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## COMMUNICATIONS

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### **NFL BUILDS ON COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE WITH DEBUT OF NEW CAMPAIGN, ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLAYER-OWNER COMMITTEE**

***Let's Listen Together initiative will highlight ongoing engagement efforts among players, owners, law enforcement, and civic organizations to improve communities***

As part of its ongoing work to support its players, the NFL today announced a joint player and ownership commitment focused on social justice. The campaign, [Let's Listen Together](#), launches today and includes a multi-layered roll-out including digital content and brand spots highlighting the player-led work on social and racial equality. The platform will also include social media support, as well as individual letters from players and owners sharing their stories and personal reasons for making social justice a priority.

The working group committee, which held its first meeting at the league office in December, includes Arizona Cardinals Owner and President **MICHAEL BIDWILL**, Atlanta Falcons Owner and Chairman **ARTHUR BLANK**, Cleveland Browns Owner **JIMMY HASLAM**, Jacksonville Jaguars Owner **SHAHID KHAN**, and Miami Dolphins Owner **STEPHEN ROSS**. The player representatives are New York Jets offensive tackle **KELVIN BEACHUM**, NFL Legend **ANQUAN BOLDIN**, New York Jets quarterback **JOSH MCCOWN**, Washington Redskins cornerback **JOSH NORMAN** and NFL Legend **AENEAS WILLIAMS**. **Quotes from each owner and player on the committee are below.** The group will focus on supporting programs and initiatives that reduce barriers to opportunity, with a priority on supporting improvements in education and economic development, community and police relations, and the criminal justice system. It will work directly with league staff to help identify future initiatives that have both broad support and a potential for high impact, and make financial recommendations accordingly.

The [NFL Foundation](#) is also launching a new grant today for active and retired players who develop social justice programming or partner with local non-profit organizations committed to this work. A similar grant will be open for club foundations later this month.

In addition, the league's government affairs division is working to provide support to the Players Coalition, players and clubs who are interested in criminal justice reform at the local, state and/or national level.

"The collaboration between the NFL and its players should be celebrated, as it's the first professional league or entity that has taken the concerns of its players and put resources behind it," said NFL Legend **ANQUAN BOLDIN**. "Our country has some real issues when it comes to social and racial equality that must be addressed. The only way these issues will get solved is to fight together."

"We are pleased to have developed a new initiative that focuses on creating meaningful solutions to improve our communities," said NFL Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL**. "In developing this plan, we have taken the lead from our players and are honored to join them in this work. Their work has deepened our understanding of the unique platform we have to help advance progress in a profound and unifying way."

Many teams and owners are engaged in ongoing social justice work. This season alone, NFL teams, together with ownership and hundreds of players, have hosted or taken part in more than 100 events pertaining to social justice. Examples include New York Jets Chairman and CEO **CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON** spending time with Jets players learning about criminal justice reform in the Bronx in December; New England Patriots President **JONATHAN KRAFT** joining Patriots players at Harvard Law School earlier this month to hear from advocates for education and economic advancement; and Philadelphia Eagles CEO and Chairman **JEFFREY LURIE** and Commissioner Goodell joining Eagles players to gain perspective on criminal justice reform this fall. Commissioner Goodell also joined Dolphins players for a day of conversation and high school roundtables with law enforcement through the Ross Initiative for Sports Equality (RISE) earlier this season. This ongoing work is built upon the constructive dialogue that has been taking place for the past year among owners, players and NFL teams.

In the coming days and weeks, the NFL will highlight various societal issues, individuals and organizations through the lens of its players in a series of NFL Network features debuting this Thursday, January 25 during *NFL Total Access*, which airs at 7:00 PM Eastern. The first feature includes Philadelphia Eagles safety **MALCOLM JENKINS** and his focus on racial bias and social and emotional intelligence training for police officers. Future pieces will address other social justice issues led by **DEVIN MCCOURTY** and **DOUG BALDWIN, JR.**, among others.

For more information, visit [www.nfl.com/letslistentogether](http://www.nfl.com/letslistentogether).

### **Player and Owner Quotes:**

“We as members of the League all have influence, but working together for real change and insisting on reform will only amplify our reach and our impact. In order to affect real change, we must begin the dialogue, elicit action, and demand accountability. The Players Coalition has provided the opportunity, and now the commitment, to open the dialogue and ensure that the narrative remains centered on the real issues.” **Kelvin Beachum**

“The positive impact NFL players and teams have on their respective communities is well-established and extends back decades. Whenever there has been a need, the league, its players and its teams have risen to meet it. It’s clear that right now the need exists to address important issues related to social justice and equality. The ability to impact this area requires collaboration not only between teams and players but also with our community leaders and elected leaders both on a national and local level. The goal of this committee is to assist in this very worthwhile effort and I’m honored to be a part of it.” **Michael Bidwill**

“We have the opportunity and obligation to work toward the worthy goal of equality and fairness for all. I’ve been encouraged and inspired by the thoughtful dialogue we’ve already had and the initial steps taken by many in the NFL community. I know we can leverage the strength, influence and resources of the league and each club to inspire real change in our communities and beyond and I look forward to working closely with the owners and players to accomplish meaningful progress on these important societal issues.” **Arthur Blank**

“Our players have been tremendous and deserve a lot of credit for engaging in very thoughtful and productive dialogue on how to create the most impactful initiatives on these very important issues. Eliminating barriers to opportunity through empathy, action, education, and inclusion is our goal and working alongside our players on this mission has been an honor and very powerful. We are all deeply committed to utilizing the unique platform that we have to create positive change for our country’s future and particularly, our nation’s youth.” **Jimmy Haslam**

“I’ve personally experienced social ignorance and injustice in my life, but unfortunately millions of Americans face societal challenges each day that are far greater and outweigh anything I have encountered. We have an opportunity and obligation at the National Football League to first make this stop, and then build a community – whether that’s local, national or global – where right and good prevail. This is a calling that I am proud to answer as a member of the committee, and being surrounded by strong owners and players who share the

same commitment, I am confident the progress and change we need will happen. It may not be easy getting there, but we will do all we can to get there and ultimately be better.” **Shahid Khan**

“If we don’t commit resources to education and economic advancement then we’re missing the most important piece to sustainable growth and have no chance of breaking a cycle that continues to leave people marginalized and underserved.” **Josh McCown**

“This working group and our Players Coalition task force are striving hard to change the narrative. From police/community engagement, criminal justice reform and to educational and economic advancement. It’s about fostering wisdom and developing an understanding of your surroundings, your resources, and your options. We are a nation built on the backs of diverse people, led by diverse people; as a united people can reach out together and turn the key that unlocks the full potential of our country.” **Josh Norman**

“I felt it is important to continue to advocate for the issues that are important to our players, specifically social justice. I know what our players have done in the community on a year round basis and there is nothing more American than what they are advocating for, equal rights and justice for all. With our continued efforts through RISE and funding to individuals and organizations that further the principles of community engagement, education and justice reform, our vision is to use the unifying power of sports to bring people together.” **Stephen Ross (Founder of Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality)**

“The power of unity is what is needed in order for us to begin to change with intention some of **the challenges that we are facing in our communities. I am so honored to be involved with the** Players Coalition along with working with owners in order to work together to solve some of the challenges!” **Aeneas Williams**

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