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Contact: Eric Burdick
Athletics Department
(805) 756-6550
eburdick@calpoly.edu

Brian Thurmond
Athletics Department
(805) 756-2410
bthurmon@calpoly.edu

SPANOS STADIUM RECEIVES FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM STANDOUT FOOTBALL PLAYERS

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Four football players with outstanding careers at Cal Poly announced today that they are making generous contributions toward completion of Alex G. Spanos Stadium, and they hope others will do the same.

Chris Gocong, drafted just last weekend to play for the Philadelphia Eagles, and three former Mustang standouts, will donate money to the university’s stadium project now underway on campus.

Joining Gocong are Jordan Beck, drafted last year by the Atlanta Falcons, David “Doc” Richardson of the Jacksonville Jaguars and Isaac Dixon, who works at Wells Fargo Financial. All are former Mustang team captains, and all say their gifts are an effort to pay back the university for the chance at success they were given on and off the field.

Head football Coach Rich Ellerson expressed gratitude and praise. “Chris, Jordan, Doc and Isaac are great examples of who we are on the field, in the classroom and in the community. We are grateful for the significant gifts they have made to the renovation of the stadium, and we hope that more and more former players will do the same.”

Gocong is Cal Poly’s highest-ever NFL draft selection and was taken 71st overall in the third round Saturday. Both he and Beck received Buck Buchanan Awards as Division 1-AA defensive players of the year – Beck in 2004 and Gocong in 2005.

Gocong, Cal Poly’s third football player to participate in the East-West Shrine Game, was named to the prestigious AFCA Division I-AA Coaches’ All-America Team, the Associated Press Division I-AA All-America Team, the Sports Network’s All-America first team and the Walter Camp Football Foundation Division I-AA All-America Team.

He was named Great West Football Conference Defensive Player of the Year in November and recorded 42 career sacks, 1.5 sacks shy of the career mark set by Tom Carey (1985-88).

Beck, a third-round draft choice (90th selection overall) by the Atlanta Falcons in 2005, led the nation in 2004 in solo tackles (97) and also had 18.5 tackles for loss, four interceptions (two of which he returned for touchdowns) and forced a I-AA record of six fumbles. He broke Cal Poly school records for tackles in a game (23 at Montana in 2003), season (135 in 2004; since broken) and career (449). He also recorded 22 tackles in a game at Eastern Washington.

Beck, who played in the 2005 East-West Shrine Game, led Cal Poly in tackles all four seasons of his Mustang career (2001-04) and was named Great West Football Conference Defensive Player of the Year. He notched 16.5 career sacks and 15 pass breakups, in addition to returning two fumbles for touchdowns.

Richardson recorded 167 total tackles in a four-year Mustang career as a cornerback and was named to the All-American Football Coaches Association first team as a defensive back in 2003. He returned two interceptions for touchdowns as a senior and notched 10 career interceptions to go along with 19 pass deflections. He played in the 2004 Las Vegas All-American Classic.

Dixon was a starter at defensive end for three seasons at Cal Poly, recording 174 tackles, including 15 sacks and 35 tackles.
for lost yardage. Dixon was Cal Poly’s leader in sacks in 2002 with seven and finished with 62 total tackles, earning All-NCAA Division I-AA Independents honors. As a junior in 2001, he led the Mustangs with 5 ½ sacks and three interceptions.

Four years ago, Cal Poly Athletics began a fund-raising campaign for the football stadium renovation. Construction of Phase 1 is well underway and will be completed in August. A new west side stadium facility is part of Phase 1 and will raise seating capacity to 10,000 fans, add a press box, donor suites, restrooms, concession areas, new lighting and Mustang Memorial Plaza.

“The renovation is long overdue for the one facility that brings together alumni, faculty, staff, students and the local community,” said Chris Baker, associate athletic director.

For more information about the project, contact Baker at (805) 756-2255.

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