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### Former YSU & NFL Stars to Serve as Guest Coaches for Charity Event

Former YSU and NFL stars Paul McFadden and Jeff Wilkins will face-off in a friendly game of flag football at this year's First "Football Game of Hope," presented by Mahoning Valley Pool & Spa and in conjunction with television stations 27 First News and FOX 17/62, and radio station 93.3, "The Wolf," Defend Youngstown, Inc, the Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley and the Mahoning Valley Thunder.

McFadden and Wilkins have agreed to serve as honorary coaches with the teams comprised of area high school football coaches, community leaders and other local personalities, all teaming up for the flag football game on Saturday, April 4 at 4:00 p.m. at the Chevrolet Centre.

While we are battling each other in the Football Game of Hope, let's not forget that Ava is battling the toughest competitor of all – Acute Myeloid Leukemia. All of us – participants and fans alike – are here today to help her win, stated Jason Loree from Boardman Township.

Jeff Wilkins team will feature a bevy of local stars, Mike Palumbo-Lowellville Local Schools, Mike Strohecker-Canfield Local Schools, TJ Parker-Austintown Local Schools, Jim Keagy-Warren Local Schools, Dave Dermer-Lakeview Local Schools, Joe McMahon-Struthers Local Schools, Derick Fletcher-Ravenna Local Schools, Jay Williams-Mayor of Youngstown, Thad Tokash-Johnson and Johnson, Dave Crawford-Teva Pharmaceuticals, Shawn Rodgers-Cleveland Clinic, John Bouloubasis-Huckestien Mechanical, Nick Cochran-Girard Local Schools and former NFL star & President of Inspiring Minds, Deryck Toles.

Paul McFadden has his own stars which include, Mark Brunguard-Poland Local Schools, Sean Guerriero-Springfield Local Schools, Brian Marrow-Youngstown Christian School, PJ Fecko, Cardinal Mooney School, Mitchell Fellows-United Local Schools, Tom Zetts-Boardman Local Schools, Dave Vecchione-Lordstown Local Schools, Jim Davis-Holiday Inn-Boardman, Kurt Hall-Empowering People, Inc, Henry Hall-Valley Electrical Consolidated, Matt Vadas-Constituent Liaison/17<sup>th</sup> District of Ohio, Dan Dascenzo-Mahoning County Common Pleas Judge, Chris Jaskiewicz-Valley Electrical Consolidated, Jason Loree-Boardman Township Administrator and Dr. Jon Saadey to server as Honorary Team Owner.

The proceeds will benefit the Ava Timko Fund and the Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley, the latter which serves chronically/terminally ill children of the valley so that they may have the experience generally afforded healthy children. "I believe it's a great cause. I feel it's a blessing to be able to help little Ava or any one else in need in any little way that I can," said Brian Morrow, Youngstown Christian Head football coach.

Ava Timko is a one year-old Canfield resident who was recently diagnosed with AML; a rare form of leukemia and is currently undergoing treatment in Cincinnati Children's Hospital. The Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley (HFMV) is an organization that was formed to benefit chronically/terminally ill children in the Mahoning Valley, having already donated over \$10,000 to local charities courtesy of its Game of Hope basketball and softball game fundraising efforts.

"It's an honor to participate in the game of hope and to support such a worthy cause. Even something as simple as playing a game of flag football can make a difference," says Mark Brunguard, head football coach at Poland. Mike Palumbo from Lowellville could not agree more. "Doing something nice for someone almost always brings a very pleasant response and if I can be apart of helping someone out that is less fortunate than me, why not help," he noted.

It will be plenty of fun for the entire family and to ensure its success, we are asking for your help. In addition to the flag football game, there will also be a Tug-of-War tournament between local high school athletes with the finals held at half-time of the Thunder game that same evening. One ticket covers the Football Game of Hope, the Tug-of-War and the Mahoning Valley Thunder vs. Milwaukee Iron, af2 football game. Game time for the Iron-Thunder contests is 7:05 p.m.

The thought of getting to play in an event like this is so unreal! Not only do I get to help with something that I am very passionate about (helping little kids), but I get to play in an event that has always been a dream," Jim Davis from Holiday Inn-Boardman stated.

Tickets start at \$13 for both games with a donation earmarked for the cause. Tickets are available at Mahoning Valley Pool & Spa Niles and Boardman locations, the same day of the event at the Chevy Centre or by calling 330-726-7787, donations are still being accepted. Other activities planned include the \$5 halftime football toss, raffles, a 50/50 raffle and halftime give-away. Team mascots Scrappy (M.V. Scrappers), Boomer (M.V. Thunder) and the Mahoning Valley Thunder Dance Teams team are set as well. More information can be found at: [www.hopemv.org](http://www.hopemv.org)

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