



For Immediate Release

February 28, 2017

Grand Chute Police Department Community Service Officer Tristain Prosper Honored with \$50,000 National Ripken Foundation Scholar Award

Former Ripken Foundation Badges for Baseball participant receives organization's inaugural scholarship to pursue college degree in law enforcement

Neenah, Wis. – The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation recently presented Neenah-native and Grand Chute Police Department Community Service Officer Tristain Prosper with the inaugural National Ripken Foundation Scholar Award at its 13th annual *Aspire Gala* on Friday, February 24 in Baltimore, Maryland. A former participant in the Ripken Foundation's multifaceted youth mentoring program *Badges for Baseball*, Prosper will use the \$50,000 scholarship award to pursue a college degree in law enforcement.

"When we implemented the *Badges for Baseball* program, it was our goal to inspire underserved youth like Tristain to make a difference in their community and strive toward being the best version of themselves," said Steve Salem, president of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. "We are thrilled to present the inaugural National Ripken Foundation Scholar Award to Tristain. His compassion and zeal toward giving back epitomizes the mission of the Ripken Foundation, and we hope this award provides him with the financial tools to pursue his dreams and look forward to watching his continued growth and success for years to come."

Since participating in the *Badges for Baseball* program as an eighth grader in Youth Go, Prosper progressed through the youth mentoring program as a participant in 2012 to an assistant coach in 2015. Having overcome numerous physical and financial obstacles, Prosper persevered to become a Community Service Officer for the Grand Chute Police Department. Currently a full-time college student at the University of Wisconsin – Fox Valley, Prosper has aspirations to transfer to the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee to complete his degree in law enforcement.

"I have known Tristain for nine years through being a part of Youth Go and I am so proud of him for receiving this honor," said Kelly Hicks, executive director of Youth Go. "I believe wholeheartedly that this scholarship will change Tristain's life. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and is something that will absolutely guarantee his success. I truly believe it has been given to someone who will pay that gift forward for years to come. Tristain's will to succeed is inspiring; his desire to serve others is admirable; and there is no doubt in my mind that he'll make his dreams come true."

The National Ripken Foundation Scholar Award was developed to further empower the youth the Ripken Foundation impacts and to encourage participants to stay on a path to educational success. The achievement-based scholarship award will be presented annually to a high school senior or first-year college student to assist in their pursuit of a college education.

Badges for Baseball is a juvenile crime prevention program created by the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice. It's a simple concept: pair police and children together to play and learn. The program reshapes the relationship between law enforcement and children in communities across the country. **In 2016, the Ripken Foundation implemented the *Badges for Baseball* program in 43 states with 1,000 youth partners and law enforcement agencies.**

****Broll footage and photos of Prosper receiving Ripken Scholar Award: <http://bit.ly/RipkenFoundationScholar>**

About the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation

For the last 16 years, the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation has worked tirelessly to implement youth development programs that directly address the problems facing at-risk youth in distressed circumstances across the country. Inspired by one of the most iconic baseball families, the Ripken's created the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation to honor the legacy of its family patriarch, longtime coach, and mentor, Cal Ripken, Sr. The Ripken Foundation uses sports-themed programs to bring police officers, youth partners and underserved kids ages 8 to 14 together on a level playing field to learn invaluable life skills.

In addition, the Ripken Foundation's Youth Development Park Initiative creates clean, safe places for kids to play on multi-purpose, synthetic surface fields that promote healthy living in an outdoor recreational facility. In just six years, the Ripken Foundation has created 61 completed parks across the country in 19 states, impacting over 239,000 kids annually. In 2016, the Ripken Foundation impacted over 1.2 million kids nationwide through its Youth Development Parks and mentor programs.

About Youth Go

Youth Go is a drop in center located at 213 Nicolet Boulevard in Neenah. Our agency is committed to making a lasting and positive difference in the lives of youth. Through our no cost Recreation, Education, and Support and Wellness Programs, Youth Go strives to provide underserved and at-risk youth in grades 5-12 with opportunities to do well in school, develop as individuals, and prepare for their next step in life. We hope that through participation in programming, youth can learn about themselves, develop positive relationships with peers and adults, grow through their experiences, express their creativity, and cultivate their skills and potential in a safe and supportive environment.

Youth Go has offered the Badges for Baseball Program to youth in Neenah and Menasha since 2010.

-- www.RipkenFoundation.org -- www.facebook.com/CalRipkenSrFdn -- @CalRipkenSrFdn --

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