

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Orange Bowl Committee
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Noah Sharfman
nsharfman@orangebowl.org
305-341-4737

ARKANSAS' PATIENCE BEARD NOMINATED FOR DISCOVER ORANGE BOWL-FWAA COURAGE AWARD

DALLAS (FWAA) – Arkansas' Patience Beard is the weekly nominee for the 2012 Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award, to be announced at the end of the season. Beard, a freshman from Douglasville, Texas, made the Razorbacks' cheerleading squad despite a prosthetic left leg.

Beard is already becoming known as "the girl with the zebra leg," a reference to the special design of the prosthetic she wears. She was born with a proximal femoral focal deficiency, which affects bone growth. At age 9 months, her left leg was amputated, but it barely slowed her down. She participated in gymnastics as a child, took up cheerleading in middle school and was homecoming queen last year at Texas High School. But even she was surprised to make the 12-member freshman squad at an FBS-level school.

"I've always dreamed of this," Beard said, "but never thought I'd be here doing what I've always wanted to do. I can't even put into words how exciting and amazing this year has been already."

Arkansas cheerleading/spirit coordinator Jean Nail said Beard is able to perform all of the required stunts and routines.

"She's the kind of person we want," Arkansas cheerleading/spirit coordinator Jean Nail told Yahoo! Sports. "She's a good role model. And she's absolutely qualified." And Nail adds: "Sometimes when you see Patience, it just gives you that little extra edge you need to try one more time."

Beard credits her parents with "giving me my drive" and never allowing her to have excuses.

"I'd just hope everyone ... would know they can do whatever they put their mind to," she said.

For the seventh straight year, the Football Writers Association of America and the Discover Orange Bowl will announce a weekly nominee each Wednesday during the season. A blue-ribbon panel will determine the winner from all of the nominees. The winner of the Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award will be announced in December and be presented with the trophy during the week of the 2013 Discover BCS National Championship Game.

The Courage Award was created by ESPN The Magazine's senior writer Gene Wojciechowski, also an FWAA member. A select group of writers from the FWAA vote on the winner each year. The requirements for nomination include displaying courage on or off the field, including overcoming an injury or physical handicap, preventing a disaster or living through hardship.

Previous winners of the FWAA's Courage Award are Michigan State offensive lineman Arthur Ray Jr. (2011), Rutgers defensive tackle Eric LeGrand (2010), the University of Connecticut football team (2009), Tulsa's Wilson Holloway (2008), Navy's Zerbin Singleton (2007), Clemson's Ray Ray McElrathbey (2006), the Tulane football team (2005), Memphis' Haracio Colen (2004), San Jose State's Neil Parry (2003) and Toledo's William Bratton (2002).

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About the Orange Bowl

The Orange Bowl is a 348-member, primarily-volunteer non-profit sports organization that promotes and serves the South Florida community. The Orange Bowl Festival features a year-round schedule of events culminating with the Discover Orange Bowl on January 1, 2013 and the Discover BCS National Championship on January 7, 2013. Other Orange Bowl core events include the MetroPCS Orange Bowl Basketball Classic, Orange Bowl Youth Football Alliance presented by Sports Authority, Orange Bowl International Tennis Championships, Orange Bowl Sailing Regatta Series and Orange Bowl Paddle Championships. For more information on the 2012-13 Orange Bowl Festival and its events, including promotional and volunteer opportunities through the Ambassador Program, log on to www.orangebowl.org.

The **Football Writers Association of America**, a non-profit organization founded in 1941, consists of more than 1,200 men and women who cover college football for a living. The membership includes journalists, broadcasters and publicists, as well as key executives in all the areas that involve the game. The FWAA works to govern areas that include gameday operations, major awards and its annual All-America team. For more information about the FWAA and its award programs, contact Steve Richardson at tiger@fwa.com or 972-713-6198.

2012 Discover Orange Bowl Courage Award Nominees

- **Sept. 26: Daniel Rodriguez, Clemson**
- **Oct. 3: Angelo Richardson, Arizona State**
- **Oct. 10: Patience Beard, Arkansas**