

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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COMMUNICATIONS

NFL LAUNCHES “BRIDGE TO SUCCESS” PROGRAM TO ASSIST PLAYERS TRANSITIONING TO CAREERS AND LIFE OFF THE FIELD

More Than 130 Former Players, Spouses and Significant Others to Participate in Four-Day Program that Includes Interview Opportunities with Fortune 500 Companies

More than 130 former NFL players and their spouses and significant others will take part in the inaugural Bridge to Success Program October 16-19 in Grapevine, TX. Bridge to Success, an evolution of the NFL Transition Assistance Program, is one of several training programs that NFL Player Engagement offers to former players as part of its [NFL NEXT](#) platform.

Bridge to Success – presented by NFL Player Engagement and the Legends Community – is shaped by the holistic approach to Total Wellness, addressing the physical, psychological and social aspects associated with transitioning out of the game. The four-day program will feature sessions pertaining to career development, family and relationships, fitness and nutrition, financial success and much more. At the end of the weekend, participants will have interview opportunities with Fortune 500 companies.

“This program is invaluable in providing support and resources to better equip and empower former players throughout their transition,” said **CHARLES WAY**, Vice President of NFL Player Engagement. “We will continue to ensure our players achieve success beyond the field of play.”

The program will kick off with a keynote speech by Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame OT and founder of GamesOver.org **KEN RUETTGERS**, who will address the stresses of coping with retirement. The weekend also will include a panel discussion moderated by **DWIGHT HOLLIER**, NFL Vice President of Clinical Services and Wellness, featuring NFL Legends Director **ED REYNOLDS** and The Trust Program Manager **HANNIBAL NAVIES**, along with **CHERYL RUETTGERS** (wife of Ken Ruetters). Other featured speakers include Dallas Cowboys Mental Health Consultant **DR. JACQUI STEPHENS** and former player and entrepreneur **RAY MICKENS**.

NFL Certified Transition Coaches, including **GARRY COBB**, **CHAD PENNINGTON**, **FREDDIE SCOTT**, **TONY STEWART**, **SCOTT TURNER** and **LEONARD WHEELER**, who are trained in life transitions, mental health first aid, relationship management and applied suicide intervention skills, will be on-hand to provide peer-to-peer support for participating players.

“Athletes face many challenges after retirement,” explained Ken Ruetters, who holds a Ph.D. and is a professor of sociology at Central Oregon Community College. “It’s important for players to acknowledge all aspects of the transition process and know they are not on this journey alone.”

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About NFL Player Engagement

NFL Player Engagement assists players in reaching their highest potential on and off-the-field with guidance, support, and resources provided before, during, and after their NFL experiences. NFL Player Engagement works with three core audiences: Prep, Life, and Next. NFL Life (current players) and NFL Next (former players) reach more than 2,000 NFL players and spouses each year through a variety of programs and services focused on career development, financial and continuing education, as well as personal, psychological, and physical wellness. NFL Prep provides high-school and college student-athletes of all sports with tools to help them succeed in life, focused on awareness, prevention, and education. More information can be found at www.nflplayerengagement.com

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