

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Orange Bowl Committee  
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## ***USC'S JAKE OLSON NOMINATED FOR CAPITAL ONE ORANGE BOWL-FWAA COURAGE AWARD***

DALLAS (FWAA) – USC's **Jake Olson** is this week's nominee for the **2017 Capital One Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award**.



Olson, a redshirt sophomore long snapper, lost his eyesight to cancer but joined the Trojans in 2015 as a walk-on. He snapped on a successful extra point in the fourth quarter of Saturday's 38-10 win against Oregon State, his second appearance of the season.

"I just think there's a beauty in it," Olson said after his first game appearance, in Week 1. "If you can't see how God works things out, then I think you're the blind one. I think to have a situation where a 12-year-old kid loses his sight and going to have to face the rest of his life without seeing is just ugly, and to fast forward eight years and have that same kid be able to snap on the football field that really got him through that time, is just really just special and incredible and I just want to thank everyone a part of it. I'm honored that I was part of God's plan in that way of Him getting me out here and inspiring thousands of people just through this whole experience."

Olson, who was also nominated for the Courage Award in 2015, was born with retinoblastoma, which is a cancer of the retina. He lost his left eye when he was 10 months old and despite several procedures, he had his right eye removed when he was 12, in 2009.

The 6-foot-3, 225-pound Olson won the 2016 Uplifting Athletes Rare Disease Champion Award, which is given to a leader in college football who has realized his or her potential to impact the rare disease community. He is a motivational speaker, and he has co-authored two books on overcoming adversity.

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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](http://orangebowl.org). Follow Orange Bowl: @OrangeBowl, Facebook and Instagram.

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](mailto: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](#)
- Oct. 11: Jake Olson, USC | High-resolution headshot

**Social Media Link:** <http://bit.ly/2xxMVYu>

**\*Editor's note: high resolution image available upon request**

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