

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Orange Bowl Committee
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WISCONSIN'S D'COTA DIXON NOMINATED FOR CAPITAL ONE ORANGE BOWL-FWAA COURAGE AWARD

DALLAS (FWAA) – Wisconsin's **D'Cota Dixon** is this week's nominee for the **2017 Capital One Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award**.



Dixon, a redshirt junior safety, overcame an unstable family situation in Miami, along with personal health issues, to become an All-Big Ten performer for the Badgers. Dixon had a brother convicted of attempted murder, and he was placed in foster care as his mother struggled to provide for the family.

Dixon's father and his father's girlfriend, Beth, took Dixon and another brother in. But as Dixon's father's drug addiction grew intense, Beth assumed guardianship and moved the brothers away. Dixon later repaired his relationship with his father, but his father passed away. Dixon and Beth were then evicted from their home during Dixon's senior year of high school. Dixon's girlfriend Grace and her mother took Dixon in.

"I am certainly well aware of D'Cota's past, but what stood out to me is what a terrific person he is today," Wisconsin coach Paul Chryst wrote in a letter of recommendation for Dixon for the Wilma Rudolph Student-Athlete Achievement Award, an honor Dixon captured in 2017. "D'Cota is a great teammate, a diligent worker, humble, genuine, compassionate, a person of true faith, passionate about life's opportunities, loyal, persistent, and a leader. The characteristics that describe D'Cota are the very same characteristics I would want someone to use to describe any one of my family members or myself."

In the spring of 2016, Dixon suffered a life-threatening infection that left him unable to walk and in pain for a week-long hospital stay. Still, Dixon ended up starting all 14 games for Wisconsin, recording 60 tackles, four interceptions and four pass break-ups en route to third-team All-Big Ten honors, in addition to Academic All-Big Ten honors.

Dixon has started all four games this season for the undefeated No. 9 Badgers, recording 27 tackles, one interception, one pass break-up and notching the game-sealing safety this past weekend in the Big Ten opener against Northwestern, a 33-24 win.

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The Courage Award was first presented by the Football Writers Association of America (FWAA) in 2002. 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. The winner of the award will be included in festivities during Capital One Orange Bowl week and receive his trophy at an on-field presentation. Previous winners of the Capital One Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award are Pittsburgh running back James Conner (2016), Miami offensive lineman Hunter Knighton (2015), Duke offensive lineman Laken Tomlinson (2014), San Jose State defensive lineman Anthony Larceval (2013), Clemson wide receiver Daniel Rodriguez (2012), 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).

About the Orange Bowl

The Orange Bowl is a 360-member, primarily-volunteer non-profit sports organization that promotes and serves the South Florida community. With its primary mission since being created in 1935 to bring tourism to South Florida through an annual football game and events, it has also maintained a legacy of charitable contributions and community outreach. Orange Bowl community outreach efforts are comprised of four pillars: youth sports, fundraising and community events, academic programs and scholarships, and legacy gifts. The Orange Bowl features a year-round schedule of events culminating with the Capital One Orange Bowl on December 30, 2017. For more information on the 2017-18 Orange Bowl events, including promotional and volunteer opportunities through the Ambassador Program presented by Panera Bread, log on to orangebowl.org. Follow Orange Bowl [@OrangeBowl](https://www.instagram.com/OrangeBowl), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/OrangeBowl) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/OrangeBowl).

Founded in 1941, the **Football Writers Association of America** consists of 1,400 men and women who cover college football. 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 game-day operations, major awards and its annual All-America team. For more information about the FWAA and its award programs, contact Steve Richardson at tiger@fwaa.com.

2017 Orange Bowl Courage Award Nominees

- [Sept. 13: J-Shun Harris II, Indiana](#) | [High-resolution headshot](#)
- [Sept. 20: William Lee, Northern Illinois](#) | [High-resolution headshot](#)
- [Sept. 27: Cristian Garcia, Florida](#) | [High-resolution headshot](#)
- Oct. 4: D'Cota Dixon, Wisconsin | [High-resolution headshot](#)

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