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COMMUNICATIONS

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NINE FIRST-YEAR NFL OFFICIALS – INCLUDING SARAH THOMAS & WALT COLEMAN IV – NAMED TO 2015 NFL OFFICIATING ROSTER

The NFL roster of game officials for the 2015 season will include nine first-year NFL officials, the league announced today.

The nine first-year NFL officials are graduates of the NFL Officiating Development program, which trains top college football officials in all aspects of NFL officiating. They will be on the field at team OTA sessions next month.

SARAH THOMAS will join the NFL as a line judge after officiating in Conference USA since 2007. Thomas is the first female to be assigned full-time to an NFL officiating crew and will be the second female to officiate in a regular-season NFL game. **SHANNON EASTIN**, an official in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference, served as a line judge for the first three games of the 2012 NFL season.

Also included among the nine is side judge **WALT COLEMAN IV**, the son of the dean of NFL officials, referee **WALT COLEMAN**, who will enter his 27th season in 2015. Coleman and Coleman IV will become the third active father-son officiating duo, joining **ED** and **SHAWN HOCHULI** and **STEVE** and **BRAD FREEMAN**.

“Our incoming officials have all demonstrated that they are among the best in college football,” said NFL Vice President of Officiating **DEAN BLANDINO**. “We are excited about having them join us.”

The nine first-year NFL officials:

Uniform No.	Name	Position	College	2014 College Conference
16	Kevin Codey	LJ	Western New England	AAC
87	Walt Coleman IV	SJ	Southern Methodist	Big 12
94	Hugo Cruz	HL	Texas-Pan American	C-USA
2	Bart Longson	HL	Brigham Young	PAC-12
19	Clay Martin	U	Tulsa	C-USA
50	Aaron Santi	SJ	Southern Oregon	PAC-12
14	Shawn Smith	FJ	Ferris State	BIG 10
53	Sarah Thomas	LJ	University of Mobile	C-USA
26	Jabir Walker	SJ	Murray State	SEC

The complete 2015 NFL roster of officials, including crew assignments, will be announced next month.