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HOMETOWN HEROES

SAQUON BARKLEY
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Dear Friends,

**WELCOME TO THE 29TH ANNUAL GRIDIRON GALA!** For over 45 years, United Way and the National Football League have huddled to improve the lives of children and youth across the country. Today, the New York Jets, New York Giants, and United Way of New York City, along with all of you, gather at the Gridiron Gala to celebrate the impact of this partnership and the incredible work we accomplish together for our city.

This year has been a year of perseverance and hope as we gradually navigate into a new reality, a life outside of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over these past two years, we have continued to work together to fulfill both our mission and vision to help New Yorkers in need. Since the pandemic began, our COVID-19 Community Fund raised over $17 million and impacted the lives of millions of New Yorkers with emergency food, housing support, books and educational resources, support for small businesses, and access to COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. The NFL, corporate partners, foundations, and individual donors—many who are in our audience tonight—were instrumental in supporting relief and recovery efforts. We thank you for your tremendous collaboration, participation, and ongoing engagement.

We are incredibly proud to honor this year’s **Community Quarterbacks, Hometown Heroes, and MVP.** These leaders are being honored for both their professional and philanthropic accomplishments and their critical roles in strengthening communities throughout New York City and beyond.

Thank you to our sponsors, and Gridiron Gala Committee for your loyalty and dedication—none of this would be possible without you. And of course, a tremendous thank you to each of you. It is your continued generosity and support that has raised more than $34 million at the Gridiron since 1994.

We hope you enjoy the evening, and once again thank you.

---

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United Way of New York City (UWNYC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping low-income New Yorkers make ends meet and lead self-sufficient lives. With members of our community facing many barriers to achieving economic mobility, our work has and continues to be deeply rooted in equity and social justice.

**Our Mission:** To help mobilize our communities to break down barriers and build opportunities that improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers for the benefit of all.

**Our Vision:** We envision a community where all New Yorkers have access to quality education and the opportunity to lead healthy and financially secure lives. By increasing reading proficiency for children, building career pathways toward sustainable jobs, expanding the emergency food system, and helping to reform the criminal justice system, we strive to provide a more equitable chance at future success.

Overcoming the challenges that our city faces requires a shift in mindsets, practices, and policies in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty—and citywide—to implement and scale what works. We empower cross-sector partners to break down the systemic barriers that have historically and currently limit communities from accessing equitable opportunities in education, job training, food access, healthcare, and essential resources. One solitary organization cannot do this work alone, which is why UWNYC mobilizes the resources of our corporate partners, donors, NYC residents, community-based organizations (CBOs) and government authorities —aligning, strengthening, and forging change-focused partnerships. Serving as a backbone convener of corporate, philanthropic, and government actions to solve common challenges makes UWNYC a unique and critical component in our city’s success.
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Airbnb is proud to be a supporter of the United Way of New York City. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to create opportunity in New York communities and congratulations to the 2022 Gridiron Gala Honorees.

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Thank you for joining us for the 29th Annual Gridiron Gala!

After two challenging years, we are excited to be able to join together in-person with the New York Jets and New York Giants to celebrate our partnership and the impact we have made together across our City.

Tonight, we are proud to recognize our honorees:

Our 2022 Community Quarterbacks, **Marc Holliday**, Chairman and CEO of SL Green Realty Corp. and **Desiree Perez**, CEO of Roc Nation. Their leadership, passion and commitment have strengthened our communities and enriched the lives of so many New Yorkers.

Our Hometown Heroes, **Saquon Barkley** of the New York Giants and **George Fant** of the New York Jets have both displayed unwavering commitment to the youth of our City.

Our **MVP Team** at The Durst Organization for their incomparable partnership and support of United Way of New York City.

This incredible Honoree lineup has impacted countless lives during the pandemic and as we continue to emerge out of it. Their dedication to New York City is both impressive and appreciated by all who have been touched by their generosity.

We are also sending out a special salute to our outstanding Gala Committee and recognize their desire to continue to make a difference. Thank you for giving your time and resources to make tonight possible.

Together, we continue to celebrate the power of TEAM as we navigate through all the challenges we face. We are New York City!

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HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS
to Tonight’s Honorees

Bob and Barbara Friedman
We are delighted to support the 29th Annual Gridiron Gala and the 2022 honorees. Congratulations to all!

For more information please contact Jim McCarroll, Partner.
SL Green Realty Corp. is proud to recognize our own Marc Holliday as he is honored as a Community Quarterback at the 29th Annual Gridiron Gala.
Marc Holliday has served as the CEO since 2004 and became the Chairman of the Board as of January 2019. He has been with the company since 1998, when he joined as Chief Investment Officer. Holliday is frequently cited and interviewed by the nation’s leading media outlets regarding the commercial real estate marketplace and the future of New York City.

In the last year, Holliday has led SL Green through the historic opening of East Midtown’s skyline-defining tower One Vanderbilt, closed on a record-setting $3 billion refinancing of the now iconic building, signed nearly 1 million square feet of office leasing, and — importantly — created a non-profit foundation in partnership with Chef Daniel Boulud responding to the impacts of COVID-19 and the City’s growing food crisis, Food1st Foundation. With a dual mission of reopening restaurant kitchens across New York City and feeding frontline workers and New Yorkers in need, Food1st has prepared, packaged and delivered more than 700,000 meals across New York City, reopened dozens of restaurants and re-employed hundreds of restaurant workers.

A trustee and emeritus benefactor of Columbia University and a long-time supporter of Columbia’s real estate development program, he established the Holliday Professorship of Real Estate Development in 2008. Holliday was recently honored by the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in 2017, receiving the Intrepid Salute Award in honor of his outstanding business and philanthropic achievements and his commitment to supporting programs for active service men and women and veterans. National Jewish Health in 2011 honored him with the Humanitarian Award and raised a record-breaking $3 million for the organization from members of New York City’s real estate and construction industries. Additionally, he has served on the Board of the New York Racing Association since 2014 and was elected as Chairman in December 2021. Holliday received a B.S. degree in business and finance from Lehigh University and an M.S. degree in real estate development from Columbia University.
CONGRATULATIONS

Desiree Perez

UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK CITY’S

2022 COMMUNITY QUARTERBACK

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YOUR ROCNATION FAMILY
Desiree Perez, Roc Nation’s Chief Executive Officer since 2009, has been, besides for Shawn “JAY-Z” Carter himself, the person most responsible for realizing his ultimate vision of creating a business empire that spreads far beyond a record label, music publishing, and artist management agency—to become a company that both engages and employs his community.

Led by Perez, in just the past three years, Roc Nation’s philanthropic arm, Team Roc, has moved over $30MM for social impact, helping over 1.4 million people. Perez has had her hand in every significant deal the company has made in the past decade, all while expanding Roc Nation’s verticals, leading partnerships and overseeing Roc Nation’s day-to-day operations.
THE NEW YORK JETS ARE PROUD TO HONOR

GEORGE FANT

AS OUR UNITED WAY HOMETOWN HERO
On the field, George has proven to be one of the Jets’ biggest difference makers, in part, due to his elite pass protection. As a sixth-year offensive lineman who entered the NFL as an undrafted free agent with the Seattle Seahawks (2016), Fant signed with the Jets as an unrestricted free agent in 2020. With 57 starts in his 75 career games with both the Seahawks and Jets, has started at both left tackle and right tackle.

Off the field, the Bowling Green, Kentucky native is making an even bigger difference through the Fant Foundation, founded by Fant and his wife, Chastity. The Fant Foundation’s mission is to strengthen, enrich and support today’s youth through special events, including the ‘Dream Big Camp,’ for school-aged children, a celebrity softball game, a turkey drive, financial wellness seminars, and much more. Most importantly, after Bowling Green was devastated by tornadoes last December, Fant raised over $30,000 to assist the victims and city in its initial recovery.
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The 29th Annual
GRIDIRON GALA
The New York Jets take great pride in a long-standing, year-round commitment to our community. Programs funded by the New York Jets Foundation look to positively influence the lives of young people in the tri-state area by supporting youth football, preventing bullying, and promoting social justice, particularly in disadvantaged communities. From launching football teams at urban high schools to unifying our community for change to fostering positive school environments, the New York Jets invest in programs that make a difference in the lives of others.

In April, the New York Jets announced a $1 million donation to help aid the people of Ukraine. The donation will be split between various organizations, each receiving $100,000, over the course of a year. “These donations will positively impact Ukrainian refugees and their families with essential supplies,” said New York Jets Chairman Robert Wood Johnson. “The need for resources is continuously growing. Our thoughts continue to be with the innocent lives who have been affected and all those who are suffering.”

Additionally, The New York Jets and Nike announced the expansion of their High School Girls Flag Football League, which will continue play this spring. The league expanded to over 40 teams in both Long Island and New Jersey, building upon the eight New Jersey schools that launched the league in 2021. The Jets and Nike believe girls should have the opportunity to play football and experience everything the greatest game in the world has to offer. The Jets High School Girls Flag Football League will provide character building, perseverance, teamwork, and dedication skills that will empower these girls throughout every aspect of their lives. This is the second year for the Jets High School Girls Flag Football League in New Jersey and the first on Long Island, with the long-term goal to have the sport adopted as an official varsity championship sport in both states.
Congratulations to
New York Giants Hometown Hero
SAQUON BARKLEY
and
Tonight’s Honorees
George Fant, New York Jets
Marc Holliday, SL Green Realty Corp
Desiree Perez, Roc Nation
Saquon Barkley was drafted by the New York Giants as the 2nd overall pick in the 2018 NFL Draft. Barkley had the greatest rookie season in Giants history, being named the Offensive Rookie of the Year, matching the achievement of wide receiver Odell Beckham, Jr. in 2014. Since then, he started in all 44 games he played, totaling 2,937 rushing yards on 659 carries, 19 touchdowns, 190 receptions, and 8 scores.

Barkley has established himself as a leader on the field and community through his work with the Saquon Barkley Hope Foundation, O'Shea Family Foundation, Gillette, and the Covenant House NJ. Through these endeavors, Barkley has helped provide youth experiencing homelessness with meals, experiences, and resources to excel on their athletic journey, academic, employment, and financial literacy. Barkley annually represents 22Q, a rare disease that his niece is battling, by wearing custom-designed cleats during the NFL’s annual ‘My Cause My Cleats.’
We are proud supporters of the United Way
(we’re big football fans, too!)

Thank you to our corporate Community Quarterbacks, Hometown Heros, and 2022 MVP, for all of your work supporting our New York City neighborhoods.

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The New York Football Giants have shown a remarkable dedication to the betterment of those in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area since the team’s founding in 1925. “Like United Way of New York City, the New York Giants are honored to be a part of this City’s great history and commitment to helping others,” said Allison Stangeby, Vice President of Community & Corporate Relations for the New York Giants.

Through partnerships with the United Way of New York City, as well as the American Heart Association, Make A Wish of New Jersey, My Sisters’ Place, Rock and Wrap it Up!, Covenant House, Special Olympics of New Jersey and many more, the Giants community relations team works diligently to create and implement programs that have established the team as a productive and contributing leader in the community.

In 2016, the Giants launched their partnership with United Way of New York City and Character Playbook™—a character education curriculum. This past year, Giants player Darnay Holmes virtually met with students throughout the area to discuss their own life experiences through the NFL’s Character Playbook and Mental Wellness Basics curriculum. Over the past 6 years, a total of 78 schools and 4,199 students have participated in the Character Playbook program throughout our community. Stangeby said, "Our partnerships with charities like United Way of New York City allow us to effectively dedicate our time and resources to the most important causes in our community. The ability to be of service to our neighbors and to witness some of the truly great programs that are taking place is a tremendous blessing."

The Giants have partnered with the United Way of New York City to celebrate Black History Month. In 2021, Ashley Lynn, Director of Player Engagement, and Giants Alumni Antoine Bethea, who both attended HBCUs, joined UWNYC to discuss their college experiences with high school students. Nate Solder also joined the United Way and Character Playbook to participate in a conversation about Sports and Civic Engagement. The Giants also worked with the NFL Foundation to provide a $30,000 digital divide grant to United Way of New York City that went to support students in Brownsville, Brooklyn.

Additionally, The Giants Foundation was created with the goal of assisting organizations dedicated to tackling important community issues, improving overall health and empowering our youth. Launched in 1993 as the nonprofit organization of the New York Giants, the team is committed to the Foundation’s focus areas as a way to provide financial assistance to those in need throughout our community.
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Aon is a proud sponsor of the 2022 Gridiron Gala and the United Way’s mission to provide exceptional outcomes for communities in need.

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For nearly 50 years, United Way and the National Football League (NFL) have worked together to improve the lives of young people across the country. In New York City, United Way of New York City, the New York Giants and the New York Jets team up to impact children and families living in some of our City’s most-challenged communities.

Since 2016 United Way and the NFL have partnered on Character PlaybookTM, an innovative digital social-emotional learning program that uses evidence-based strategies to educate students on how to cultivate and maintain healthy relationships during their critical middle school years. Schools across the country have had access to Character PlaybookTM at no cost. The program has reached more than 1,000,000 students in over 12,000 schools across the nation in over five years.

Schools that teach character education report higher academic performance, improved attendance, reduced violence, fewer disciplinary issues, reduction in substance abuse, and less vandalism. The New York Jets partners with United Way of Newark and the New York Giants works with United Way of New York City to support students through this initiative.

Although the past two years prevented UWNYC and the NFL from hosting some of their most beloved programs, it did not stop the teams’ unwavering dedication and support from shining through. From fundraising to volunteering, empowering youth, to helping increase awareness of community challenges, the NFL has used their influence, players, and team spirit to help New York City’s most-vulnerable neighbors.
We applaud UWNYC’s dedication to improving the lives of low-income individuals and families in New York City. Let’s accelerate change and create opportunities for the deserving members of our community. **Together, we can make a difference.**

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CONGRATULATIONS TO DESIREE PEREZ ON BEING HONORED BY UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK CITY WITH THE PRESTIGIOUS COMMUNITY QUARTERBACK AWARD.
Tina Cervasio joined WNYW-FOX 5 in January 2018 as the Lead Sports Anchor and Reporter serving both Good Day New York and the Evening Newscasts. Cervasio is also the Host of the Weekly Sports Show “Sports Xtra” every Sunday night at 10:30 where she conducts exclusive interviews, presents feature length stories, as well as highlights, and major news from both the greater New York metropolitan area and around the sports world. During the NFL season, Cervasio is a co-host on “Giants Kickoff”, a weekly New York Giants Pre-game show. Cervasio had been with FOX 5 as a fill-in sports anchor and reporter since 2009.

Cervasio is also currently a college football sideline reporter and host at CBS Sports Network, where she broadcasts all Army West Point home football games on the sidelines of historic Michie Stadium, and is one of the co-host on the all-female panel of the groundbreaking studio show “We Need To Talk”. For Westwood One Radio, Cervasio has been the sideline reporter on the nationally broadcast Army/Navy Football Game since 2020.

The broadcast veteran is a seven-time New York Emmy Award Winner as part of the New York Knicks Broadcasts on MSG Networks where Cervasio worked from 2008 to 2017. During that time at MSG, Cervasio was also the pre-game and halftime host of the New York Red Bulls broadcasts as well as serving as the in-game and postgame reporter. In 2015, Cervasio became the first female lead, talk radio host, at SiruisXM NBA Radio.

Over her career, Cervasio has worked as a play-by-play announcer for the Olympic Games with Westwood One Radio, as a sideline reporter for the NFL on FOX and NBA on TNT and as the Field Reporter for the Boston Red Sox on the New England Sports Network (NESN).

Cervasio also has a heart for charities. In 2008, 2009 and 2013 she ran the New York City Marathon for the Garden of Dreams Foundation. She works with EDGE, formerly Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation, serves on the fundraising committee for the Clara Maass Medical Center Foundation / David Diehl Golf Invitational, and serves as emcee for several fundraisers each year, including United Way of New York City. Cervasio is an active member of Women in Sports and Events.
Chris Canty is the co-host of ESPN Radio’s recently announced afternoon drive show Canty & Carlin (debuting April 25) – alongside Chris Carlin. Most recently, Canty hosted Canty & Golic Jr. in the same timeslot on ESPN Radio (2021-22). Prior to his national show, Canty appeared on DiPietro, Canty & Rothenberg on 98.7 FM ESPN New York, teaming with Rick DiPietro and Dave Rothenberg on weekdays from 5-8 a.m. ET.

Canty is a Super Bowl-champion defensive tackle. He spent 11 years in the NFL with the Baltimore Ravens (2013-15), New York Giants (2009-12) and Dallas Cowboys (2005-08). He was a member of the Giants’ Super Bowl XLVI Championship team.

Canty is the founder of The Chris Canty Foundation. Operating in New York City, the foundation is dedicated to enhancing the total development of youth in our communities by utilizing the platform of sports to affect positive change in the lives of children through mentoring and educational programs.

Canty graduated from the University of Virginia in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in African-American Studies.
Hailing from Boston, MA, 24-year-old singer/songwriter Becca Hannah brings an authentic, quirky rasp into her ethereal vocals. Her soulful, jazzy sound is heavily influenced by various artists such as Amy Winehouse and Corrine Bailey Rae. Becca has been an artist from a young age. She finds writing songs to be the most organic way to articulate and express her rawest emotions and keep herself grounded - It is clear that she finds solstice in her music.
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At EY, we’re proud to support the United Way of New York City and congratulate 2022 Gridiron Gala honorees Saquon Barkley, George Fant Marc Holliday and Desiree Perez. It’s one of the ways we’re helping to make our community a better place to work and live. A better and brighter future starts with all of us.

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Making a Difference in Our Communities

Hearst is proud of our longtime partnership with the United Way of New York City. Congratulations to tonight’s honorees, George Fant, Marc Holliday, Desiree Perez and Logan Ryan. We thank them and UWNYC for their important, impactful work to support and empower the city’s most vulnerable.
Holland & Knight is proud to support the 29th annual Gridiron Gala.

The firm values its long-standing relationship with honoree **Desiree Perez**, CEO of Roc Nation. We congratulate her for being honored as one of this year’s Community Quarterbacks.

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By empowering young people today, we inspire them to dream big and achieve their potential tomorrow.

JPMorgan Chase proudly supports the United Way of New York City and the Gridiron Gala. Congratulations to all of the 2022 honorees on their well-deserved recognition. We applaud your outstanding commitment to education in our community.

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Thank you for helping change the world.

KPMG is proud to support Gridiron Gala and the United Way of New York City effort to help mobilize our communities to break down barriers and build opportunities that improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers to build a future for themselves.

You came for the celebration. You leave with the knowledge that you made a difference.

KPMG congratulates the 2022 Gridiron Gala Honorees Community Quarterbacks, Desiree Perez and Marc Holiday.

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The National Football League congratulates DESIREE PEREZ on being honored as the 2022 Community Quarterback.
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The Rudin Family
Extends its Congratulations
& Best Wishes to

Community Quarterbacks
Marc Holliday
Desiree Perrez

- Hometown Heroes
  Saquon Barkley - NY Giants
  George Fant - NY Jets
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The Durst Organization Inc.
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Some ask for change and you’re making it. Thank you for going above and beyond to make our community a better place.
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29th Annual United Way of New York Gridiron Gala

HONORING:

Community Quarterbacks
Marc Holliday
CEO, SL Green Realty
Desiree Perez
CEO, Roc Nation

Hometown Heros
Saquon Barkley
New York Giants
George Fant
New York Jets

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UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP CONGRATULATES DESIREE PEREZ AND ALL OF THE GRIDIRON GALA HONOREES

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
WTW is proud to support this year’s honorees and the continued effort of the United Way.
Committed to helping United Way, the Jets and the Giants in their collaboration to support New York’s most challenged neighborhoods.
The Cabrera Family

is proud to support the work of
United Way of New York City
and salute the
2022 Gridiron Gala Honorees

COMMUNITY QUARTERBACKS

MARC HOLLIDAY
Chairman & CEO, SL Green Realty Corp.

Desiree Perez
CEO, Roc Nation

HOMETOWN HEROES

Sauquon Barkley
Running Back, New York Giants

George Fant
Tackle, New York Jets

MVP

THE DURST ORGANIZATION

We also congratulate United Way of New York City’s Board of Directors and the most amazing Gala Committee who continue to work tirelessly behind the scenes. Their impact is incomparable!

Go Team!
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Champion Parking is proud to support The United Way of New York City and its 29th Anniversary. Congratulations to tonight’s Honorees!
Cushman & Wakefield is proud to support United Way of New York City and the 29th Annual Gridiron Gala.

Congratulations to this year’s honorees:

Community Quarterbacks:

Marc Holliday
Chairman & CEO
SL Green Realty Corp

Desiree Perez
CEO
Roc Nation

Hometown Heroes:

Saquon Barkley
Running Back
New York Giants

George Fant
Offensive Tackle
New York Jets
Dechert is a proud sponsor of the United Way of New York City’s

29th Annual Gridiron Gala

We salute this year’s honorees:

Marc Holliday
Desiree Perez
Saquon Barkley
George Fant
The Durst Organization

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We Proudly Support Our Dear Friend & Honoree Desiree Perez
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At the 29th Anniversary

Gridiron Gala
Richard L. Hoffman & Associates, Inc. is happy to salute tonight’s Honorees:

Community Quarterbacks
Desiree Perez • Marc Holliday

Hometown Heroes
Saquon Barkley • George Fant

MVP
The Durst Organization
In honor of our friend

Marc Holliday

In support of the

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29th Annual Gridiron Gala
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

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Congratulations to
The Honorees & Hometown Heroes

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- MARC HOLLIDAY | Chairman & CEO, SL Green Realty Corp.

HOMETOWN HEROES

- SAQUON BARKLEY | Running Back, New York Giants
- GEORGE FANT | Safety, New York Jets

MVP

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No matter what jersey you are wearing on game day, we are all fans of making an impact on the community.

We are proud to support team

UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK CITY

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The United Way of New York City’s
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HONORING

Desiree Perez, CEO of Roc Nation
AND
SL Green Realty

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Congratulations to the honorees
Marc Holliday
Desiree Perez
Saquon Barkley
George Fant
Special Thanks

The Gala Committee and United Way of New York City Board of Directors for their continued dedication and support.

Our emcees Chris Canty, Tina Cervasio and all the players in attendance for donating their time to join us this evening.

Becca Hannah for donating her time and talent to this event.

To all our corporate and individual donors who supported this event through Silent Auction and Gift Bag donations.
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