



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Meredith Geisler
Tandem Sports + Entertainment, LLC
(703) 740-5015
mgeisler@tandemse.com

CHARLES JOHNSON FOUNDATION NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR \$20,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The application is open to students from Hawkinsville, Bleckley County and Wilcox County High Schools.

HAWKINSVILLE, GA, January 10, 2017 – The Charles Johnson Foundation will recognize local student-athletes in Middle Georgia by awarding four \$20,000 college scholarships this year. There will be one male and one female selected from Hawkinsville High School, and an additional male and female recipient between Bleckley County and Wilcox County High Schools. For the first four years of the program, the foundation awarded two scholarships annually, and in 2016 expanded to four.

The Charles Johnson Foundation's scholarship program has seen tremendous success for its recipients. In 2016, the inaugural recipients of the scholarship (from 2012) both graduated from college. One of the graduates is working at the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce in Texas, and the other accepted a position as a special education teacher at Hawkinsville High School in addition to assistant coaching baseball and football. The remaining 10 recipients are still in school and have all maintained full-time status and consistently upheld requirements, including a commitment to serving their communities, in order to be eligible for scholarship renewals. Recipients have a network of resources through the foundation and provide regular updates to the executive director.

"The scholarship program is one of my favorite things about my foundation," Carolina Panthers defensive end Charles Johnson said. "To help kids fulfil their dreams and continue their education is amazing. I'm proud that we're providing scholarships to four students again this year. I'm looking forward to reviewing the applications we receive."

Among requirements to apply for the \$20,000 scholarships (renewal scholarships at \$5,000 per year up to four years) applicants must:

- Be a senior at Hawkinsville High School (Hawkinsville, Ga.), Bleckley County High School (Cochran, Ga.), or Wilcox County High School (Rochelle, Ga.)
- Receive a varsity letter in at least two sports
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen
- Must be planning to enroll in a four-year college or university in the fall of 2017 as a full-time, degree seeking, first-year student
- Have a minimum cumulative grade of 70% (2.0 GPA equivalent)
- Demonstrate financial need
- Demonstrate volunteer commitment of time to support youth in the community
- Receive written acceptance from their selected four-year college and provide proof in the application (Copy of acceptance must be included in application)
- Submit all application materials by the March 1 postmark deadline

The foundation is also covering expenses and transportation for students from Wilcox County, Bleckley County and Hawkinsville High Schools to attend the Black College Expo in Atlanta for a fourth year. This year, registration is also open to 7th and 8th graders from Hawkinsville Middle School. The Black College Expo will take place on Saturday, February 4 at Cobb Galleria Centre. Space is limited and all students must visit their guidance counselor to register for the event by January 23. Spots will be filled on a first to register basis. This is a great opportunity for students to learn more about continuing their education after high school.

To view the full Charles Johnson Foundation scholarship application with updated guidelines and requirements, please visit charlesjohnsonfoundation.org/scholarships. For media requests or additional information, please contact Meredith Geisler at (703) 740-5015 or mgeisler@tandemse.com.

ABOUT CHARLES JOHNSON & THE CHARLES JOHNSON FOUNDATION

Charles Johnson is a defensive end for the Carolina Panthers, a native of Hawkinsville, GA, and a proud alumnus of Hawkinsville High School. After attending the University of Georgia where he starred at defensive end, Charles was drafted by the Carolina Panthers of the NFL in 2007.

Through nine professional seasons, Charles has received All-Pro recognition on the strength of 63.5 career sacks, placing him among the premier pass-rushers in the league. Charles ranks second on the Panthers' all-time sacks list. He is a four-time captain for the Panthers, including the 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016 seasons.

In 2012, Charles' passion for philanthropy and loyalty to Middle Georgia led him to launch the Charles Johnson Foundation. A non-profit organization, the Charles Johnson Foundation is dedicated to fulfilling a two-fold mission:

- Providing opportunities for under-served youth to reach their full potential through athletic, recreational, and educational programs and initiatives; and
- Providing support for single African American mothers through proven programs and initiatives.

The Charles Johnson Foundation Sports Academy and Community Weekend is the flagship annual event in Hawkinsville, GA for the Charles Johnson Foundation, combining his efforts to advance education with free sports clinics in football, basketball, tennis, dance and cheer.

###