

Military, Law, and more ...

Finalists announced for 14th Annual NFL Salute to Service Award presented by USAA to be recognized February 6

NEW YORK – Jan. 16, 2025 – The NFL and USAA, an official NFL Salute to Service partner, announced Minnesota Vikings running back Aaron Jones, San Francisco 49ers tight end George Kittle and Los Angeles Chargers defensive end Morgan Fox as finalists for the 14th annual Salute to Service Award presented by USAA.

The Salute to Service Award is part of the NFL and USAA's year-round commitment to recognize and honor the military and veteran community. Through the Salute to Service initiative, the NFL and its teams come together to honor, empower and connect with service members, veterans and their families. The 32 award nominees from each team were announced in November and consisted of active and retired players, coaches and team executives and personnel who best demonstrated support for the military community.

The Salute to Service Award recipient will be announced in February and recognized at NFL Honors presented by Invisalign on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025.

"Our three finalists for the 2024 Salute to Service Award are all deserving of recognition for their long-standing and unwavering commitment to honoring the military community," said USAA Senior Vice President and head of Military Affairs, Major General (Ret.) John Richardson. "We commend Aaron Jones, George Kittle and Morgan Fox for continually using their platforms as NFL players to advance and enrich the lives of our military service members and their families, putting service to others above

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USAA will contribute \$25,000 in the award recipient's honor to the official aid societies representing each of the military branches. The NFL Foundation will match that donation, which will go directly to the recipient's military charity of choice. The award recipient will also receive a specially designed military challenge coin which is presented to members of the military community to demonstrate membership, recognize excellence or boost morale.

Fans were once again able to vote for their favorite nominees, and the finalists were ultimately decided based on a consensus fan vote, an NFL internal committee and USAA. Nominees were also evaluated on the positive impact of their efforts to support the military community, the type of service conducted, the thoroughness of their support and their level of commitment.

A panel of judges, consisting of representatives from the U.S. military community, the NFL and USAA, will determine the Salute to Service Award recipient, and includes Chad Hennings, Air Force Academy graduate and three-time Super Bowl champion; Jim Mora, Sr., Marine Corps veteran and former NFL head coach; Lenny Bandy, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and NFL Vice President of Security; Major General (Ret.) John Richardson, USAA Senior Vice President and head of Military Affairs, and Joe Cardona, New England Patriots long snapper, U.S. Naval Reservist and 2023 Salute to Service Award recipient.

Since 2011, USAA has used its sponsorship to honor and appreciate service members, veterans and their families by creating unique opportunities that bring the military community and the NFL closer together.

To learn more about the Salute to Service Award presented by USAA, please visit NFL.com/Salute. Below is an overview of the three finalists.

Aaron Jones, Sr., Minnesota Vikings running back

Aaron Jones, Sr., embodies each tenant of the NFL's Salute to Service initiative to honor, empower and connect service members, veterans and their families. Aaron honors current and former U.S. Military service members including his late father, Alvin Jones, Sr., who served 29 years in the U.S. Army and mother, Vurgess, who served 27 years in the U.S. Army -- both are retired as sergeants major. Aaron honors his older brother,

Xavier, who serves in the U.S. Air Force through his A&A All the Way Foundation. Founded in 2020 by Aaron and his twin brother Alvin, Jr., the nonprofit emphasizes the support of youth in military families. Aaron's commitment to the military community connects families and young people who have experienced the difficulties of deployment, regular change and relocation and the uncertainties that often accompany military life. Aaron calls on his own childhood experience, when his parents were deployed to Iraq, and he saw firsthand the sacrifices made to serve one's country. A&A All the Way holds an annual gala to raise money that empowers military families by providing them with necessary resources and care. Aaron and his family have donated their own time and resources to provide military families with joy-filled experiences, such as trips to the zoo or movie nights. Aaron over the years has participated in Huddle for Heroes events, writing letters to active-duty military members, and meet-and-greets for T.A.P.S. families who have lost loved ones from the military or veteran community. Less than two months after signing with Minnesota in free agency, Aaron took part in a visit to the local United Heroes League and connected with young people and military members.

George Kittle, San Francisco 49ers tight end

George Kittle's connection is personal, rooted in family with his Uncle Pat and Grandfather Carl among loved ones who've served. Kittle hosts military and frontline heroes at every game, donating over 400 tickets in six

years. Founding Hidden Pearls Podcast (HPP) in 2020, Kittle and his family amplify community stories, including those of nearly 60 veterans. Inspired by these stories, he and his family created an app offering free mental health resources to veterans, including the meditative practices he uses while playing. Kittle has donated over \$250,000 to military nonprofits and further highlighted military organizations through My Cause My Cleats. Kittle's connection with service members goes beyond their introduction. After gifting the family of fallen Army soldier SGT Martin LaMar Super Bowl tickets, Kittle continues to host them at training camp and keeps SGT LaMar's Purple Heart in his locker. Army veteran Chris Kleinsorge handed a uniform he wore in Afghanistan to Kittle's wife, Claire, during an away game on behalf of all military veterans. Understanding the uniform's importance, Kittle flew Kleinsorge and his wife to a 49ers home game. These are just two of countless stories that exemplify Kittle's dedication to the military community. Kittle is an active participant in the team's Salute to Service programming and goes the extra mile to create opportunities to uplift the military community.

Morgan Fox, Los Angeles Chargers defensive end

Morgan Fox has dedicated his philanthropic efforts to serving veteran and active-duty military communities. Morgan grew up in the military community and experienced the sacrifice of service members and their families firsthand. During the offseason, the team traveled to U.S. Marine

Corps Base Camp Pendleton, where Morgan addressed the military members and their families in attendance prior to practice. This November, Morgan will host a chalk talk with 100 warriors from the nonprofit Wounded Warrior Project, speaking on the challenges of overcoming adversity. Morgan participated in the Chargers Community Corner program to provide 100 club level game tickets to military and Veteran focused nonprofits. He celebrated the grand re-opening of the U.S. Vets Long Beach dining hall renovation and served meals to over 300 veterans.

For the past two seasons, he has hosted warriors from the Wounded Warrior Project at the Chargers practice facility, supported our nation's fallen heroes through the nonprofit Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, and talked about the parallels between elite athletes and veterans with the Pat Tillman Foundation. During Salute to Service month over the past two years, Morgan has created his own merchandise with all proceeds going to the Headstrong Project and the Wounded Warrior Project. On the field, Morgan has raised awareness and funds through My Cause My Cleats for nonprofit organizations including Wounded Warrior Project, the Headstrong Project, Merging Vets and Players, One Tribe Foundation and War Heroes on Water. These organizations support and assist veterans in overcoming mental and emotional struggles that they face after their service has ended. Morgan ongoing support of our nation's military and veterans has never wavered and will continue far beyond his playing career.

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation launches Forestry Advisory Council to bring the conservation community to work together

From The Outdoor Wire

JANUARY 21, 2025- This month, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) launched the CSF Forestry Advisory Council to bring together the forest industry and the hunting conservation community to work collaboratively to provide guidance to CSF to inform and advance policies that facilitate active forest management, support a robust forest industry, and improve wildlife habitat and access for sportsmen and women. The establishment of the CSF Forestry Advisory Council,



which will meet regularly throughout the year, builds on CSF's recently expanded programmatic emphasis on forest policy which will significantly

increase CSF's capacity to engage on state and federal issues that impact both the forest industry and the sportsmen's community. The CSF Forestry Advisory Council is comprised of organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting sportsmen's access, wildlife conservation, and sustainable forest management. "Hunters and foresters have a long history of working together on natural resource management issues dating back to the beginning of the conservation movement in the United States," said CSF Director of Forest Policy

John Culclasure. "The CSF Forestry Advisory Council builds on that tradition, and I'm excited to work with our partners in the forestry and sportsmen's communities to move the needle on issues impacting our shared forest conservation policy priorities."

CSF Forestry Advisory Council member organizations and individuals representing the organizations include:

- Craig Anderson, Director of Government Affairs, Forest Landowners Association;
- Ryan Bronson, Director of Government Affairs, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation;
- James Cummins, Immediate Past President, Boone and Crockett Club, and CSF Board of Directors;
- Brian Luoma, CSF Board of Directors, retired CEO and President of The Westervelt Company;
- Deon Nelson, Vice

President of Government Relations, National Alliance of Forest Owners;

- Bill Imbergamo, Executive Director, Federal Forest Resource Coalition;
 - James McKittrick, Director of Government Affairs, National Association of State Foresters; and
 - Tom Spezze, National Director of Conservation Programs, National Wild Turkey Federation.
- During the inaugural meeting, the CSF Forestry Advisory Council adopted its charter and by-laws, elected officers, and discussed issues and legislation that will inform CSF's forest policy prioritization and engagement strategy. Brian Luoma was elected Chairman, and Deon Nelson was elected Vice Chairman. CSF appreciates the support of the CSF Forestry Advisory Council member organizations and their representatives and

looks forward to working with them to advance policies that support active management on private working lands and public lands, state and federal, to support America's hunting heritage.



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