably made the second greatest sacrifice on earth. Those people shouldn't have to worry about the basic necessities when they come back home. They should be taken care of by the people that they protected."

In a letter to support the [Paris Johnson Jr. Foundation](#), Ohio State coach Ryan Day said his Outland Trophy candidate is a "wonderful civilian, one who cares and takes care of those who are less fortunate. He does this through his foundation. These efforts that Paris does with his foundation are indicative of the leader that he is ... on the field and off. He is a conscientious young man, an incredibly sincere and thoughtful individual, and someone I can't wait to see succeed in life as an upstanding citizen."

PAST RECIPIENTS



Damien Jackson
Nebraska, 2021



Collin O'Donnell
Bluefield, 2020



Mike Viti
Army West Point, 2019



Dr. Chris Howard
Robert Morris, 2018



KSU Football Program
Kansas State, 2017



Steven Rhodes
Middle Tennessee, 2016



Bret Robertson
Westminster, 2015



Daniel Rodriguez
Clemson, 2014



Brandon McCoy
North Texas, 2013



Nate Boyer
Texas, 2012

Past recipients of the [Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA](#) are [Nate Boyer](#) of the University of Texas (2012), [Brandon McCoy](#) of the University of North Texas (2013), [Daniel Rodriguez](#) from Clemson University (2014), [Bret Robertson](#) of Westminster College (Fulton, Mo., 2015), [Steven Rhodes](#) from Middle Tennessee State University (2016), [Dr. Chris Howard](#) from Robert Morris University (2018), Army West Point assistant coach [Mike Viti](#) (2019), [Collin O'Donnell](#) of Bluefield College of Virginia, (2020) and [Damien Jackson](#) of the University of Nebraska (2021)

[Kansas State](#) and its football team were honored in 2017 as the sixth recipient of the [Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA](#) for the university's partnership with the United States Army that created a bond between the school's athletic department and the Iron Rangers at Fort Riley.

[ESPN Events](#), a division of ESPN, owns and operates a portfolio of collegiate sporting events nationwide. In 2022, the 32-event schedule includes three early-season college football kickoff games, 17 college bowl games, 11 college basketball events, and a college softball event, which account for approximately 400 hours of live programming, while reaching nearly 64 million viewers and attracting over 800,000 annual attendees. With satellite offices in more than 10 cities across the country, ESPN Events builds relationships with conferences, schools and local communities, as well as providing unique experiences for teams and fans. For more information, visit the official [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [YouTube](#) pages.



Founded in 1941, the **Football Writers Association of America** (FWAA, <http://www.sportswriters.net>) consists of journalists, broadcasters, publicists, photographers and key executives in all areas of college football. The FWAA works to govern media access and gameday operations while presenting awards and honors, including an annual All-America team.



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