

ARMED FORCES



MERIT AWARD

For Immediate Release, October 10, 2019

2019 Armed Forces Merit Award nominations announced

Fort Worth, Texas, October 10 - A total of 33 individuals and five programs have been nominated for the 2019 [Armed Forces Merit Award](#) presented by the [Football Writers Association of America \(FWAA\)](#).

Of the 33 individuals nominated for the 2019 [Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA](#), 12 are currently playing college football this season, 14 being college coaches, five being college/university administrators and two referees.

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 with a military background and/or involvement that has an impact within the realm of college football."

The recipient of the 2019 [Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA](#) will be announced the week of November 3 or 10 as the selection committee of five FWAA members and two representatives from the [Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl](#).

Robert Morris president and Air Force veteran [Dr. Chris Howard](#) was the 2018 recipient of the Armed Forces Merit Award. A 1991 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, Dr. Howard was a Rhodes Scholar and received the 1990 Campbell Trophy, the highest academic award in the nation presented to a senior college football player.

Dr. Howard, a member of the College Football Playoff Selection Committee, was inducted into the CoSIDA Academic All-America Hall of Fame and a recipient of the NCAA Silver Anniversary Award, which recognizes distinguished individuals on the 25th anniversary of the conclusion of their collegiate athletic careers.

[Nate Boyer](#) of the University of Texas was the initial recipient in 2012. Other recipients were [Brandon McCoy](#) of the University of North Texas in 2013, [Daniel Rodriguez](#) from Clemson University in 2014, [Bret Robertson](#) of Westminster College (Fulton, Mo.) in 2015 and [Steven Rhodes](#) from Middle Tennessee State University in 2016.

Boyer (long snapper), McCoy (defensive lineman), Rodriguez (wide receiver) and Robertson (defensive back) served in the Army before playing collegiate football. After his military service with the Marine Corp, Rhodes played four seasons at Middle Tennessee, including an appearance in the 2013 Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl with the Blue Raiders.

[Kansas State](#) and its football team were honored in November 2017 as the sixth recipient of the Armed Forces Merit Award 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.

ARMED FORCES



MERIT AWARD

Armed Forces Merit Award presented by the FWAA - 2019 Nominations

Programs

- [Athletes of Valor](#), Alex Stone, Founder & CEO, Athletes of Valor (U. S. Marines)
- [Battlefields to Ballfields](#), Mike Pereira, CEO/President/Director
- [National Association of College Directors of Athletics](#), Wounded Warrior Project
- University of South Carolina's "[Seats for Soldiers](#)" program and other initiatives
- [University of Tennessee](#), POW/MIA Chair of Honor

Active Players

- [Cornelius Andrews](#), Union College, WR, 5-7, 148, Soph., Stockbridge, GA.
- [Dromynique Chestnut](#), Azusa Pacific, DB, 5-9, 180, Sen., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
- [Alexander Findura](#), Bloomsburg, DL, 6-6, 255, Jun., Woodland, Ga. (U. S. Marine Corps)
- [Rashaud Freeman](#), Webber International, LB, 6-0, 225, Soph, Jacksonville, Fla. (U. S. Army)
- [Joshua Griffin](#), Colorado State, RB, 5-10, 208, Jun., Houston, Tex.
- [Rasheed Holloway](#), Union College, WR, 6-0, 198, Soph., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
- [Damian Jackson](#), Nebraska, DL, 6-2, 275, Soph. Las Vegas, Nev. (U. S. Navy)
- [Kenwon Mack](#), Union College, CB, 5-9, 165, Frosh, Detroit, Mich.
- [Ty Morrow](#), Texas Tech, OL, 6-4, 275, Sen., Canadian, Tex. (U. S. Navy)
- [Collin O'Donnell](#), Bluefield College, DL, 6-0, 250, Frosh, North Tonawanda, N.Y.
- [Josh Schenck](#), Oklahoma, LB, 5-11, 210, Jun., Knightdale, N.C. (ROTC Cadet) - [TWITTER](#) - [READ](#) - [READ](#)
- [Casey Stewart](#), Shenandoah, WR, 6-4, 200, Sen., Front Royal, Va. (National Guard) - [READ MORE](#)

Football Staff

- [Troy Calhoun](#), Head Coach, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Jake Campbell](#), Assistant Backfield, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Lt. Col. Robert Green](#), Defensive Assistant, United States Naval Academy (U. S. Marine Corps)
- [Brian Knorr](#), Assistant Head Coach/Co-Def. Coord./Inside Linebackers, U. S. Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Steed Lobotzke](#), Offensive Line, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Ben Miller](#), Running Backs/Special Teams Coordinator, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Capt. Ross Pospisil](#), Title Director of Player Development, United States Naval Academy (U. S. Marines Corps)
- [John Rudzinski](#), Defensive Coordinator, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Trent Steelman](#), Quarterbacks/B-Backs Coach, Jacksonville, University (U. S. Army)
- [Mike Thiessen](#), Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)
- [Mike Viti](#), Assistant Football Coach/Fullback, United States Military Academy (U. S. Army)
- [Charlton Warren](#), Cornerbacks, Georgia (U. S. Air Force)
- [Mick Yokitis](#), Wide Receivers, United States Naval Academy (U. S. Navy)
- [Jake Zweig](#), Director of Man Development, Illinois, (U. S. Navy)

Football Support Staff

- [Jordan Simmons](#), Strength & Conditioning, Nevada (U. S. Army)
- [Rusty Whitt](#), Strength & Conditioning, United States Military Academy (U. S. Army)

Staffing

- [Jim Knowlton](#), Director of Athletics, University of California (U. S. Army)
- [LTC John Nawoichyk](#), Assistant AD/Military Operations, United States Military Academy (U. S. Army)
- [Steve Senn](#), Director of Recruiting and Player Personnel, United States Air Force Academy (U. S. Air Force)

Referees

- [Raymond Daniel](#), Official, Mid-American Conference (Army National Guard)
- [Steve Thielen](#), Official, Mid-American Conference (U. S. Army)