

THE TENNESSEE TITANS AND NFL FOUNDATION, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION (LISC), AWARD \$50,000 FOR FIELD UPGRADES AT FREEDOM PREPARATORY ACADEMY IN MEMPHIS

Grant is part of \$3 million in new Grassroots Program funding to athletic fields nationwide

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - April 10th, 2023 (MEMPHIS, Tenn.) – The Tennessee Titans recently partnered with the National Football League (NFL) Grassroots Program to award Freedom Preparatory Academy (FPA) Charter Schools \$50,000 to install bleachers, lighting, and a scoreboard at their Brownlee Road campus in the Whitehaven neighborhood.

The NFL Foundation Grassroots Program – a partnership between the NFL Foundation and LISC (the nation's leading community development support organization) – has supported the construction or renovation of 431 football fields nationwide since 1998. During that time, the NFL Foundation has granted nearly \$61.8 million to revitalize playing fields in underserved neighborhoods. Fields are newly built or significantly renovated, with improvements such as irrigation systems, lights, bleachers, scoreboards, goal posts and turf. Grassroots grants are issued once established funding thresholds are reached for each project.

"Interscholastic athletics play a key role in the growth and development of young people, and the Titans are continually committed to increasing access to high-quality training and facilities," said Josh Corey, Titans Director of Marketing, Youth & Community Engagement. "We are proud to partner with the Whitehaven neighborhood as they welcome the new Brownlee Road Campus Stadium and utilize the field for years to come."

Founded in 2009, Freedom Preparatory Academy (FPA) is now one of the largest charter school networks in Memphis and is one of the highest-performing networks (with 2+ schools) in terms of proficiency and growth, according to 2018-19 TNReady assessments. FPA has matriculated six graduating classes with 100 percent acceptance into four-year colleges and universities. The network boasts robust extracurriculars, including chorus, football, soccer, cheerleading and baseball, and electives, including visual arts and physical education. In addition, FPA offers a full team of social workers, counselors, college counselors and nurses on staff to support families.

The field enhancement gift will provide needed safety improvements for the 840 Freedom Prep scholars who utilize the athletic facilities, as well as visiting teams and residents who are anticipated to access the space for recreation. This grant will provide funds for an upgraded facility designed to serve youth sports efforts, as well as host partners and neighborhood organizations to create opportunities for citizens to achieve their health-related goals. With these facility enhancements, Freedom Prep is excited to introduce their new athletic director, Dion Barry, who brings more than 10 years of experience in the athletics industry.

"We are grateful to the NFL Foundation Grassroots Program, as well as the Tennessee Titans and LISC, for this generous donation, which benefits our students, their families and our community as a whole," said Roblin Webb, founder and CEO of Freedom Preparatory Academy. "Since the inception of our charter school network, our mission is for all our students to have the same competitive advantage as the most privileged children in America. Enhancing our field will not only improve visitor experience, but it will also directly impact the self-confidence of students and players – knowing they are receiving and enjoying the same high-quality accommodations as those of their peers".

LISC- a national community development financial institution with staff, expertise, and relationships in 38+ cities and hundreds of rural communities across the U.S.- identifies local, community-based agencies that have an interest in building or refurbishing football fields in schools and parks. Through the program, local agencies are provided with

the necessary financing and technical assistance to improve the quality of fields in their neighborhoods, and selected organizations work to oversee the construction, maintenance, and programming of the fields.

The LISC Memphis office opened in September 2020, and this grant is the second LISC Sports and Recreation + NFL Grassroots Program investment in Shelby County provided by the Titans franchise; the first being a turf field renovation award provided to the Memphis-Shelby Police Activities League (MSPAL) in 2022- fundraising and preparation for stadium overhaul at their Frayser-based stadium is underway. These investments are part of \$3 million in field refurbishment awards allocated across the nation in 2023.

“This investment is much more than support for new seating and a scoreboard,” said Kathy Moore Cowan, LISC Memphis Executive Director, “The field renovation gift will assist Freedom Preparatory Academy in promoting success for young people while providing a refreshed asset that surrounding neighborhood residents can enjoy. By contributing to positive experiences for youth, LISC Memphis is working collaboratively to increase opportunities for healthy engagement and socialization, and improve quality of life in Whitehaven, Shelby County, and beyond.”

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About the NFL Foundation

The National Football League Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those touched by the game of football – from players at all levels to communities across the country. The NFL Foundation and its members, the 32 NFL clubs, support the health, safety and wellness of athletes, youth football, and the communities that support our game. For more information on the NFL Foundation, visit: www.NFLFoundation.org

About LISC

LISC is one of the country’s largest community development organizations, helping forge vibrant, resilient communities across America. We work with residents and partners to close systemic gaps in health, wealth and opportunity and advance racial equity so that people and places can thrive. Since our founding in 1979, LISC has invested \$26.7 billion to create more than 463,000 affordable homes and apartments, develop 78.5 million square feet of retail, community and educational space and help tens of thousands of people find employment and improve their finances. For more, visit www.lisc.org.

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