



NEWS RELEASE

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BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASSIC TO KICK OFF SEASON THIS WEEKEND

FIRST-EVER EVENT TO TAKE PLACE ON PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME'S CAMPUS

CANTON, OHIO – The first-ever Black College Football Hall of Fame (BCFHOF) Classic is coming to the campus of the Pro Football Hall of Fame (PFHOF) over Labor Day weekend. Proceeds from the Classic will go towards the creation of a permanent home for the BCFHOF within the PFHOF museum.

Alabama A&M University will take on **Morehouse College** on Sunday, Sept. 1 at 3:30 p.m. ET in Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium.



The Classic also includes a variety of other events and entertainment that will kick off the college football season including a **Drumline & Dance Competition**, and **Tailgate Party** featuring performances by each of the schools' marching bands who will also play at halftime of the game.

GAME: ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY vs. MOREHOUSE COLLEGE



Alabama A&M University Bulldogs - Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC)

Morehouse College Maroon Tigers - Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC)

Alabama A&M and Morehouse meet for the 25th time. Alabama A&M holds an 18-5-1 lead in the series which dates back to 1952.



FOUR PLAYERS IN SUNDAY'S GAME ON 2019 BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR WATCH LIST

Two members from each of the participating teams in Sunday's game are among those players included on the 2019 Watch List for the **Black College Football Player of the Year Award**.

Two juniors from Morehouse's backfield – running back **Santo**

Dunn and quarterback **Michael Sims** – were named to the list along with the Alabama A&M tandem of senior running back **Jordan Bentley** and junior quarterback **Aqeel Glass**.

The Watch List candidates, announced on Aug. 14, were selected based on past performance and future potential. Additions to the list may be made as the 2019 season progresses.



The Award is presented annually to the most outstanding football player from a Historically Black College & University.

The winner will be honored with the Deacon Jones Trophy during the BCFHOF Induction Ceremony, which takes place on Feb. 15, 2020 in Atlanta.

"The Deacon Jones Trophy is the most coveted individual award a football player from an HBCU can receive," said BCFHOF co-founder and 2012 inductee **James Harris**. "I enjoy monitoring the progress of these young men throughout the season."



OHIO CONNECTIONS

Alabama A&M senior cornerback **Mike Mills** will return to his home state to play in Sunday's game which marks the first time the **Dayton native** has played a college game in Ohio. He joined the Alabama A&M roster as a walk-on freshman in 2016 but earned a starting job at cornerback and a scholarship by his sophomore season. Heading into this year, Mills was an honorable mention on the Phil Steele All-SWAC preseason team.


Morehouse's roster also features a Buckeye State native with **Julien Turner** who hails from **Pickerington, Ohio**. The senior middle linebacker led the team in tackles last season and is an All-SIAC Preseason selection.

Off the football field, Turner focuses on a career as a filmmaker. An extra credit video he produced went viral and received tremendous publicity.

- <https://www.ajc.com/news/world/morehouse-student-who-created-viral-extra-credit-video-lands-sesame-street-deal/FfEL5x8MjViWqxhIpYS3eM/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2RksGrzyE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kddIFPZJJHM>
- <https://studybreaks.com/students/biology-man-julien-turner/>



NFL NETWORK TO BROADCAST GAME NATIONALLY

 The inaugural BCFHOF Classic game will be televised nationally on NFL Network. The broadcast is being led by Fran Morison (Producer), Allan Flowers (Coordinating Producer), Charlie Yook (Vice President, Production) and Mike Roth (Director).

Andrew Siciliano will handle the play-by-play and be joined by **Charles Davis** as an analyst and **Steve Wyche** as the reporter.

Siciliano is an NFL Network host and can be seen every week on *NFL Now* and *TNF First Look*, as well as NFL Network's on-location coverage of such events as Super Bowl, NFL Draft and training camps. Siciliano has also hosted DIRECTV's RedZone Channel since its inception in 2005.

Siciliano has been the preseason television play-by-play voice of the Rams since 2011. He hosted NBC Sports Gold Zone coverage of the 2014 Sochi Olympics, and 2016 Rio Games.

From 2002-2011, Siciliano held hosting duties at FOX Sports Net for various FSN programming including FSN's Final Score for five years. He has also called Arena Football League (AFL) games on FSN, co-hosted The Ultimate Fantasy Football Show, Totally Football and appeared weekly on The Best Damn Sports Show Period.

After four years of covering the Bears as a radio reporter at Chicago's WMAQ, Siciliano spent eight years as a nationally syndicated talk show host for FOX Sports Radio. He also hosted a midday radio show on 710 ESPN in Los Angeles.

A native of Reston, Virginia, Siciliano is mildly obsessed with travel, hiking, and Jeopardy. He has a B.A. in Broadcast Journalism from Syracuse University.



Davis serves as an analyst for NFL Network's extensive NFL Scouting Combine and NFL Draft coverage.

Davis' college football expertise is featured within NFL Network's exclusive coverage of the Reese's Senior Bowl and NFL Scouting Combine, as well as within NFL Network's live coverage of the NFL Draft.

Since 2017, Davis has partnered with Kevin Burkhardt and Pam Oliver for FOX'S coverage of the NFL.

Throughout his career, Davis has served as an analyst for the NFL, college football, Arena League Football, basketball, baseball and golf for ESPN, CBS, NBC, FOX, The Golf Channel, TBS, TNT, and the Sun Sports Network.

Davis, a four-year starting defensive back for Tennessee (1983-86), led the Volunteers to four straight bowl appearances and was a member of the Academic All-SEC Team. After graduation, Davis was an assistant coach at the University of Pacific before moving into athletic administration where he worked as an assistant athletic director at Stanford University.

A native of New Paltz, New York, Davis currently resides in Orlando, Fla. with his wife, Lisa, his daughter, Taylor and son, Parker.



Wyche serves as a reporter for NFL Network, analyst studio host and senior writer for NFL.com.

Wyche, who joined NFL media in 2008, contributes insider reports, analysis, and moderates panel discussions on NFL Network's signature show *NFL Total Access*. He also files field reports at various team facilities and games on *NFL GameDay Morning* and *NFL Now*. Wyche also is a panelist on *The Aftermath*, which airs Monday at 3 p.m. ET. He also hosts the network's Pro Football Hall of Fame specials during the season, after the Super Bowl and during enshrinement week.

Prior to joining NFL Network and NFL.com, Wyche spent four seasons as a beat writer for the Atlanta Journal Constitution covering the Atlanta Falcons. During the 2007 season, Wyche also worked as a correspondent for ESPN and ESPN2.

From 1990-1999, Wyche covered a variety of sports teams for the Miami Herald including the Miami Dolphins, Miami Heat and Steve Spurrier's championship Florida Gator football teams. Wyche then followed up with a five-year stint as the NBA and Washington Wizards writer for the Washington Post.

After earning a B.A. in Journalism from Howard University in 1989, Wyche began his journalism career covering high school and small college sports for the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch from 1989-1990.

A native of Minneapolis who grew up in St. Louis, Mo., Wyche resides in Los Angeles with his wife of 23 years and three sons.



HBCU GAME OF THE WEEK AIRED ON SIRIUSXM RADIO

The game will be the featured HBCU Game of the Week by **Heritage Sports Radio Network (HSRN)** on **SiriusXM Radio**. HSRN was started a decade ago by five HBCU graduates for the expressed purpose of providing a national platform for HBCU sports. HSRN remains the only national media outlet dedicated solely to the broadcast of HBCU Football and Basketball.

The broadcast will begin at 2:30 pm ET, one hour before kickoff and can be heard on **Sirius Channel 78, XM Channel 201** and on **Channel 964** on the **SiriusXM app**. The broadcast will also be streamed on **HSRN.com**, and on the **HSRN mobile app**.

Lamont Germany will handle play-by-duties with **Ronnie Duncan** serving as the color analyst.

Germany, one of the Founding Fathers of **HSRN**, has invested over three decades in the broadcast industry; including an ongoing tenure as an award winning "Play by Play" voice. Germany brings energy, insight and enthusiasm every time he's privileged to turn on the microphone. In addition to his work at **HSRN**, Germany has worked in radio on the national, regional, and local level. He's been a Sports Anchor at SiriusXM Satellite radio, and a Sports Director at WEAAFM radio in Baltimore, MD. Germany's sports broadcast resume spans the spectrum from high school to collegiate to the professional ranks. Germany's experience goes beyond sports, as he spent 15 years as an award-winning broadcast journalist; covering news nationally and locally. Germany resides in Parkville, Md.



Duncan not only “tells it like it is,” but goes a step further and “tells it like it should be.” The 30-year broadcast veteran has been called a lot of things, but never shy. Duncan has a colorful, creative and entertaining style that he brings to everything he does. Ronnie has worked as a Sportscaster, News Reporter and anchor in various markets around the country including; Indianapolis, Baltimore, Phoenix, and Cleveland, Ohio. In 2001 Ronnie founded Slam Dunc Productions, specializing in boxing telecasts and long form documentaries. Duncan has been in the broadcasting booth as both a Color Analyst and Play by Play voice on both the national and regional level. And as a testament to his versatility, Ronnie was an Associated Press Award winner in 2015 for his continuing coverage of the water crises in Flint, MI. Duncan resides with his wife Yvonne in Manassas, Va.



COIN TOSS

More than twenty members of the BCFHOF on hand for the Classic will gather at midfield for the pre-game coin toss.



HALFTIME TO FEATURE BANDS FROM BOTH SCHOOLS

Halftime entertainment will be provided by the bands from each of the schools. Their dynamic and energetic performances will be aired in their entirety on NFL Network’s broadcast of the game.

ABOUT THE BANDS

GO BULLDOGS! The **Alabama A&M University Marching Maroon and White Band** was established in 1890. Some of the early noted bandmasters include William Grant Still, Sr., W.C. Handy, and Wade Hammond, just to name a few. In 2020, the school celebrates the band's 130th Anniversary! The band is now under the direction of Carlton Wright, a 1986 graduate of Alabama A&M University.



The **Morehouse College House of Funk Marching Band** was established in 1911 by Kemper Harreld. They have performed for Spike Lee, Samuel Jackson, Capitol One, Nike, Dodge Ram, and AT&T. The band is under the direction of Dr. Chad E Hughes.



POST-GAME CONCERT

A special concert from **Morris Day & The Time** in Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium will immediately follow the season opener for the two colleges.

OFFICIAL BCFHOF CLASSIC TAILGATE

The **Official Black College Football Hall of Fame Classic Tailgate** will take place on the Pro Football Hall of Fame's Field Turf located adjacent to the museum. The Official Tailgate is **free, family friendly** and **open to the public** on Saturday, Aug. 31 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 1 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Performances at the Tailgate on Saturday, Aug. 31 will include DJ Ryan Wolf, the Official DJ of the Cleveland Browns; EN-RICH-MENT Community Drumline; and Four Keeps, an O-Jays cover band.

On Sunday, Sept. 1, the marching bands from Alabama A&M and Morehouse will perform on campus at 2 p.m. Radio One will be on location to broadcast live from the Official Tailgate.

Several vendors and food trucks will be selling a variety of cuisine from Barrio Tacos, Tremont Coffee, JGK Concessions, LaDow's Concessions, Big Bad Wolfe BBQ, AVI Food Systems and Stachia's Almost Famous Wings. An assortment of adult beverages will also be available for purchase.

Children of all ages can enjoy inflatables at the Tailgate. Official Black College Football Hall of Fame Classic merchandise will also be available for purchase.

Full details and updated schedule can be found at www.ProFootballHOF.com.

DANCE & DRUMLINE COMPETITION

A **Dance & Drumline Competition** will take place on Saturday, Aug. 31 from noon to 5 p.m. at the Canton Memorial Field House located next to Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium. The competition will feature groups who will take part in an HBCU-style dance and drumline competition.

Guest celebrity judges for the competition include: **Charkeitha Ramey**, director of the Xplosive Cheer and Dance Company in Dallas, Texas; **Jason Hill**, creator of War Zone Competition held at Fisk University; **Jamar Horton**, Prancerettes located in Memphis, Tenn.; **Scott Barwick** from Central State University; and two cast members from the hit movie "Drumline" – **Jamie Riles III** and **Tajuana (Butter) Hawkins**.

Drumline Teams: Euclid (Ohio) High School; Warrensville Heights (Ohio) High School Real Deal Drumline; Canton (Ohio) McKinley High School

Dance Teams: Black Pearlz (Columbus, Ohio); Damage Dance Crew (Pittsburgh, Pa.); Euclid High School (Cleveland, Ohio); Next Level Dance (Cincinnati, Ohio); Redefined Studio (Cincinnati, Ohio)

TICKET INFO

Tickets for the Dance & Drumline Competition are \$20.00 in advance and \$25.00 day of event. BCFHOF Classic Game Tickets start at \$30.00

ONLINE - www.profootballhof.com/classic/

ON LOCATION

Fans can purchase tickets (cash or credit card) on the day of event at three locations starting at 9 a.m. each day.

- Hall of Fame ticket office
- Lot A at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium (1779 Blake Avenue NW, Canton, OH 44708)
- Harrison Avenue (located near the East entrance to Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium (*Drumline tickets available on Saturday at this location only*))

Will Call is located in Lot A

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

The Pro Football Hall of Fame relies on community volunteers to assist on various events throughout the year. The inaugural Black College Football Hall of Fame Classic is no exception with more than 200 citizens volunteering their time over the holiday weekend to welcome fans to Canton.

“The response for filling our volunteer needs has been terrific. It is so great that many of the individuals donating their time for this event are first-time volunteers,” commented Hall of Fame Director of Team Development Mark Prosis.

BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAMERS ATTENDING CLASSIC

More than 20 members of the Black College Football Hall of Fame will be on hand for the Classic weekend.

*(Name – HBCU – Year of Induction into BCFHOF / *Also enshrined into PFHOF)*

- ***Elvin Bethea** – North Carolina A&T – Class of 2013 / PFHOF Class of 2003
- ***Mel Blount** – Southern – Class of 2011 / PFHOF Class of 1989
- ***Robert Brazile** – Jackson State – Class of 2014 / PFHOF Class of 2018
- **Harold Carmichael** – Southern – Class of 2018
- ***Harry Carson** – South Carolina State – Class of 2012 / PFHOF Class of 2006
- ***Richard Dent** – Tennessee State – Class of 2015 / PFHOF Class of 2011
- **Parnell Dickinson** – Mississippi Valley State – Class of 2017
- **James “Shack” Harris** – Grambling – Class of 2012
- **Bill Hayes** – Winston-Salem State, North Carolina A&T – Class of 2018
- ***Kenny Houston** – Prairie View A&M – Class of 2013 / PFHOF Class of 1986
- **Billy Joe** – Cheyney, Central State, Florida A&M, Miles – Class of 2017

- ***Charlie Joiner** – Grambling – Class of 2013 / PFHOF Class of 1996
- **Ed “Too Tall” Jones** – Tennessee State – Class of 2013
- ***Willie Lanier** – Morgan State – Class of 2010 / PFHOF Class of 1986
- **Greg Lloyd** – Fort Valley State – Class of 2018
- **Charlie Neal** – Class of 2013
- **Ken Riley** – Florida A&M – Class of 2015
- ***Art Shell** – Maryland Eastern Shore – Class of 2011 / PFHOF Class of 1989
- **Donnie Shell** – South Carolina State – Class of 2015
- ***Emmitt Thomas** – Bishop – Class of 2016 / PFHOF Class of 2008
- **Everson Walls** – Grambling – Class of 2018



FREE MEET & GREET

Fans will get the opportunity to mingle with the many football legends on hand for the Classic. Black College Football Hall of Fame members will take part in several “Meet & Greets” for fans to meet and take photos with the football greats. No autographs will be allowed.

The sessions take place at the Tailgate on the Hall’s FieldTurf Field adjacent to the museum. The following time slots will include different lineups of legends.

Saturday: 4-5 pm and 5-6 pm

Sunday: Noon-1 and 1-2 pm.

BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

The Black College Football Hall of Fame (BCFHOF) will have a permanent home at the Pro Football Hall of Fame (PFHOF) to tell the story of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The two organizations announced a partnership in 2016 and are working together on joint programs and events including: hosting future annual BCFHOF induction ceremonies at Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village; expanded educational programming and special events at the PFHOF during Black History Month; a travelling exhibition; and post-graduate internship opportunities for graduates of HBCUs. The partnership also includes the BCFHOF Classic held at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium, and a major permanent exhibition inside the PFHOF.

The BCFHOF was founded in 2009 by two legendary NFL quarterbacks and African American pioneers **James Harris** and **Doug Williams**. Under their leadership, the BCFHOF has continued to grow, providing a meaningful platform to share the history and stories of the greatest HBCU football players, coaches, and contributors.





James Harris, a star quarterback at Grambling State University, was drafted by the Buffalo Bills in the eighth round of the 1969 combined AFL-NFL Draft. As a rookie he became the **NFL's first African American to start full-time at quarterback**. Later, while with the Los Angeles Rams, he became the **first African American quarterback to be named to the Pro Bowl (1975) and to start and win a NFL playoff game**.

Harris played with the Bills (1969-1971), the Rams (1973-76) and the San Diego Chargers (1977-79).

Photo: © Associated Press



Doug Williams, who also excelled at Grambling, was taken in the first round of the 1978 NFL Draft by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. As a member of the Washington Redskins, he made history as the **first African American quarterback to start and win a Super Bowl**. His then-record 340 yards passing and 4 TDs in Super Bowl XXII earned him **Most Valuable Player honors, also a first**.

Williams played with the Buccaneers (1978-1982) and the Redskins (1986-89) and two seasons with the USFL Oklahoma/Arizona Wranglers (1984-85).

Photo: © Associated Press



PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAMERS FROM HBCUs

Thirty (30) members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, including more 10% of the players enshrined in Canton, are from an Historically Black College or University. All but two (Len Ford and Marion Motley who briefly attended an HBCU before transferring to another college) are also members of the Black College Football Hall of Fame.

Lem Barney	Jackson State
Elvin Bethea	North Carolina A&T
Mel Blount.....	Southern University
Robert Brazile	Jackson State
Roosevelt Brown	Morgan State
Willie Brown	Grambling State
Buck Buchanan	Grambling State
Harry Carson	South Carolina State
Willie Davis.....	Grambling State
Richard Dent	Tennessee State

Len Ford	Morgan State
Bob Hayes.....	Florida A&M
Ken Houston.....	Prairie View A&M
Claude Humphrey.....	Tennessee State
Charlie Joiner.....	Grambling State
Deacon Jones	Mississippi Valley State
Leroy Kelly	Morgan State
Willie Lanier.....	Morgan State
Larry Little.....	Bethune Cookman
Marion Motley	South Carolina State
Walter Payton.....	Jackson State
Jerry Rice.....	Mississippi Valley State
Shannon Sharpe.....	Savannah State
Art Shell.....	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Jackie Slater	Jackson State
John Stallworth	Alabama A&M
Michael Strahan	Texas Southern
Emmitt Thomas.....	Bishop
Aeneas Williams.....	Southern University
Rayfield Wright	Fort Valley State



JAMES HARRIS-DOUG WILLIAMS FELLOWSHIP



Akil Blount joined the Pro Football Hall of Fame in June 2019 as the first recipient of the **James Harris-Doug Williams Fellowship** that was created through a collaboration between the Pro Football Hall of Fame and the Black College Football Hall of Fame. The fellowship – named after NFL quarterbacks, African American pioneers and co-founders of the Black College Football Hall of Fame – provides a unique career advancement opportunity at the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton to a graduate of a Historically Black College & University (HBCU).

Blount’s one-year fellowship has him working closely with the Hall of Fame’s executive leadership team.

“It is a tremendous honor to have the fellowship named after Doug Williams and myself,” **Harris** said. “It rewards students who have achieved and provides them an opportunity to work with the talented team at one of the best sport organizations in the country.”

“We are excited to see Akil take the lessons he learned from competing in football and apply them to becoming a leader of tomorrow,” Hall of Fame President & CEO **David Baker** commented. “His academic accomplishments earned him this great opportunity and we look forward to helping him grow professionally and personally.”

Blount, a dean's list student, earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Florida A&M in 2015 and graduated in May with a Master of Business Administration from the university. A celebrated student-athlete, he played linebacker for the Rattlers and amassed 207 tackles, including 22.5 for a loss, during his college football career. Blount served as team captain for two seasons and was twice named all-conference in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC). He also served as the President of the Student Athletic Advisory Committee that represented all athletes at Florida A&M. Blount went to training camp with the Miami Dolphins in 2016 after he had been signed as a free agent.

"He is such a great first recipient," **Williams** stated. "He has done everything that we were looking for in a Fellowship. We are truly blessed for Akil to be our first of many more to come."

Akil Blount is the son of Pro Football Hall of Fame cornerback MEL BLOUNT, who is also a product of a HBCU (Southern University).

Harris added, "This is an opportunity to allow the Fellow to make a difference and who else better than the son of Hall of Famer Mel Blount to serve as the first recipient. Akil Blount has proven his ability by earning his Master's at Florida A&M. I am thrilled that we are able to provide this leadership experience to such a wonderful young man."

2020 BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASSIC GAME SET



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ABOUT THE PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Located in Canton, Ohio, the birthplace of the National Football League, the Pro Football Hall of Fame is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit institution with the Mission to Honor the Heroes of the Game, Preserve its History, Promote its Values, & Celebrate Excellence EVERYWHERE.

The Pro Football Hall of Fame is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. AAM accreditation is national recognition for the museum's commitment to excellence and the highest professional standards of museum operation and public service.

Hundreds of thousands of fans from across the globe travel to Canton annually to experience "*The Most Inspiring Place on Earth!*" that chronicles America's most popular sport. Fans can also enjoy the Hall of Fame Store at the Hall, and online at www.profootballhof.com/store, for merchandise from all 32 NFL clubs plus the Hall of Fame. Proceeds from the Store support the Hall's Mission.

Construction on Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village, a mixed-use development project, is under way in Canton to transform the Hall of Fame's campus.

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