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**PLAYERS COALITION CHARITABLE FOUNDATION HOSTED  
SUPER BOWL PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE 2019 PLAN AND  
SIX GRANT RECIPIENTS**

**(Atlanta, GA, January 30)**- On Wednesday, the Players Coalition Charitable Foundation unveiled its 2019 plan to impact racial and social inequality and also announced its 2018-19 grants totaling \$2 million to six national non-profit organizations at a press conference. Players Coalition Co-Founders Anquan Boldin and Malcolm Jenkins presented the Coalition's direction for the next year and each organization's representative spoke about their individual program and how the grant will support them.

In 2018, Players Coalition, an independent 501c3 (charity) and 501c4 (advocacy) organization, focused on building awareness and support for national campaigns centered around cash bail reform, juvenile justice, the power of elected public officials, and the importance of voting, all aimed to educate and mobilize action among the masses with the collective objective to effect systemic change. Players across the country committed personal funds, time and resources to advocate for legislative initiatives and programs to impact their communities, and were successful in aiding grassroots efforts, with bills passing in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Florida, Louisiana and Michigan.

Players Coalition is committed to achieving meaningful impact on root issues around social justice and racial equality using our influence and support to impact systemic social and civic change in the areas of Police & Community Relations, Criminal Justice Reform and Education & Economic Advancement in low-income communities. To assist in that impact, players worked alongside subject matter experts and grassroots organizations in these areas in Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Seattle, Tampa, Washington D.C.

Players Coalition's priorities in 2019 will build upon their 2018 efforts and layer in strategic partnerships with grantee organizations to elevate the serious and urgent issues each group

tackles, heighten awareness around challenges faced and amplify the impact of their meaningful work. In 2018, Players Coalition Charitable Foundation received funding from the NFL, Fwd.US and Open Philanthropy among other donations. Players Coalition advocacy work through the c4 is fully funded by player contributions and player-driven efforts.

Grantees were proactively identified, and selection priority was focused on nonprofit organizations working at the national level in communities where players work, reside and play, providing evidence-based solutions to achieve: juvenile justice and bail reform, police transparency and accountability, equal education and economic advancement opportunities for low-income communities.

“Players Coalition is proud to partner with our 2019 grantee organizations, working on a national scale but focused in communities impacted the most. Our goal has always been to work hand in hand with groups that can provide evidence-based solutions to achieve change and make a lasting difference on impacted citizens,” said **Anquan Boldin, Players Coalition Co-Founder**.

The following organizations are recipients of 2019 grants and partnerships with the Players Coalition:

#### **National Juvenile Defender Center**

Every day in America, children across the nation are denied their Constitutional right to legal counsel—they are arrested, prosecuted, and too often incarcerated without lawyers at their side. In 34 states, youth are charged for a “free lawyer” and frequently waive the right to a lawyer without a lawyer even being present. The National Juvenile Defender Center is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that provides support to public defenders, appointed counsel, law school clinical programs, and non-profit law centers to ensure quality representation in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas. “In the past year, we’ve been shocked to see how some of our youth, especially youth of color, are being thrown into our juvenile and criminal court systems. In working with the National Juvenile Defender Center, players will help educate and seek justice for kids,” said **Devin McCourty, Players Coalition Task Force member and Safety for the New England Patriots**.

“For young people in our juvenile courts, the essence of access to justice is access to legal counsel,” according to **Mary Ann Scali, executive director of the National Juvenile Defender Center**. “As the nation that incarcerates children at the highest rate in the world, and disproportionately youth of color, we have an obligation to fulfill the promises of the Constitution for all youth, most especially the rights to liberty and a lawyer.” Scali added that, “Partnering with the Players Coalition answers an urgent call to turn back the tide of criminalizing childhood and create waves of opportunity for all young people to have access to well-trained lawyers and receive fair and equal justice under the law.”

## **Communities In Schools**

In the U.S., approximately 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 live in poverty, shouldering a significant burden. Communities In Schools (CIS) is the leading national organization empowering students to stay in school by utilizing a model that works directly in the schools to address the impacts of poverty from every angle. CIS “Integrated Students Supports” model operates in schools to match at-risk students with the specific resources they need to beat the odds and stay in school. “Players have long been associated with education and a desire to encourage kids to stay in school. But there is a lack of educational equity that we are fighting for,” said **Chris Long, Players Coalition Task Force member and Defensive End for the Philadelphia Eagles**. “Players Coalition will be working alongside Communities In Schools to advocate for state-level grassroots policy to level the playing field in schools as well as reinforce the importance of education with students.”

“All of our nation’s students deserve a level playing field,” said **Communities In Schools President and CEO Dale Erquiaga**. “They deserve an equal opportunity to achieve in school and fulfill their potential in life. The critical support of the Players Coalition allows Communities In Schools to execute a bold new vision to help break down some of the barriers these students face in school and give them a voice in creating a more equitable future.”

## **The Justice Collaborative**

Nearly half of all people living in the United States have experienced incarceration in their family. 113 million adults have had an immediate family member incarcerated, and right now, 6.5 million adults have an immediate family member currently incarcerated in jail or prison. The Justice Collaborative Engagement Project is an independent, nonpartisan research and advocacy organization devoted to holding public officials accountable for reforming the justice system and building healthier and safer communities. “America has an incarceration problem. Through working with The Justice Collaborative, players will use our voices to advocate for change on a state and local level to address the root issues behind incarceration. Incarceration doesn’t solve the problem, it exacerbates the poverty problem in America,” said **Malcolm Jenkins, Co-Founder of the Players Coalition and Safety for the Philadelphia Eagles**.

“America locks-up more people than any other country, criminalizes poverty, needlessly separates children from their parents, and throws away people who make mistakes. And taking away so many people’s respect and dignity has not increased our safety. The Justice Collaborative seeks to identify the people with the most power to change these injustices – and to make sure that they do it. The Players Coalition and their tremendous platform plays a critical role in placing pressure on the actors with the ability to reverse mass incarceration and restore human dignity, and we are privileged to work with them,” said **Jessica Brand, Legal Director of The Justice Collaborative**.

## **Year Up**

Millions of young adults in the US have talent and motivation, but lack opportunity. At the same time, companies have opportunities available, but lack the talent they need to succeed. Year Up is a non-profit organization that enables young adults to move from minimum wage to meaningful careers in just one year. “We want to help close the Opportunity Divide,” said **Torrey Smith, Players Coalition Task Force member and Wide Receiver for the Carolina Panthers**. “There are motivated youth who simply need a leg up. Players Coalition will help Year Up expand, recruit and educate young people as well as advocate for more inclusion.”

“Every year, Year Up ensures the economic advancement of thousands of low-income young adults, providing them with the skills and experience to secure meaningful-wage careers at top companies,” said **Gerald Chertavian, Year Up Founder and CEO**. “With the support of the Players Coalition, Year Up will be able to serve even more talented young people in new and existing markets across the country, while also working to change perceptions, employer practices and public policy to create a more inclusive marketplace, where the opportunity to achieve the American Dream is available to anyone willing to work for it.”

## **Center for Policing Equity**

Center for Policing Equity is the largest research and action think tank on race and policing in the world. A science-based nonprofit organization, CPE uses advanced analytics to diagnose disparities in policing and provide a data-driven vaccine against them. “Our communities desire a better relationship with law enforcement. Players Coalition will work with CPE to draw awareness to the sources of racial disparity in policing and advocate for reforms that can reduce them,” said **Doug Baldwin, Players Coalition Task Force Member and wide receiver for the Seattle Seahawks**.

“**The Center for Policing Equity** uses data on police behavior to identify burdensome and disparate practices—and help police prevent them. By leveraging the insights of behavioral science, we arm law enforcement and the communities they are sworn to protect with tools to hold departments accountable to the values of their communities. The support from the Players Coalition will allow us to grow these efforts to do science in pursuit of justice.” - Dr. Phillip Atiba Goff, Co-Founder & President

## **Advancement Project National Office**

Advancement Project National Office is a next generation, multi-racial, policy, communications, and legal action organization committed to civil rights and racial justice. Through strategic communications, Advancement Project influences public opinion on issues of race, democracy and justice, creating an opening for local change to occur.

“As we continue to advocate for police accountability and transparency and efforts to stop the school-to-prison pipeline, Players Coalition will collaborate with Advancement Project National Office on a local and statewide level to boost visibility and political education around these issues,” said **Demario Davis, Players Coalition Task Force member and linebacker for the New Orleans Saints.**

“We are excited to collaborate with the Players Coalition Charitable Foundation to combat systemic racism and raise awareness about the challenges thousands of people of color navigate each day in the criminal legal system,” said Judith Browne Dianis, Executive Director of **Advancement Project’s National Office.** “Our current criminal legal system is the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow and is too often presented as a ‘solution’ to issues which are better addressed by additional investments in public health and education. While police in white communities are there to protect and serve, in Black and Brown communities they exist for law and order. As a result, these communities are over-criminalized, experiencing higher arrests, incarceration and conviction rates. Through our partnership with Players Coalition Charitable Foundation, we aim to dismantle the structures that fuel mass incarceration, criminalize poverty and funnel students from school to prison. We are also excited about partnering with NFL players to help communities re-imagine public safety and center the voice of those directly impacted to change the public narrative that criminalizes people of color.”

### ***About Players Coalition***

Players Coalition is an independent 501c3 (charity) and 501c4 (advocacy) organization, working with professional athletes, coaches and owners across leagues to improve social justice and racial equality in our country. The work is focused on three key pillars: Police & Community Relations, Criminal Justice Reform and Education & Economic Advancement. Players Coalition is solution-oriented, and members invest significant time and resources to educate themselves on various issues impacting their communities to identify where their influence can have the greatest impact. In 2017, the Players Coalition was co-founded by NFL Pro-Bowl Safety and 2017 NFLPA Byron “Whizzer” White winner Malcolm Jenkins and retired wide receiver and NFL 2015 Walter Payton Man of the Year winner Anquan Boldin. Players Coalition continues to grow in numbers of ambassadors with the collective goal of making an impact on federal, state and local levels through advocacy, engagement and providing resources. For more information follow @playerscoalition on Instagram and Facebook and @playercoalition on Twitter.

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