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HARDWICK, WIGGINS, RITCHEY HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Trio to be honored at annual Salute to the Champions

SAN DIEGO—(Sept. 6, 2016)—Former San Diego Chargers center Nick Hardwick, women’s basketball standout Candice Wiggins and the late Johnny Ritchey, a pioneer with the San Diego Padres when they were in the Pacific Coast League, will be inducted into the Breitbard Hall of Fame at the Salute to the Champions on Feb. 21, 2017 at the Town & Country Resort and Convention Center.

Few San Diego Chargers have had the quiet impact Hardwick had while playing center from 2004, when he was the team’s third round draft pick out of Purdue University, to 2014 when he retired.

The 6-foot-4 Hardwick, who played at 305 pounds, made an immediate impact, starting all 14 games his rookie season and never looked back. No. 61 was rock-solid in the middle of the line, earning a 2007 Pro Bowl berth where he was the back-up center.

Hardwick started all 16 games in each of his final two years during which time he was named to the Chargers 50th Anniversary team. He has remained in the spotlight as a radio sports personality.

Wiggins will be the first women’s basketball player to enter the Breitbard Hall of Fame after brilliant careers at La Jolla Country Day, Stanford University, USA Basketball and the WNBA.

She was a member of two state high school championship teams, advancing to the title game all four years, at LJCD. There was no slowdown at Stanford where she set school and Pac-10 career scoring records, winning the Wade Trophy as the National Player of the Year her senior season when she led the Cardinal into the NCAA title game before falling to Tennessee.

In an eight-year pro career she was a major contributor in leading the Minnesota Lynx to the WNBA title in 2011.

Johnny Ritchey was to the Padres and Pacific Coast League what Jackie Robinson was to the Dodgers and Major League baseball.

Ritchey, a homegrown San Diego High graduate, broke the PCL color barrier in 1948 (a year after Robinson joined the Dodgers) after batting .378 playing in the Negro American League. Although he batted .323 in his first season, it was still difficult being the lone African-American but Ritchey, a catcher, excelled none-the-less.

He was traded to the Portland Beavers in 1949 and bounced around the PCL and Western International League, where he led the league in batting in 1952 with a .343 average. Ritchey, who never played in the majors, retired in 1956 and passed away in 2003.

For ticket information please contact Terri Rochon at terrir@sdhoc.com or 619-699-2302.

ABOUT THE HALL OF CHAMPIONS

The “Hall” is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating outstanding local athletic achievement and providing sports programming to the community. The Hall was launched by the Breitbard Athletic Foundation, which was founded in 1946 by the legendary Bob Breitbard to recognize significant athletic achievement in San Diego. Through its awards and recognition programs and vigilant focus on the community of San Diego and its betterment, the Hall is devoted to motivating and inspiring youth of all ages to reach their full potential. For more information, please visit www.sdhoc.com