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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Outland Trophy and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases Partner for Public Awareness Campaign to Help #FightFlu

Dallas, TX (FWAA) — The **Football Writers Association of America (FWAA)** and the **National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID)** will again partner to present the **2019 Outland Trophy** as part of a continued public awareness campaign focused on the importance of influenza (flu) prevention during the 2019-2020 flu season. Selected by FWAA, the trophy is awarded annually to the top interior lineman in college football. The announcement was made by Steve Richardson, FWAA executive director, and Marla Dalton, CAE, NFID executive director and CEO.

“The partnership with the Outland Trophy offers NFID a timely opportunity to promote the importance of flu prevention and reminds college football fans all across the U.S. that annual flu vaccination is recommended for all individuals age six months and older,” said Dalton. “With millions of college football fans congregating at stadiums and tailgate parties every weekend, it is critical for everyone to be vaccinated to protect themselves and each other.”

Flu is a highly contagious and sometimes life-threatening disease that affects between 5-20 percent of the U.S. population annually and accounts for between 140,000-960,000 hospitalizations and 12,000-79,000 deaths in the U.S. each year. Getting vaccinated annually against flu is the most effective way to prevent influenza.

As part of the public awareness campaign, the **Outland Trophy presented by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases** will use the hashtag #FightFlu on all advertising, marketing, social media and public relations materials. Branded content and advertising will promote the campaign in *Touchdown Illustrated* gameday programs at more than 1,000 college football games during the 2019-2020 season, and in most of the major bowl game programs – including the College Football Playoff – as well as most NFL gameday programs. Ads will encourage fans to take three steps to #FightFlu: get an annual flu vaccine, practice healthy habits, and take flu antiviral drugs if prescribed.

Former University of Pittsburgh All-American Mark May, the 1980 Outland Trophy winner and two-time Super Bowl Champion as a member of the Washington Redskins, will serve as the Outland Trophy #FightFlu ambassador. One of 41 Outland Trophy winners who have been inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame, May will be inducted into the University of Pittsburgh Hall of Fame on September 20th, the week before he receives his flu vaccine at an NFID media event in Washington, D.C. to kick off flu season. Additionally, May will make media appearances on behalf of the public awareness campaign and will share reminders for people to get their annual flu vaccines to help #FightFlu on social media.

The **2019 Outland Trophy presented by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases** will be presented during ESPN’s *The Home Depot College Football Awards* on December 12 from the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, GA. The official presentation to the winner will be made at the NFID Outland Trophy Awards Dinner sponsored by Werner Enterprises in Omaha, NE on January 15, 2020.

Last year, University of Alabama defensive tackle, Quinnen Williams became only the second sophomore to earn the award. He was selected by the New York Jets with the third pick in the 2019 NFL Draft.

The **2019 Outland Trophy presented by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases** will be one of college football's most anticipated award races this season. The preseason Outland Trophy Watch List, featuring standout interior linemen on offense and defense from all 10 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision conferences and independents, will be announced tomorrow, July 23.

"The FWAA is delighted to once again partner with NFID for this Outland Trophy sponsorship. NFID is an influential thought leader promoting important public health messages around disease prevention and treatment. Using one of college football's oldest and most revered awards to help promote flu prevention is a winning play on any field as far as the FWAA is concerned," said Richardson.

The Outland Trophy, now in its 74th year, is the third-oldest major college football award. Created in 1946 when Dr. John Outland presented the FWAA with a financial contribution to initiate the award, the Outland Trophy has been given to the best interior lineman in college football ever since. Dr. Outland, an All-American at the University of Pennsylvania in the late 1890s, eventually took up practice in Kansas City, MO. An avid outdoorsman, Dr. Outland believed linemen did not get the credit they deserved and wanted an award to recognize them.

About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Founded in 1973, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to educating the public and healthcare professionals about the burden, causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases across the lifespan. Visit nfid.org for more information.

About the Football Writers Association of America

Founded in 1941, the non-profit Football Writers Association of America (FWAA) consists of more than 1,300 members, including journalists, broadcasters, publicists and key executives in all areas of college football. Led by current President Matt Fortuna of The Athletic, longtime Executive Director Steve Richardson, and a board of veteran journalists, the association continues to grow and work to help college football prosper at all levels. Visit footballwriters.com for more information about the FWAA and its award programs.

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