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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Antwan Dixon of Kent State University; Tanner Mangum of Brigham Young University; and Marquez Stevenson of the University of Houston Named Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Nominees

ROCHESTER, Minn. — The College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) in association with The Associated Press (AP) and the Fiesta Bowl organization have selected three college football student-athletes—**Antwan Dixon** of Kent State University, **Tanner Mangum** of Brigham Young University and **Marquez Stevenson** of the University of Houston—as **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award Nominees**.

Ten times during the 2018 college football season, three inspiring student-athletes from all levels of college football who have overcome injury, illness or other challenges will be recognized as **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Nominees**. At the end of the season, the 30 nominees will be eligible for the **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award**. Dixon, Mangum and Stevenson join the nominees from Week 1: **Caleb Farley** of Virginia Tech, **Cody Thompson** of the University of Toledo and **Nate Ricci** of the University of Minnesota–Duluth.

CoSIDA members can nominate deserving student-athletes at Comeback-Player.com. Here's a look at this week's three nominees.

Antwan Dixon, a junior wide receiver at Kent State University, was diagnosed with aplastic anemia in high school and then his symptoms worsened late in his freshman year, during a season in which he was the team's leading receiver with 26 catches for 355 yards, causing him to miss the entire 2016 and 2017 seasons. Dixon needed a bone marrow transplant, which his father gave to him, and also needed nine teeth removed to stop some of the bleeding. He went through eight days of chemotherapy treatments before the transfusion. After nearly three years away from football, the Fort Myers, Fla., native returned to Kent State, where he had an immediate impact, catching three passes for 48 yards and a touchdown in the season opener versus Illinois. Through five games, he ranks second for the Golden Flashes with 19 receptions for 198 yards.

Tanner Mangum, a senior quarterback for Brigham Young University, has overcome numerous challenges. Prior to the 2017 season, Mangum announced his struggle with mental health, depression and anxiety. Since then, he has embraced his opportunity to speak out about mental health and be an advocate for seeking

help and being a positive influence. His 2017 season ended prematurely after suffering a season-ending Achilles injury, which forced him to miss the last three games. But the native of Eagle, Idaho, quickly worked his way back during spring football and won the starting job back in fall camp for the 2018 season. He has the Cougars off to a 3-2 start, including a stunning 24-21 win over Wisconsin on Sept. 15. Statistically, Mangum has passed for 772 yards and three touchdowns while completing 62 percent of his passes (85-137).

Marquez Stevenson, a sophomore wide receiver for the University of Houston, has endured three injuries over his first two seasons, two of which have been season-ending. The Shreveport, La., native missed the first seven games of 2016 and after seeing action in two games was injured again, missing the final four games. He then missed the entire 2017 season, after a season-ending injury in preseason camp. Now healthy, Stevenson has established himself as one of the American Athletic Conference's top receivers, leading the Cougars with 22 receptions for 391 yards (17.8 average) and five touchdowns. He's also recorded four rushes for 119 yards, including a 51-yard touchdown run versus Rice and a 60-yard run against Arizona. A big-play receiver, he has five plays of at least 50 yards and six plays of at least 20 yards. His 141 all-purpose yards per game leads the Cougars.

All nominees are now eligible for the **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award**, presented at the end of the season. Mayo Clinic, the premier sponsor, will donate \$5,000 to the general scholarship funds for the three winners and \$2,500 in the name of six other worthy finalists. In addition, the three honorees will be recognized during a special ceremony during the 2019 Fiesta Bowl. Honorees and winners are selected by a panel of writers, editors and sports information directors from CoSIDA, AP and *Touchdown Illustrated*, and representatives of the Fiesta Bowl.

Chad Pennington, the only player twice named professional football's comeback player of the year award winner (2006, 2008), will serve as the Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award ambassador. Pennington played his college football at Marshall University and was selected in the first-round of the 2000 NFL Draft by the New York Jets.

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About Mayo Clinic

The title sponsor of CoSIDA's Comeback Player of the Year Awards program, Mayo Clinic is a nonprofit medical practice and medical research group with major campuses in Rochester, Minn.; Scottsdale and Phoenix, Ariz.; and Jacksonville, Fla. The Mayo Clinic Health System has dozens of locations in several states. Mayo Clinic was recently named the #1 hospital in the U.S. in the U.S. News & World Report rankings of top hospitals. It employs more than 4,700 physicians and scientists and 58,000 allied health staff. Learn more at www.MayoClinic.org.

About CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America)

CoSIDA was founded in 1957 and is a 3,000+ member national organization comprised of the sports public relations, media relations and communications/information professionals throughout all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. The organization is the second oldest management association in intercollegiate athletics. To learn more, visit cosida.com.

About Associated Press

The Associated Press is the essential global news network, delivering fast, unbiased news from every corner of the world to all media platforms and formats. Founded in 1846, AP today is the most trusted source of independent news and information. On any given day, more than half the world's population sees news from AP. On the web: www.ap.org.

About the Fiesta Bowl Organization

The Fiesta Bowl is a world-class community organization that executes innovative experiences, drives economic growth and champions charitable causes, inspiring pride in all Arizonans. As a nonprofit organization, it believes in the importance of community outreach and service. Through charitable giving, the organization strives to enhance Arizona nonprofit organizations that contribute to the success of communities through youth, sports and education. Since 1971, the Fiesta Bowl has worked to increase its footprint across the state and work to benefit Arizonans year-round, during and outside of bowl season. In the month of December, the organization manages the PlayStation Fiesta Bowl, Cheez-It Bowl and the Fiesta Bowl Parade.

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