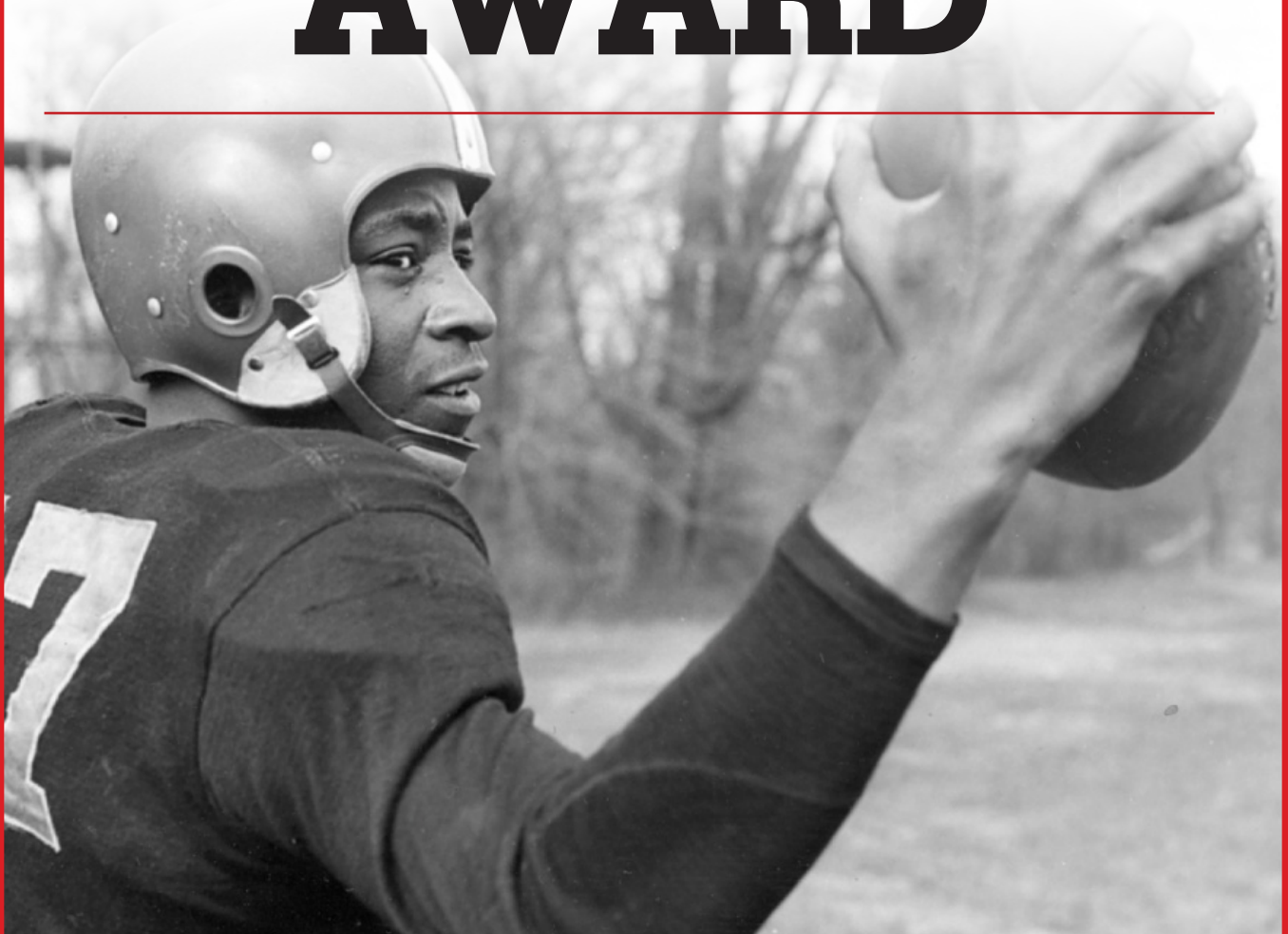


THE 2022 — **THIRD ANNUAL**

WILLIE THROWER AWARD



MARCH 25, 2023

PRESENTED BY:

**THE WILLIE THROWER
AWARD FOUNDATION**



WILLIE THROWER MEMORIAL AWARD FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

Melvyn E. Smith
PRESIDENT

Monique Smith
VICE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY

Thomas Roberts
TREASURER

Brian Clark
SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

Robert Pallone
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Baron "BB" Flenory
MEDIA CHAIR

Hon. Frank Dermody
PLANNING COMMITTEE

George Guido
AWARDS COMMITTEE

Jimmy Lee Santorella
AWARDS COMMITTEE

William "Muzzy" Colisimo
QB CAMP COORDINATOR

Mayor Thom Guzzo
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Michael Azadian
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Willie Thrower, Jr.

Melvin Thrower

Jennifer Thrower-Mason

WILLIE THROWER MEMORIAL AWARD FOUNDATION MISSION STATEMENT

The Willie Thrower Memorial Award, beginning with the 2020 season, will annually honor the best high school quarterback in Southwestern Pennsylvania to memorialize Willie Thrower for being the first Black Quarterback in professional football history.

We want to recognize and pay tribute to the fact that in the storied history of professional sport's most dominant league (NFL) that it was a black quarterback who hails from Southwestern Pennsylvania who broke through that barrier.

The individual selected to receive this award will be determined by the voting of a panel comprised of high school football coaches representing each of the conferences from the WPIAL and City League along with a panel of sports broadcasters and sports writers who cover high school football on a regular basis in the ten-county area of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Willie played for the former New Kensington High School which has since merged with Arnold High School to form Valley High School. Thrower was known as "Mitts" because of his large hands and arm strength which stood in contrast to his 5'11" frame.

He was part of a 2-time WPIAL Championship team and 1-time WPIAL runner-up squad.

Collegiately, he played at Michigan State University under legendary Spartans head coach Clarence Lester "Biggie" Munn and was a member of the 1952 Michigan State University Division One National Champions. In 1953, after signing as a free agent with the NFL's Chicago Bears, he made his groundbreaking debut against the San Francisco 49ers on October 18, 1953.

The recipient of this award will receive a bronze replica statue of Willie Thrower just like the one that is on display at the entrance to Valley High School's football stadium in New Kensington, Pennsylvania.

"Whatever it is that you are going to be...be a giant."

—Willie Thrower, Sr.

**WILLIE THROWER MEMORIAL AWARD HONORING THE BEST HIGH SCHOOL
QUARTERBACK IN SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

HOW THE WINNER WILL BE DETERMINED

The selection process will be comprised of a panel of high school football coaches representing each of the conferences from the WPIAL and City League along with a panel of sports broadcasters and sports writers who cover high school football on a regular basis in the ten-county area of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The award will be given to an outstanding high school football quarterback who is a leader both on and off the field. The recipient will be a very talented signal-caller who like Willie Thrower was, is dangerous with both his arm and his legs and makes opposing defensive staffs stay up late at night trying to devise schemes to slow him down.

The recipient must be a dependable and respected teammate and be of good character.

Each participating panel member will at the conclusion of the regular season submit their nominees via email or postal mail to the Willie Thrower Award Committee.

Each participating panel member will rank their top 5 high school quarterbacks that they have either played against, watched play or read about their accomplishments during that regular high school football season. It is recommended that the panel members make themselves aware of their 5 nominees' statistical achievements from the season. For example, passing yards, rushing yards, completion percentage and touchdowns passing and rushing.

Each participating nominator will rank their top 5 high school quarterbacks on the following scale: Their number 1 ranked nominee will receive (10) points, number 2 (8) points, number 3 (6) points, number 4 (4) points and number 5 (2) points.

The top 5 nominees who earn the most points will be invited to an awards banquet in March/April in which they will be recognized and the eventual winner will be announced. The winner will receive a bronze replica statue of Willie Thrower just like the one that is on display at the entrance to Valley High School's football stadium in New Kensington, Pennsylvania.

Additional Criteria for Nominators to Consider in Determining their 5 Nominees:

- A. *Clearly a difference maker* for his team when he is on the field.
- B. Rises to the occasion when his squad *really* needs it most.
- C. Mentally and physically strong.
- D. Wants to win every game but more importantly *"hates to lose"*.
- E. Possesses an exemplary work ethic.
- F. Sets the bar for his team in terms of demonstrating *"good sportsmanship"*.

BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIE "THE PRO" THROWER

by Melvin & Willie Thrower Jr.

WILLIE THROWER was born March 22, 1930 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Willie Thrower went to Ken High in 1945-1949, known today as Valley High School, in New Kensington, PA There he helped lead his team the Ken High Raiders to 2 WPIAL Championships in 1946 and 1947, they also were the WPIAL runner-up in 1945.

After graduating high school, Willie Thrower went to Michigan State from 1949 - 1952 where he helped lead the Spartans to win their first National Championship in 1952 beating Notre Dame.

Willie Thrower graduated with a degree in Psychology from Michigan State University. Later on, he went undrafted to the Chicago Bears in 1953 for just one season. Willie then went on to play for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers 1954-1956.

Willie ended his career at the age of 27 due to a shoulder injury. He married Mary Rowe (THROWER) in 1964 at St. James A.M.E church in New Kensington where they became the church's first African American couple to get married. From this union they had 3 boys: Willie Jr., Jason and Melvin Thrower.

Willie Thrower was not only a pioneer who broke the color barrier for quarterbacks, he was a great man who loved his family, community and was loved by many that looked up to him. He was a tremendous inspiration, mentor, and advocate, most especially to those in his community. The famous line he would tell kids when he mentored them was, "Anything you do, always be a Giant."

Willie Thrower passed away February 20, 2002.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & AWARDS

- Allegheny-Kiski Valley Sports Hall of Fame
- W.E.B DU BOIS AWARD N.A.A.C.P (W.E.B. DU BOIS Exhibited Great Courage in His Fight of Social Justice and Equality)
- WPIAL HALL OF FAME - 2011 Athlete/Heritage Award.
- Featured in the ESPN Sports History book: *THIRD AND A MILE - THE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE BLACK QUARTERBACK.*
- RIPLEY'S BELIEVE OR NOT: Known for the world's largest pro football hands.

Willie Lee Thrower (March 22, 1930 – February 20, 2002) was an American football quarterback. Born near Pittsburgh in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, Thrower was known as “Mitts” because of his large hands and arm strength, which stood in contrast to his 5’ 11” frame. He was known to toss a football 70 yards. Thrower was a part of the 1952 Michigan State Spartans who won the national championship. He became one of the first National Football League (NFL) African American quarterbacks in the modern era, playing for the Chicago Bears in 1953.

Early life

Thrower played halfback in the single-wing formation for New Kensington High (present-name: Valley High School) as a freshman just after the end of World War II in 1945. Single wing halfbacks received a direct center snap, and then had run, handoff, or pass options. The team lost 2 games. In subsequent seasons head coach Don Fletcher installed the T formation and moved Thrower to quarterback. From his sophomore to senior years, New Kensington won 24 straight games, including the 1946 and 1947 Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) Class AA championships. He would only lose one game in his career. As a dual-threat quarterback, Thrower was also an All-WPIAL and all-state first team honors, and he was named captain for an All-American scholastic selection covering the nation east of the Mississippi River. His final high school record was 35–3–1. Despite his accomplishments, Thrower still experienced racism. In 1947, the Miami, Florida Peanut Bowl, featuring top high school teams around the country, rescinded the invitation it had extended to Ken High to play in the annual prep classic game when organizers saw a photograph of its star. In addition, many colleges opted not to extend Thrower a scholarship when they discovered his ethnicity.

College football

After graduating, Thrower chose to play collegiate football for the Michigan State Spartans alongside some of his high school teammates William Horrell, Joseph Klein, Renaldo Kozikowski, Vincent Pisano, and the Tamburo brothers, Harry and Richard. He would remain in East Lansing from 1949–1952, competing for playing time at quarterback with All-Americans Al Dorow and Tom Yewcic. Under head coach Clarence “Biggie” Munn Thrower became the first black quarterback to play in the Big Ten Conference in 1950 in his first year of varsity eligibility (NCAA rules dictated no freshman on varsity preventing Thrower, who was a freshman in 1949, to play) although during the first two years of his varsity career, he had only attempted 14 passes. During the 1952 championship season, Thrower was an integral part of the title run, completing 59 percent of his passes (29-of-43) for 400 yards and five touchdowns. In a crucial game with Notre Dame, Thrower stepped in for an injured Tom Yewcic and threw a touchdown in a 21–3 win. In his final game in a Spartan uniform, Thrower completed seven of his 11 attempts for 71 yards and a touchdown, and added a rushing touchdown in a dominating 62–13 win over Marquette that sealed the nation’s Number 1 ranking, and championship, for Michigan State.

Professional career

National Football League (1953)

In the 10th minute of the period, (Joe) Perry fumbled and (Dick) Hensley recovered on the 49ers’ 16. Willie Thrower, former Michigan State Negro quarterback star making his major league debut, passed 12 to (Jim) Dooley, putting the ball on the 4. (George) Blanda and (Fred) Morrison came into the game with a resounding razzberry. They wanted Willie to put it over. But Morrison did it on a blast off tackle. The boos changed to cheers. Although Thrower was not drafted in 1953, he was offered one year, \$8,500 contract with the Chicago Bears. He became the backup quarterback and roommate to future

Pro Football Hall of Famer George Blanda. He did not play until October 18, 1953 against the San Francisco 49ers. Bears coach George Halas was unhappy with Blanda's play and pulled him, sending in Thrower. He moved the team to the 15-yard line of the 49ers, but was denied a chance to score a TD when Halas put Blanda back into the game. The Bears eventually lost the game 35–28. Thrower completed 3 out of 8 passes for 27 yards, and had one interception. He would only play one more game for the Bears, who released Thrower after the 1953 season.

Legacy

In 1979, he was elected to the Westmoreland County Sports Hall of Fame. In 1981, he was inducted into AK Valley Hall of Fame. In 2003, an official state marker was dedicated to him in his high school. In 2011, he was inducted into the WPIAL Hall of Fame. Being the first African-American quarterback in the NFL, in 2002 Thrower told The Valley News Dispatch of Tarentum, Pa, "I look at it like this: I was like the Jackie Robinson of football. A black quarterback was unheard of before I hit the pros."

Death

He died of a heart attack in New Kensington on February 20, 2002, at the age of 71. His funeral was held at the Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in New Kensington, where 150 people mourned. In 2006, a statue of Thrower was erected near Valley High School in New Kensington to honor his accomplishments. The statue was unveiled during a Valley High School football game in September attended by Pittsburgh Steelers owner Dan Rooney as well as Thrower's family. Willie Thrower was also mentioned by former NFL quarterback Warren Moon in his Pro Football Hall of Fame acceptance speech. Moon thanked Thrower, among others, for giving him inspiration during a time when few African-Americans played the quarterback position in the NFL.

REMEMBERING THROWER'S CONTRIBUTIONS

by: Len Pasquarelli

ESPN.com

A dozen African-American quarterbacks started a combined 112 NFL games during the 2001 season. While those numbers represent all-time league highs, it is likely not a single one of those 12 QBs can correctly identify the first man of color to take a snap in a modern-day NFL game.

Then again, no one could blame Donovan McNabb if he never heard of Willie Thrower. Ditto Steve McNair, Michael Vick, Aaron Brooks, Daunte Culpepper, Charlie Batch, Quincy Carter or Tony Banks. And even though Kordell Stewart plays 30 miles south down the Allegheny River from where Willie Thrower established himself as a prep school star, operating the single-wing formation at New Kensington (Pa.) High, it's understandable that the name would likely register a blank with the Pittsburgh Steelers star.

Unless you were born in Western Pennsylvania, weaned on the lore of that area's gridiron history, there is little chance of familiarity with Willie Thrower. I first heard of Thrower from my dad and my uncles and, in subsequent trips to the hamlets of the Allegheny Valley, his legend became a part of my football rearing.

"But he was a lot more than a thrower. He was a passer, a guy who could fit the ball through the eye of a needle when he needed to." — Hall of Fame quarterback George Blanda on Thrower

But as they say about a bad joke, well, you had to be there.

The irony is, Willie Thrower was no joke, and his football deeds no laughing matter. You've got to dig deep into the pages of encyclopedic tomes such as Total Football to unearth the fact that Thrower, then 23 years old, played two games for the Chicago Bears during the 1953 season. He completed three of eight passes for just 27 yards and tossed an interception before coach George Halas released him.

It was 13 seasons before another black man lined up at quarterback in an NFL game.

The printed professional football legacy of Thrower, who died Wednesday at age 71, occupies all of 3½ lines, and two of those detail his height and weight, birth date, high school and college. It is preposterous, though, to suggest that Thrower's contribution to the game can be limited to a puny half-inch of agate type.

For many players of this era, the history of the black quarterback in the NFL commences with the glory days of Doug Williams, who earned most valuable player honors in Super Bowl XXII. It's likely, of course, that players such as McNabb and Stewart and McNair still would have become high-profile performers in the NFL even if Thrower had never made his two-game cameo. But to diminish the importance of Thrower's contribution, from a competitive and social standpoint, is incredibly shortsighted.

Those eight passes Thrower tossed in 1953 before Halas decided he didn't really require a third quarterback on the roster certainly were not the galvanizing event of, say, Rosa Parks refusing to move to the back of the bus. Neither should Thrower's brief NFL career be tossed into the trash bin of history, nor discarded as an afterthought occurrence. He earned less than \$10,000 on his only league contract, but his legacy is far richer than that.

Thrower's son, Melvin, on Wednesday told the local Valley News Dispatch his father was "a giant." But be careful before you charge a grieving son with hyperbole, because Willie Thrower overcame insurmountable odds to simply make it out of the river town where his name and his deeds meant so much.

One of the game's most aptly named athletes, Thrower could fling the ball 70 yards on a line. "But he was a lot more than a thrower. He was a passer, a guy who could fit the ball through the eye of a needle when he needed to," said Hall of Fame quarterback George Blanda.

When the historians click off the names of great quarterbacks of western Pennsylvania lineage -- John Unitas, Joe Namath, Joe Montana, Dan Marino, Jim Kelly and others -- the famous litany never includes Thrower. It's an unfortunate oversight. In the bigger picture, the one beyond the field, his accomplishments were every bit as significant.

A humble and giving man even as a youngster, Thrower's celebrity drew thousands to the New Kensington games on Friday nights, and he led coach Don Fletcher's team to a pair of Class AA titles in the late 1940s. The games also drew college recruiters, many of whom came armed with scholarship offers, only to withdraw them once they noticed through binoculars that Thrower was black.

It took an enlightened administration, and plenty of convincing on both sides, to get Thrower into Michigan State, where he became the Big Ten's first African-American quarterback. After his stint in the NFL, Thrower played three years in the CFL before retiring and returning home to western Pennsylvania to raise his family and work in the community.

Battling diabetes for the past eight years, Thrower spent much of that time spinning yarns at the local Elks lodge, where on Wednesday night his fellow members toasted his memory. There will be thousands of prayers whispered for Willie Thrower over the next few days, oratories by those who recalled him not only as a football star but more important as a good guy.

It would be fitting if the fraternity of black quarterbacks who now star in the league could recall Thrower with a prayer of thanks.

Len Pasquarelli is a senior writer for ESPN.com.

INSPIRING GREATNESS: WILLIE THROWER

A trailblazer on the field of play,
Willie Thrower led the way.
A quarterback with skill and grace,
Breaking barriers, he set the pace.

In 53, he took the snap,
With courage in his heart, he made the call.
A pioneer, he faced the test,
The first African American at his best.

Though his time was brief and rare,
His impact reached beyond compare.
He showed the world what he could do,
And inspired many to follow through.

A hero in the eyes of many,
Willie Thrower spirit still shines so brightly.
He paved the way for those to come,
And his legacy will forever run.

So, here to Willie, a true great,
Who fearlessly ran through football's gate.
His courage and his skills, so rare,
Inspire us all to strive and dare.

-ChatGBT

ARMSTRONG'S OLSEN WINNER OF 2ND WILLIE THROWER AWARD AS TOP QB IN SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA OF 2021

by: Michael Love

Tribune Review

April 9, 2022



Cadin Olsen stood tall, literally and figuratively, among a wide-ranging crop of talented quarterbacks in the WPIAL and City League.

The 6-foot-5 junior was a running and passing threat for Armstrong during the 2021 season, and the standout helped the River Hawks to an 8-4 overall record, a 5-2 mark in the Greater Allegheny Conference and the first WPIAL playoff victory in school history against Montour in the Class 5A first round.

His accomplishments, which included throwing for more than 2,500 yards and 28 touchdowns and running for 800-plus yards and 16 additional scores this past fall, were recognized Saturday at the Quality Inn in New Kensington as he was presented with the second Willie Thrower Award, named in honor of the New Kensington native who blazed a trail as a Black quarterback at the high school, college and professional levels from the 1940s into the 1950s.

"This is a great feeling to be recognized as a top quarterback in the WPIAL and to be able to represent my family, my teammates and my school and community," said Olsen, who follows Pine-Richland's Cole Spencer, last year's award recipient.

"I can't thank everyone enough, especially the committee and others who selected me for this award."

Thrower made a name for himself in high school at New Kensington, leading the Red Raiders to WPIAL titles in 1946 and '47.

The member of the Westmoreland County Sports Hall of Fame, the Alle-Kiski Valley Sports Hall of Fame and the WPIAL Hall of Fame then became the first Black quarterback in the Big Ten while at Michigan State. Thrower was a part of the Spartans' 1952 national championship team.

He again made history with the Chicago Bears in October 1953 as the first Black quarterback to play in an NFL game. The 1953 season was Thrower's only one in the NFL.

"Why is this award so meaningful?" New Kensington Mayor Thomas Guzzo said. "Yes, it is named after the man born with the perfect name, Willie Thrower. But it also has such historical meaning and relevance. Pioneer, barrier-breaker and trailblazer; those words undoubtedly describe New Kensington's own Willie Thrower. But there's one (word) that will always top the list: first."

Olsen said he is humbled to receive an award honoring a man who kept working through all manners of adversity, including racism, and set an example for athletes and others to emulate to this day.

"It's important to see and understand where (Thrower) came from and the impact he's had on athletes' lives throughout the years," Olsen said. "He had to deal with so many things through segregation and other forms of racism. That was very unfortunate, but he persevered through everything and helped shape sports to where it is today."

Olsen beat out four other finalists — Gateway sophomore Brad Birch, Beaver Falls junior Jaren Brickner, Mt. Lebanon senior Joey Daniels and Belle Vernon senior Devin Whitlock — as the top quarterback in Southwestern Pennsylvania for the 2021 season as voted upon by a panel of high school football coaches, sports broadcasters and sports writers.

The vote pared down the initial 30-player nomination list – 28 from the WPIAL and two from the City League – to the five finalists.

"You set the bar for your team in demonstrating good sportsmanship," said Amy Scheuneman, executive director of the WPIAL, in addressing the finalists.

"There are far too many examples of bad sportsmanship, and we need good leaders to make sure those good examples are set and people follow you. Willie Thrower is not just recognized and remembered because he was a good football player, but he also was a good person. That is what we want to instill in our student athletes across the WPIAL. You here have the opportunity to do that in a very prominent role."

Daniels and Whitlock were unable to attend Saturday's banquet ceremony as they were in State College at a practice for the Big 33 Football Classic set for Memorial Day at Bishop McDevitt's Rocco Ortenzio Stadium in Harrisburg.

But both addressed the award committee and others in attendance with prepared video messages.

February marked the 20th anniversary of Thrower's 2002 death from a heart attack at the age of 71.

A number of Thrower's family members, including his wife, Mary, and son, Melvin, were in attendance.

"The train is starting to roll a little faster," Melvin Thrower said. "We're starting to gain more momentum in the second year. A lot of people still don't know who my father was, the impact that he made and the trailblazer that he became in the NFL. The committee again did an awesome job of putting together this day, which honors my father's memory and legacy while also recognizing five outstanding quarterbacks."

Former Schenley and University of Pittsburgh Darnell Dinkins, who played eight years in the NFL, including his final one with the Super Bowl Champion New Orleans Saints in 2009, recognized, as part of words offered to the audience, the untimely death Saturday morning of Steelers quarterback Dwayne Haskins in a car-pedestrian accident.

A moment of silence was observed for Haskins and also his family and friends.

"My thoughts and prayers and those of my family go out to the Haskins family who lost a great player in the quarterback brotherhood," Melvin Thrower said.

"He wasn't only a great player but a great person who had so much of his life left to live. Opportunity was right in front of him (with the Steelers). This is such a tragic loss. We want them to know we are with them."

THIRD ANNUAL WILLIE THROWER MEMORIAL AWARD LUNCHEON

MARCH 25, 2023 - 12PM

KNEAD CAFÉ, NEW KENSINGTON

Welcome George Guido
- Board Member & Master of Ceremonies

Introduction of Head Table George Guido

Pledge of Allegiance..... James Santorella,
- Board Member & WHJB Radio

Welcoming Remarks Mayor Thomas Guzzo,
- Board Member & Mayor of New Kensington

MEALTIME

Introduce the Foundation Board Members and Distinguished Guests..... George Guido

Address by WPIAL Board Member/City League Robert "Tink" Cloherty
- PA Sports Hall of Fame Western Chapter

Introductions of 2022 Finalists..... George Guido

Steel Valley Coach **Ray Braszo** speaks of Cruce Brookins and the team; address by **Cruce Brookins**

Sto-Rox coach **Marvin Mills** speaks of Josh Jenkins and the team; address by **Josh Jenkins**

Westinghouse coach **Donta Green** speak of Keyshawn Morsillo and the team; address by **Keyshawn Morsillo**

Armstrong coach **Frank Fabian** speaks of Cadin Olsen and the team; address by **Cadin Olsen**

Central Catholic rep. speak of **Payton Wehner** and the team; address by Ret. Central Catholic Coach **Terry Totten**

Address by keynote speaker Larry Richert
- KDKA Radio, PITT and Steeler football Announcer

Announcement of WINNER and Gifts for the Four Finalists..... George Guido

The Willie Thrower Memorial Award Foundation Would Like To Extend A Very Special Thanks To:

Keynote Speaker **Larry Richert**, KDKA Radio host and announcer of PITT University and Steelers.

Featured Guest _____, of WPIAL/City League

Special Guest: **J.T. Thomas, Chuck Cooper III, Darrell Porter, Chris Moore, Thomas Rooney, Hon. Dwayne Woodruff, Clyde Manns, Shawn Gibson, and Benjamin Pryor**

Valley High School technology teacher Rich Shaner and his students for assembling the video portion of today's luncheon.

Ms. Mary Thrower and Family would like to thank all boards members, finalists, their families, and guest for being a valuable, dedicated, and honorable person(s) to the late Willie "The Pro" Thrower.

"Anything you do, always be a GIANT."

– Willie Thrower

CRUCE **BROOKINS**

SENIOR - QUARTERBACK STEEL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL



Cruce Brookins is a 6'2" 185lb QB/S from Steel Valley High School. He utilized his exceptional talents to help lead his team to a 2A WPIAL Championship this season. Cruce has worked extremely hard since his freshman year at the Steel Valley to become a highly decorated student/athlete this season.

Throughout his on the field journey this season Cruce was able to obtain several accolades. He was unanimously voted as a first team All-Conference QB and safety. Having successful senior season also granted him with other accolades such as; KDKA 2A Player of the Year, Post-Gazette Fabulous 22, All-State QB, as well as the Big "33" game.

Cruce attracted a lot of recognition from several division 1 colleges but has decided to commit to the University of Pittsburgh. He will be attending Pitt in the fall of 2023.

Cruce also displayed keen abilities in the classroom by maintaining a 3.5Gpa. He takes pride in being a leader on and off the field and hopes to become a young man who can influence positive change throughout the society.

JOSH **JENKINS**



SENIOR - QUARTERBACK STO-ROX JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

- 1st Team All-State QB (Writers)
- 3x Offensive Player Of The Year
- 3x 1st Team All-Conference
- Holy Cross Commit
- Trib 25 Kennywood All-Star
- Finalist for Mr. PA Football (1A-3A)
- KDKA Super 7 Finalist - 2A Player of The Year
- 2x Wpial Runner Up
- 5th All-Time in Sto-Rox Passing History
- 30-5 Record Over 3 yr. Span
- 5,329 Career Passing Yards - 68 Total Career Touchdowns
- Gained Early Interest Sophomore Year From Rutgers, Penn State, Michigan, Pitt, And Many More Power 5 Schools
- 3.9 GPA
- National Honors Society
- Volunteer For Tri-Mark Community Clean-Up
- 3 Year Starter & Captain For Sto-Rox Varsity Basketball Team
- Pylon 7v7 Tournament MVP / Richmond,VA

KEYSHAWN **MORSILLO**



SENIOR - QUARTERBACK WESTINGHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL

- 3 Year starter
- 31-3 as a starter
- Led Westinghouse to its first ever PIAA Championship appearance ('22)
- City League record, 3 undefeated regular seasons in City League play
- 3 City League Championship appearances
- 2x City League Champion
- 2x City League Championship MVP
- 3x 1st Team All-City League Section
- 2022 City League Player of the Year
- 2x District 5 Regional Champion
- 2x District 5 Regional Championship MVP
- 2x KDKA Super 7 City League Player of The Year
- 2022 PFN Coaches Select Class 2A All-State Team
- Holds school record with 5,094 career passing yards
- Holds school record with 70 career Touchdown passes
- Holds school season record with 2,544 passing yards ('23)
- Holds school season record with 43 Touchdown passes ('23)
- Rushed for 2,117 yards in his career
- Rushed for 52 Touchdowns in his career
- Committed to California University of Pennsylvania

CADIN OLSEN



SENIOR - QUARTERBACK ARMSTRONG HIGH SCHOOL

SENIOR POSTSEASON ACCOLADES:

- PFN All-Academic Gold Team 4.31GPA ('22)
- Willie Thrower Finalist
- WPIAL Regular Season Passing Leader
- PrepRedzone #1 QB in the class of 2023 in Pa
- PrepRedzone #42 in class of '23 for Pa
- Big33 Selection
- MrPaFootball Tremendous 25
- 1st Team All-Conference
- Fab 22 selection
- Trib-Review Terrific 25
- Post-Gazette 1st Team All-Conference
- Cover 3 Athletics 4A Player of the year ('22)
- NexGen QB 1- National QB of the year
- PA AP Writers 4A All-State QB
- KDKA Super 7 Finalist
- PFN 1st Team All-State QB
- Leader Times Off. Player of the Year
- Leader Times Most Valuable Player of the Year
- WPIAL Today 4A Co-Player of the Year
- #1 in 4A and #6 in state for total yards.
- #2 in 4A and #3 in state for passing yards and Passing TDs.

CAREER POSTSEASON ACCOLADES:

- Willie Thrower Award: Top QB in Southwestern PA ('21)
- Willie Thrower Award Finalist ('21)('22)
- 2x HSFA Academic All-American ('20)('21)
- Pa All-Academic selection with a 4.43GPA('21)
- 2x PFN All-Academic Gold Team 4.3GPA('21)('22)
- Big33 Selection ('22)
- 2x NexGen QB 1- Nat. QB of the year ('20)('22)
- PrepRedzone #1 QB in class of '23 in Pa ('22)
- PrepRedzone #42 recruit in class of '23 in Pa ('22)
- Cover 3 Athletics 4A Player of the year ('22)
- WPIAL Today 4A Co-Player of the year ('22)
- MrPaFootball Tremendous 25 ('22)
- KDKA Super 7 Finalist ('22)
- PFN 1st Team All-State QB ('22)
- 2x AP Pa Writers All State QB ('20)('22)
- Pa Prep Rivals All-State QB ('20)
- 2x Trib. Review WPIAL All Star Team ('21)('22)
- 2x Fab 22 Selection ('21)('22)
- Trib-Review Terrific 25 ('21)('22)
- 3x All-Conference QB ('20)('21)('22)
- MaxPreps Pa player of the week (wk 2)('21)
- Trib player of the week (wk 9-'21)(wk 8-'22)
- Pa Prep Rivals Sophomore Qb of the Year ('20)
- 2x WPIAL Reg. Season Passing leader('20)('22)
- Leader Times Offensive Player of the Year('22)

- Leader Times MVP of the Year('22)
- 2x Elite 11 invitee
- Rivals/Wilson QBX Invitee
- Tom Lemming Report Selection

HIGH SCHOOL RECORDS:

- Single game passing TDs(5)
- Single game TDs (6)
- Single game rushing QB TDs (5)
- Single season passing TDs(43)
- Single game passing yards(447)
- Single season QB rush TDs (16)
- Single season total TDs (50)
- Single season passing yards(3,210)
- Single season total yards(3,671)
- Career TDs (119)
- Career passing TDs (95)
- Career QB Rushing TDs (23)
- Career yards (9,291)
- Career passing yards (7,819)

BASKETBALL ACCOLADES:

- 1,080 points and 684 rebounds
- School record 43 points in one game
- 3X first team all Big 56 in 5A basketball.
- Tribune Review Basketball Player of the week (wk 6)
- WV Brooke Holiday Tournament MVP.
- 1,000 points: first in Boys History.
- Cager Classic All-Star Game
- Roundball Classic All-Star Game

PAYTON WEHNER



**JUNIOR - QUARTERBACK
CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

- **2020 WPIAL Champion**
- **2021 & 2022 WPIAL Runner-up**
- **3-year letterman**
- **2-year starter**
- **2022 TribLive HSSN Terrific 25**
- **2022 WPIAL Today 6A Player of The Year**
- **2,507 Yards, 17 TD (Junior Year)**
- **1,460 Yards, 17 TD (Sophomore Year)**
- **2023 Football Leadership Committee Member**
- **4.27 GPA**
- **2023 WPIAL Champion in basketball**
- **2 year starter & letterman in basketball (sophomore and junior)**
- **2nd Team All Section in basketball**
- **Central Catholic Academic High Honors**
- **Youth camp coach for football and basketball**
- **Plans to attend a 4-year College to continue his football career**



The Willie Thrower Memorial Award Foundation Would Like Thank And Recognize Our Sponsors:

**R&D Impact Foundation
Lombardo Industries, Inc**

EM Media

Knead Community Café

TradeMark Threads, Inc

Penn State New Kensington

Pressley Ridge

O'Neil Ins Powered by Sebak Ins

Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co, Inc

Ross Walker Funeral Home

AWL&L Insurance Agency

IBPOE of W Elks Lodge 294

Hillcrest Volkswagen

**Robert "Tick" Cloherty-Western Chapter of
Pa HOF**

Vincent W. Stasolla

City of Arnold D>A>R>E> Chief Eric Doubt

George & Joseph, Attorneys at Law

Nick Chevrolet, Inc

Zampogna Construction, Inc.

Phil Jackson

East Boro Chapter of the Pa Sports HOF



THE WILLIE THROWER AWARD

