

MEDIA RELEASE

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ED BLOCK COURAGE AWARD FOUNDATION SPECIAL GUESTS ANNOUNCED

February 7, 2007 – **BALTIMORE**, Md. – The Ed Block Courage Award Foundation announced the names today of special awards that will be presented at **29th Annual Ed Block Courage Awards** on Tuesday, March 20th at Martin's West.

Vince Papale, former **Philadelphia Eagles** wide Receiver will be attending the 29th Annual Ed Block Courage Awards and will be presented with a special Courage Award. In 1976, at the age of 30, Vince tried out for the Philadelphia Eagles, made the team, and became the oldest rookie in NFL history and still is to this day. The movie **Invincible** was made about Vince Papale and his story. Vince was with the Eagles for 4 seasons and was voted Special Teams Captain by his teammates. Papale was voted Man of the Year by the Eagles, in 1978, for his many charitable contributions.

Rachel Nichols, **ESPN** will be serving as an **Ambassador of Courage** and also as a special guest Emcee for the 29th Ed Block Courage Awards. Rachel joined ESPN in February 2004 as a New York-based reporter for ESPN's news-gathering operation, particularly *SportsCenter*, *Outside the Lines* and *ESPNNEWS*. During the fall, Nichols joined *Sunday NFL Countdown* and covers team news and provides the latest updates from stadiums around the league. Rachel is a native of Potomac, MD

Baltimore Ravens Defensive Coordinator, Rex Ryan has been named the **Assistant Coach of the Year** by *Pro Football Weekly Magazine*. Hub Arkush, Senior Editor of *Pro Football Weekly* is scheduled to be in Baltimore to present the award to Coach Ryan during the 29th Annual Ed Block Courage Awards March 20, 2007 at Martin's West. Rex led the Baltimore Ravens to the Number 1 ranked defense in the NFL. The Ravens notched 60 sacks in the season, second most in the league and had 4 members named to the Pro Bowl. Rex is the son of former Eagles and Cardinals Head Coach Buddy Ryan and his brother, Rob, is the Oakland Raiders' Defensive Coordinator.

The **Professional Football Athletic Trainers Association (PFATS)** has announced that the **Athletic Training Staff of the Year** is the **Miami Dolphins**. Head Athletic Trainer, Kevin O'Neill; Assistant Athletic Trainer, Troy Maurer; and Director of Rehabilitation/Assistant Athletic Trainer, Ben Westby will be presented their awards during the Annual Ed Block Courage Awards banquet on March 20, 2007.

The *Ed Block Courage Award Foundation* is proud to announce there will be a new member inducted into the **Baltimore, MD Sports Media Hall of Fame** at the Annual Banquet on March 20th. This year's inductee will be **Johnny Holliday from the University of Maryland**. Johnny has been the long-time voice of the Terps. Other members of the *Baltimore, MD Sports Media Hall of Fame* include **Chuck Thompson, Vince Bagli, John Steadman, Jim McKay** and **Frank DeFord**.

MEDIA RELEASE

Baltimore Ravens Tight End Todd Heap will be participating as this year's **Courage Captain** and will play a major role during the events of the 29th Annual Ed Block Courage Awards.

Some notable recipients that will be presented the Courage Award at the annual banquet this year are **Deuce McAllister**, New Orleans Saints; **Rex Grossman**, Chicago Bears; **Rodney Harrison**, New England Patriots; and **Reggie Wayne**, Indianapolis Colts. All of these Courage Award Recipients will be playing this weekend in the AFC and NFC Championship games.

The recipients were selected by their teammates for displaying a commitment to the principles of courage and sportsmanship, while serving as inspirations in their locker rooms. The accolade has become one of the most esteemed honors bestowed upon a player in the NFL, especially since the recipient is selected by his peers. Recipients are often players who have overcome devastating injuries or tragedies in their personal lives and returned to the top level of competition that is the NFL.

The Courage Award is named after Ed Block, the longtime head athletic trainer of the Baltimore Colts who was a pioneer in his profession and a respected humanitarian. The Foundation's efforts are endorsed by the NFL and the Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society (PFATS). The inaugural Ed Block Courage Award was presented in 1978 to Baltimore Colts' defensive end, Joe Ehrmann. Following the Colts departure from Baltimore in 1984, the scope of the Award expanded to include one player from every team in the NFL.

For more than 28 years, the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation has celebrated the courageous efforts of players in the NFL while raising the nation's awareness of the plight of abused children in NFL communities. Through the Foundation's *Courage House National Support Network for Kids*, the organization has helped Courage Houses improve the lives of abused children across America. Named after the NFL team in a respective city, a Courage House is a facility that provides support and quality care for abused children in that community. Currently, more than 50-percent of the teams in the NFL support a Courage House. That group includes: **Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit, Miami, Dallas, Baltimore, Oakland, New York (Giants), Seattle, Carolina, Cleveland, Atlanta, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Buffalo, San Francisco** and **Minnesota**. A new Courage House will be dedicated at this year's event. The **Green Bay Packers Courage House** has been selected for inclusion in the *Courage House National Support Network for Kids*.

Sponsorship opportunities for the event range from \$2,500 to \$25,000. A table (10 seats) may be purchased for \$1,250 and individual tickets are \$150 each. To become a sponsor or purchase tables/tickets, call 410.821.6252.

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