

## Titans to host a Merry Christmas Eve with Seahawks ... from sports page 1

Fans in Nashville can stream live Titans games on mobile devices with NFL+, which offers access to local games and all primetime games on phones and tablets. Out of market, fans can watch every Sunday afternoon game with Sunday Ticket. The Titans Radio Network and Nashville flagship 104.5 The Zone carry all Titans games across the Mid-South with the "Voice of the Titans" Mike Keith, analyst Dave McGinnis, sideline reporter Ramon Foster and gameday host Rhett Bryan. Streaming is available at the Titans Mobile App for listeners in the Nashville market and available everywhere for desktop users.

### TITANS LOOK TO BOUNCE BACK AFTER OVERTIME LOSS

The Titans hosted the Houston Texans last week and fell in overtime by a final score of 19-16. Ka'imi Fairbairn made a 54-yard field goal as time expired in overtime to provide the winning margin. It was the Titans' third overtime game of 2023 and marked their fifth contest of the season that was decided by three points or less.

Rookie quarterback Will Levis started his eighth consecutive game and completed 17 of 26 passes for 199 yards with one interception. He also rushed for 25 yards, including his first career touchdown on a one-yard run. The defensive highlights included defensive back Elijah Molden's 44-yard interception return for a touchdown. Molden tallied the team's first pick-six since Andrew Adams' 76-yarder against Indianapolis on Oct. 23, 2022.

Defensive lineman Denico Autry led the Titans against the Texans with a team-high two sacks. His 11 total sacks in 2023 represent a career high, and Autry joined Jevon Kearse (1999 and 2000), Kyle Vanden Bosch (2005 and 2007), Jason Babin (2010) and Harold Landry III (2021) as the only players for the team in its "Titans era" (since 1999) to record at least 11 sacks in a season.

Following this week's game, the Titans will travel to Houston for a New Year's Eve rematch with the Texans. They close out the regular season at home in Week 18 against the Jacksonville Jaguars (Jan. 6 or 7).

### THE SEAHAWKS

The Seahawks will have a short week to prepare for their road game against the Titans. They are scheduled to host the Philadelphia Eagles on Monday, Dec. 18. Pete Carroll is in his 14th season as head coach of the Seahawks. He owns the NFL's fourth-longest tenure among head coaches with their current clubs behind only New England's Bill Belichick, Pittsburgh's Mike Tomlin and Baltimore's John Harbaugh. Quarterback Geno Smith is in his 11th NFL season and his fifth campaign with the Seahawks. He moved into the full-time starting role in 2022 and was subsequently named the AP Comeback Player of the Year. He started the first 12 games of 2023 before sitting out Dec. 10 at San Francisco due to a groin injury.

\* Seattle's record does not include their game vs. Philadelphia on Monday, Dec. 18.

## Titans mathematically eliminated after OT loss from sports page 1

On their first possession of the fourth quarter, the Titans were able to add to their lead when Folk completed a 45-yard field goal. Unfortunately, the Texans did not waste any time tying the game. A 3-yard touchdown from Keenum to Noah Brown and the successful point after from Fairbairn were all it took to send the game into extra time. Tennessee won the toss and went on offensive first in overtime. Despite a 23-yard pass to Chris Moore, the Titans were unable to find the endzone. The Texans would try, and fail, as well, before the Titans were given a second chance at

scoring. Unfortunately, the second drive was much like the first and was unsuccessful. The drive ended with Levis getting sacked and injured on the play. Houston would end up relying on their kicker, Fairbairn, who had been red hot all game. With 2 seconds remaining in overtime, his 54-yarder not only ended the game, but also ended any hope of the Titans seeing the postseason. Tennessee (5-9) will face the Seattle Seahawks (6-7) on Christmas Eve Sunday before traveling to Houston for a rematch against the Texans.

## Tigers receive United Soccer Coaches Scholar All-American List ... from sports page 1

Alberta, had an outstanding season where she was named to the AAC's All-Conference First Team, was selected as the AAC's Offensive Player of the Year and was a United Soccer Coaches All-South Region honoree. Jones, who was second on the team with 11 goals, finished the season with a team-best 33 points.

after she helped hold down a Tiger backline that recorded 12 shutouts during the season while holding conference opponents to single-digit shots in seven of the nine matchups. Spray, along with the rest of the Memphis defense, held AAC opponents to just five goals during the regular season.

**Miller** (Biomedical Engineering & Math, 3.99), a fifth-year senior from Halifax, Nova Scotia, marked her final year in the Memphis Blue with a team-leading 12 goals with six of them serving as game-winning goals. The AAC All-Conference First Team honoree was a four-time Weekly Awards selection this season while also being picked to the United Soccer Coaches All-South Region Second Team.

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Soccer, visit [www.GoTigersGo.com](http://www.GoTigersGo.com) and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

**Spray** (Marketing Management, 4.00), a senior out of Allen, Texas, was named as the AAC's Co-Defensive Player of the Year

# NFL expands Hispanic Heritage Foundation partnership with 'NFL Latino Youth Honors' for student-athletes throughout the nation



NEW YORK — Dec. 18, 2023 — The National Football League and the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) announced the inaugural "NFL Latino Youth Honors," recognizing outstanding high school tackle and flag football athletes from around the country for their academic and athletic excellence. Eight of these exemplary student-athletes were announced today as finalists, representing each of the eight league divisions.

The NFL and the HHF have a rich history of celebrating excellence within Latino communities, and this year's program is fully focused on honoring outstanding Latino youth football players. This initiative celebrates high school seniors from across NFL club markets who excel in the classroom and on the football field.

"The NFL is proud to again join forces with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation in the launch of this year's 'NFL Latino Youth Honors,' where Latino students and their inspiring stories will motivate the next generation of fans and athletes of this great sport," said Marissa Solis, NFL Senior VP/Global Brand & Consumer Marketing. "This initiative underscores the league's commitment to fostering excellence, nurturing the next generation of football players and fans, and recognizing the outstanding contributions of Latino youth within the NFL community and beyond."

Earlier this season, all 32 NFL teams were invited to submit exemplary student-athletes to be considered for this year's program. As part of the selection process and after receiving hundreds of applications between August and October, a total of two students (one male and one female) were identified and nominated by many of the league's 32 clubs. The selection criteria for the "NFL Latino Youth Honors" program includes:

- Being a Latino/Hispanic High School Senior.
- A flag or tackle football player.
- Based in or near the 32 NFL team markets.
- Be in good academic standing (minimum GPA 3.0).
- Must demonstrate commitment to his/her community.
- Verifiable football stats (season and career), with designation of tackle or flag.

This selection process led to 56 remarkable student-athletes being nominated for the 2023 NFL Latino Youth Honors, many of whom were honored and celebrated locally during Latin Heritage Month events held by their nominating teams. Once the NFL and HHF received all nominations, a panel convened to

choose eight outstanding finalists — each representing a club market.

The eight finalists will each receive a grant award that can be used for college and are set to participate in a variety of special events taking place in Las Vegas during Super Bowl LVIII Week, presented by Nationwide. Activities will be designed to provide mentorship, guidance and resources to pursue careers in professional sports. During that week, the NFL and HHF will also announce the national winner, with the recipient receiving an invitation to HHF's National Youth Awards ceremony later in 2024.

"In partnership with the NFL, we are thrilled to announce the 'NFL Latino Youth Honors' program, celebrating the many talents and achievements of young Latinos who are not only exceptional athletes, but also outstanding students and leaders," said Jose Antonio Tijerino, President and

*"In partnership with the NFL, we are thrilled to announce the 'NFL Latino Youth Honors' program, celebrating the many talents and achievements of young Latinos who are not only exceptional athletes, but also outstanding students and leaders," said Jose Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO of HHF. "We look forward to discovering and celebrating Latino talent throughout the league's 32 club markets while highlighting the bright future that lies ahead."*

CEO of HHF. "We look forward to discovering and celebrating Latino talent throughout the league's 32 club markets while highlighting the bright future that lies ahead."

### This year's eight "NFL Latino Youth Honors" finalists are profiled below:

**AFC SOUTH:** Briciani Platas, Jacksonville, FL, nominated by the Jacksonville Jaguars

With an impressive track record that includes 62 flag pulls, 6 tackles for loss, 3 sacks, 6 interceptions and 18 pass breakups in her career, Briciani Platas has demonstrated her incredible dominance on the field as a cornerback for Orange Park High School. Off the gridiron, Platas has a 3.2 GPA while balancing school, sports, clubs, work and taking care of her little sisters seamlessly and also being a good role model for her classmates and teammates every day.

**NFC SOUTH:** Gabriela Ruiz, Tampa, FL, nominated by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers

In her two years as a standout WR/DB on the Plant City High School varsity team, Gabriela Ruiz has achieved 86 flag pulls, 8 interceptions on defense and 13 receptions for 126 yards on offense. As a first-generation American, Ruiz embodies hard work and determination, pushing herself to excel both academically and athletically. With an outstanding 6.9 GPA, she is not only a dedicated athlete, but also an exceptional student.

**AFC WEST:** Jeilani Davis, Inglewood, CA, nominated by the Los Angeles Chargers

Jeilani Davis, an 18-year-old standout from Mater Dei High School, is a star safety that received 14 Division I scholarship offers before committing to the University of Utah. A Mater Dei Scholar Athlete, Davis was the recipient of the Mater Dei Football Coaches' Award, and holds a 3.2 GPA. Davis' commitment to excellence isn't limited to football; he's recognized for his community service, including his contributions to the OG Ducks Youth Football League.

**NFC EAST:** Juan Minaya, Newark, NJ, nominated by the New York Giants

With a four-year starting position on the offensive line for Paramus Catholic High School, Juan Minaya is recognized as one of New Jersey's top high school football players, earning a full scholarship to the University of Miami due to his remarkable skill and dedication on the field. Off the gridiron, Minaya has showcased his resilience by transforming his cumulative GPA from 2.0 to 3.0 after the pandemic, demonstrating a strong work ethic and determination.

**NFC WEST:** Julian Rodriguez, Gilroy, CA, nominated by the San Francisco 49ers

Julian Rodriguez, a remarkable student-athlete from Christopher High School, shines on the football field as a dedicated starting guard for the school's varsity team, contributing to their impressive 2022 season (9-2) and a promising 2023 season (9-1 so far). Off the field, Rodriguez's character is equally impressive, with an outstanding commitment to community service, amassing 100 volunteer hours and a strong track record of academic excellence, boasting a GPA of 4.41. His ability to balance academic rigor with athletic demands showcases his adaptability and tenacity, qualities that make him an exceptional asset both on and off the football field.

**AFC EAST:** Natalia Lopez, Oakland Park, FL, nominated by the Miami Dolphins

Natalia Lopez, a 17-year-old dynamo from Pompano Beach High School, is a rising star in girls flag football. With impressive 2023 season stats, including 32 receptions, 245 yards, 3 TDs and 12 sacks, she's been a key playmaker and both a running back and rusher for her team. Beyond the field, Lopez shines as a student-athlete, boasting a remarkable 5.03 GPA and serving as her class president for all four years. Her commitment to her community and the empowerment of women is evident through her roles as the Women Empowerment Club Vice President, Rho Kappa President and MOSS Club Parliamentarian.

**AFC NORTH:** Peter Jaden Gonzalez, Pittsburgh, PA, nominated by the Pittsburgh Steelers

Boasting All-State and All-WPIAL honors, Peter Jaden Gonzalez is also recognized as one of the top 100 wide receivers in the nation for the Class of 2024. A star at Pittsburgh Central Catholic, his combination of speed and athleticism, including a 4.4-second 40-yard dash and a 40-inch vertical, sets him apart on the field. Off the gridiron, Gonzalez is a well-rounded young man, carrying a 4.2 GPA and prioritizing his family, friends and faith. He is known for his passion for catching touchdowns and will continue his football journey at Penn State University.

**NFC NORTH:** Yeniah Matos Delgado, Cicero, IL, nominated by the Chicago Bears

In the 2022 season, Yeniah Matos Delgado served as the starting quarterback and linebacker at Morton East High School, earning the title of team MVP with 5 interceptions on defense and 9 touchdowns as the quarterback. However, she doesn't stop at being a star on the field; Delgado also excels academically with a 3.6 GPA and as a natural leader who motivates her peers. She's a passionate advocate for her Puerto Rican heritage and demonstrated admirable resilience in the face of adversity after the devastating loss of her mother. For more information on this program, visit <http://nfl.com/LatinoYouthHonors>.

### About the Hispanic Heritage Foundation

The Hispanic Heritage Foundation's mission focuses on education, workforce, identity, and social impact through the lens of leadership and culture. For more information, visit [www.hispanicheritage.org](http://www.hispanicheritage.org) and follow the Hispanic Heritage Foundation on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok.

Watch for  
The Mid-South Tribune's 29th Annual Black History Month Special Edition coming in Feb. 2024.  
Email your Black History Month news, photos, and events to  
MSTnews@prodigy.net  
MSTentertainment@prodigy.net  
or BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net

MEMPHIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Drunk driving affects more than just YOU.**  
Don't drink & drive.

Emergencies: 9-1-1  
Non-Emergencies: 901-545-2766

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!