



For Immediate Release
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**ARA PARSEGHIAN TO ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS
TO COLLEGE FOOTBALL AWARD PRESENTED BY THE
NATIONAL COLLEGE FOOTBALL AWARDS ASSOCIATION**

Bednarik Award
Biletnikoff Award
Bronko Nagurski Trophy
Broyles Award
Butkus Award
Davey O'Brien Award
Disney Sports Spirit Award
Doak Walker Award
Eddie Robinson Award
Heisman Trophy
Jim Thorpe Award
Lou Groza Award
Mackey Award
Maxwell Award
MFC Coach of the Year
Outland Trophy
Ray Guy Award
Rimington Trophy
Rotary Lombardi Award
Walter Camp Award
William V. Campbell Trophy
Contributions to College
Football Award

FORT WORTH (NCFAA) – Legendary University of Notre Dame football coach **Ara Parseghian**, who took Fighting Irish from the depths of despair to national prominence in the 1960s and 1970s and later helped establish his own Medical Research Foundation, has been named the recipient of the 11th annual **Contributions to College Football Award** presented by the **National College Football Awards Association** (NCFAA).

Parseghian, 89, will accept the award on ESPN during *The Home Depot College Football Awards*, airing live from the Atlantic Dance Hall at Disney's BoardWalk at the Walt Disney World Resort on Thursday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m. ET.

The Contributions to College Football Award was created by the NCFAA more than a decade ago and is presented to an individual "who has been closely associated with college football as a player, coach, administrator, media personality or other position attendant to the game."

"Ara Parseghian was an iconic coach during the 1960s and 1970s who led Notre Dame football to the highest of heights," said the Davey O'Brien Foundation's Danielle Moorman, president of the NCFAA. "His inspirational leadership left its imprint on the lives of hundreds of student-athletes, and his strong character contributed to one of the great coaching legacies of our time. Later in life, his leadership in his own Medical Research Foundation has contributed greatly to the awareness of the terrible disease, Niemann-Pick Type C, and has provided a beacon of hope for those afflicted by it."

Parseghian is personally involved in the fight against Niemann-Pick Type C, a genetic, pediatric, neurodegenerative disorder responsible for the build-up of cholesterol in cells that results in eventual damage to the nervous system. Three of his grandchildren, Michael, Marcia, and Christa Parseghian, were diagnosed with NP-C in 1994 and all three died of the disease by 2005.

Later, Ara's son, Dr. Michael Parseghian, and his wife Cindy, the mother of the three children, started the Ara Parseghian Medical Research Foundation. It has raised more than \$40 million for research into causes and treatments for the disease.

"When tragedy struck our family, my wife and I asked my father to return to work as the chairman of the medical research foundation we were establishing," said Michael Parseghian. "For the past 18 years, he has worked to help raise over \$40 million for research into finding a cure for Niemann Pick Type-C disease. If you ask him, I think he'll tell you he's best known for his work in football, but his most important work came after football, with the Ara Parseghian Medical Research Foundation."

Parseghian, who previously had coached at Miami University (Ohio) and Northwestern University, arrived at Notre Dame in 1964 and promptly turned the program around. After failing to post a winning record in the previous five seasons, the Fighting Irish went 9-1 during Parseghian's first season. Two seasons later in 1966, Notre Dame won its first

national championship since 1949, despite the epic 10-10 tie with Michigan State.

In 11 seasons, Parseghian compiled a sterling 95-17-4 record at Notre Dame that included another national championship in 1973. The only season Notre Dame lost more than two games under Parseghian was in 1972 when it went 8-3. He retired from coaching after the 1974 season and entered broadcasting, serving as a color analyst – first for ABC and then CBS – from 1975-88. Parseghian was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1980.

Ara Parseghian becomes the ninth person with head coaching in his background to win the NCFAA award. The inaugural winner was the late Darrell Royal in 2002. Other winners are Keith Jackson (2003), Vince Dooley (2004), Tom Osborne (2005), Chuck Neinas (2006), Frank Broyles (2007), Bobby Bowden (2008), LaVell Edwards (2009), Lee Corso (2010) and Roy Kramer (2011).

The **National College Football Awards Association** (NCFAA) was founded in 1997 as a coalition of the major collegiate football awards to protect, preserve and enhance the integrity, influence and prestige of the game's predominant awards. The NCFAA encourages professionalism and the highest standards for the administration of its member awards and the selection of their candidates and recipients. For more information, visit the association's official website, www.NCFAA.org.

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