



GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL FUND TO HELP WITH CONCUSSION RESEARCH

Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic set for July 12-13 at Schaffer's Mill

March 30, 2015 (TRUCKEE, Calif.) – The Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund donated \$180,557 in 2014 to further the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research's pursuit to invent a device that accurately diagnoses concussions.

Since launching the fund in 2009, \$323,544 has been directed specifically for traumatic brain injury research with the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research. Most of the money is raised through the Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic conducted in July. Upshaw, a National Football League Hall of Famer and former NFL Players Association executive director, died of pancreatic cancer in 2008 at Tahoe Forest Hospital. Upshaw's wife, Terri, and sons Justin and Daniel established the fund because of the exceptional care he received at the hospital.

More than \$825,000 has been raised since the inaugural golf classic in 2009. Funds have also supported the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, pancreatic cancer research, Tahoe Forest Hospital Innovations Fund and Hospice programs at Tahoe Forest Hospital.

Led by founding director Thomas D. Hobday, the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research began work on developing a concussion-testing mechanism three years ago. Hobday and his team of researchers are determined to replace the standard subjective computerized testing programs such as ImPACT with an objective mechanism for determining when a concussion has occurred and when it has healed. Research has determined that traumatic brain injuries typically occur when athletes come back to the field before the brain has healed or returned to its baseline and suffer subsequent brain trauma.

The researchers envision the device as a low cost, compact, portable unit that will be able to determine injury severity within 10 minutes. To further evaluate their testing device and gather more data for their research, the institute is testing student-athletes at Truckee High School and Feather River College, as well as Squaw Valley, Sugar Bowl and Northstar ski teams, during their 2014-15 sports seasons.

The institute's TBI research started five years ago following a conference of neurologists, doctors and scientists from Tahoe Forest Hospital and UC Davis. At the conference, Nolan Harrison, the NFLPA's senior director of former players services, challenged the doctors and scientists to discover an objective way to determine when concussions occur and when the brain has healed afterward.

The money behind this research is raised every year through the Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic. NFL Hall of Famers, former Major League Baseball players and other sports celebrities will gather July 12-13 to once again pay tribute to the former Oakland Raider at the 7th annual Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic <http://www.gu63.org/> at the event's new host site Schaffer's Mill Golf & Lake Club in Truckee, Calif. <http://www.schaffersmill.com>

NFL Hall of Fame running back Marcus Allen has played in the tournament every year.

“Trophies get old, they get dusty, so what lives on is what you do for other people,” Allen said at last year’s tournament. “It’s about helping support cancer research, one of the great menaces of our society. In addition, the fact that it’s to support traumatic brain injuries and research for that, I think that’s even better. Especially a lot of the guys here have, playing football, experienced concussions and some of the after effects of that certainly know how important that is.”

The golf classic features one sports celebrity and four guests on each team playing a Shamble format. Social gatherings include receptions and a VIP pairings party with a decidedly Bay Area infused sports memorabilia auction at The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe.

Celebrity commitments to-date also include NFL Hall of Famers Mike Haynes and Tim Brown, who will be officially inducted to the hall of fame in August, along with former Raiders head coach Tom Flores and former NFL players Raymond Chester, Herm Edwards, Sam McCullum, and Clinton Portis, plus Cy Young and American League MVP winner Vida Blue, former San Francisco Giants first baseman J.T. Snow, and pitcher Shawn Estes among the field of 25 to 30 celebrities. Joining the sports celebrities this year are actor Kevin Sorbo of Hercules: The Legendary Journeys, and actress Debbe Dunning of Home Improvement fame.

Practice rounds begin Sunday, July 12, followed by a private VIP pairings party. Tournament play begins Monday, July 13, with a 10 a.m. shotgun start followed by an afternoon awards reception.

Registration, sponsorship opportunities, volunteer inquiries and a full list of participating celebrities can be viewed at <http://www.gu63.org/>. Sponsors receive playing spots in the tournament and the opportunity to meet and spend time with players from the Oakland Raiders Super Bowl winning teams of the 1970s and 80s, five-star lodging, VIP tickets to the private pairings party, gift bags, and recognition on all program materials and releases.

Sponsors of this year’s event include presenting sponsor Schaffer’s Mill Golf & Lake Club; foundation sponsors, the National Football League Foundation, Professional Athletes Foundation, The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe; legacy sponsors, Epic Promise; Cigna; Aon Hewitt; Oakland Raiders and Dorfman Pacific.

For companies or individuals looking to be aligned with concussion and cancer research a limited number of sponsorships are still available. Each provides celebrity accessibility, company exposure and client entertainment. For more information, please contact the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation at 530-582-6329 or email Martha Simon at msimon@tfhd.com

Upshaw was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1987. He played offensive guard for the Oakland Raiders for 15 years, becoming the first player in NFL history to reach the Super Bowl in three different decades. Upshaw played in six Pro Bowls and was ranked No. 62 on *The Sporting News*’ list of 100 Greatest Football Players in 1999.

In honor of Upshaw's contributions to college and pro football, NCAA Division II established a lineman of the year award in Upshaw's name in 2004. The award is annually presented during the weekend of the NCAA Division II Championship. After being an active member of the NFL Players' Association bargaining committee as a player, Upshaw became executive director in 1983 and served in that role until his death.

In addition to honoring Upshaw's legacy through the fund, the family remains fervent about humanitarianism, providing quality medical treatment and care not only for patients but their families, sustainability, medical technology advancement as well as funding for medical research in critical areas such as traumatic brain injury.

For more information about the Tournament, visit www.GU63.org. For more information on the Schaffer's Mill community and golf club, visit www.schaffersmill.com.

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Truckee High School football athletes get a moment with NFL Hall of Famer Marcus Allen at the 2014 Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic. Student athletes at Truckee High School are part of the research database for the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research's concussion project, funded by the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund.

About the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund

Gene's wife, Terri, and sons Justin and Daniel, established the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund (<http://www.gu63.org/gene-upshaw-memorial-fund>) to recognize the extraordinary care he received at Tahoe Forest Hospital. The family partnered with Tahoe Forest Health System (<http://tfhd.com/>) to provide funding for important health programs and research.

The mission of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund is to honor Upshaw's legacy, advance his family's passion for quality medical treatment, care for patients and their families, sustainability and advancement of medical technology, and to provide funding for research in areas such as traumatic brain injury.