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Rose Bowl Stadium & Legacy Foundation



**THE ROSE BOWL INSTITUTE**



## **The Rose Bowl Institute's Athletes in Schools Program Partners with the 2nd & 7 'Role Model Reading Program' to Promote Literacy**

**PASADENA, Calif. (February 7, 2025)** The Rose Bowl Institute's Athletes in Schools program has partnered with the 2nd & 7's Role Model Reading Program to promote literacy by providing free books and positive role models to children in need. This collaboration encourages young student-athletes to give back to their communities by inspiring the next generation of readers.

The Rose Bowl Institute is dedicated to promoting sportsmanship, leadership, and citizenship through its "Sportsmanship as Citizenship" civic literacy program. Its Athletes in Schools initiative continues to grow nationwide by sending athletes to high schools to inspire students and highlight the connection between good sportsmanship and civility through exposing them to hall of famers, Olympians and former professional athletes in a connective environment. After each visit, the students are introduced to the 2nd & 7's reading program, enabling them to take the lessons learned back to elementary schools and continue fostering positive values in their communities.

2nd & 7 is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 by former Ohio State University football players Luke Fickell (current head football coach at the University of Wisconsin), Ryan Miller, and Mike Vrabel (current head coach for the New England Patriots). All three were a part of the 1997 Rose Bowl Game® championship in Pasadena for the Buckeyes victory over Arizona State. Inspired by their involvement in community outreach as student-athletes, they launched 2nd & 7 to promote literacy and provide positive role models for children in central Ohio. Since its inception, the organization has expanded into a nationwide movement dedicated to "paying it forward" and fostering a love for reading.

Through this partnership, 2nd & 7 has generously donated books to support student-athletes participating in the Athletes in Schools program. These student-athletes will visit local schools, emphasize the importance of reading, and provide a free 2nd & 7 book to each student.

"Our country needs a stronger focus on sportsmanship values and civility," said James Washington, president of the Rose Bowl Institute. "We're honored to partner with such respected organizations to address this critical issue. By connecting students with inspiring athletes, we hope to inspire and encourage a deeper understanding," he added.

The purpose of the Athletes in Schools program is to interest American youth in becoming good citizens on the field and in their communities. The Rose Bowl Institute seeks to inspire students by facilitating athletes to speak in schools on sportsmanship as citizenship. Athletes have the students' attention and respect and can get messages across.

"I am so excited about the partnership between the Rose Bowl Institute's Athletes in Schools program and 2nd & 7's mission to provide free books and role models to children in the Pasadena community and beyond," said Ryan Miller, 2nd & 7 Co-Founder. "During my time as a collegiate student-athlete, I learned that my sphere of influence extended far beyond the playing field. After finishing my football career in the 1997 Rose Bowl, I helped start 2nd & 7 with the mission of providing free books and positive role models to kids in need while encouraging young athletes to pay it forward. Together, we can inspire a new generation of readers across the country" said Ryan Miller, 2nd & 7 Co-Founder.

For more information on 2nd & 7, please visit: [www.secondandseven.com](http://www.secondandseven.com)

For more information on the Rose Bowl Institute please email [rosebowlinstitute@rosebowlstadium.com](mailto:rosebowlinstitute@rosebowlstadium.com), or call 626-577-3100.

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### **About the 2nd & 7**

2nd & 7 promotes reading! 2nd & 7 has donated over **800,000 books to kids in need** across the country since it started in 1999. By engaging thousands of colleges and high-school student-athlete volunteers across the country, we are inspiring the next generation of readers and leaders. The reading program encourages student-athletes from universities and high schools across the nation to participate in weekly readings in second-grade classrooms. While in the classrooms, they are reading to the kids, passing out FREE books for the kids to take home and reminding the kids why it is so important to read. 2nd & 7 created its own book series featuring a group of friends called the Hog Mollies; each book teaches valuable life lessons. In the fall of 2023, we will distribute our 16th book in that series - The Hog Mollies and the Winter Walk with Wally.

Student-athletes from universities and high schools across the nation are the heart of our program. They are out in the schools each week, reading to kids, handing out books, and reminding the 2nd graders why reading is so important. They also use the themes in the Hog Mollies books to reiterate valuable life lessons. The focus is to encourage 2nd graders to become readers. Studies have shown that if children are not reading well by the end of 2nd grade, there is trouble ahead. We are committed to getting books in the hands of children who need them the most. For many kids we visit, the book we give them may be the only book they have at home.

### **About the Rose Bowl Institute**

The Rose Bowl Institute champions sportsmanship, leadership, and citizenship. Through educational programs, focused dialogues, and awards, the Institute leverages the power of sports to unite people everywhere. It is an arm of the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation. James Washington, a former two-time Super Bowl Champion and UCLA Alumni, leads the Institute alongside a current Advisory Board.

Launched in 2020, the Rose Bowl Institute has proven to be an inspirational flashpoint to educate and inspire both at-risk youth and underserved communities in Southern California and around the nation with compelling programming. Sports is a universal language that has the power to unite everyone. The Institute continues teaching independent skills and positive sports values such as *ethics*, *teamwork*, *sportsmanship*, *equality* to ensure its viewers and participants are exposed to free programming that can benefit their growth as contributing members of society.

Coupled with the Rose Bowl Stadium brand, and anchored by a nationwide, celebrity, values- driven advisory board, the Institute has quickly become a unique leader in valuable, productive dialogues rooted in positive sports values.

#### **About the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation**

Formed in 2010, the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization whose primary goal is to financially ensure the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the future of the Stadium as a National Historic Landmark. The Foundation has established funding for key capital improvement initiatives, educational programming, and heritage protection due to the generosity of supporters from around the world who are invested in its premier future.

#### **About the Rose Bowl Stadium**

The Rose Bowl Stadium is the proud home of the Tournament of Roses Rose Bowl Game, UCLA Bruins football, AmericaFest Fourth of July Celebration, concerts including Kenny Chesney, Coldplay, Taylor Swift, and U2, international and Premier League soccer matches, and the World's Largest Flea Market.

A National Historic Landmark built in 1922 and known around the world, the Rose Bowl Stadium has earned its world-class reputation by hosting five NFL Super Bowl games, the 1984 Olympic Soccer matches, the 1994 Men's World Cup, the 1999 Women's World Cup, four BCS National College Football Championship Games, and the College Football Playoff Semi-Final game.