



## **NFL GRASSROOTS PROGRAM COMMITS \$2.4 MILLION TO BUILD AND UPGRADE 20 YOUTH COMMUNITY FOOTBALL FIELDS**

*NFL and NFL Players Association have contributed more than \$17 million to make stronger neighborhoods through field building and revitalizations since 1998*

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**NEW YORK (January 25, 2007)** – Neighborhoods in 20 cities across the country will get new or improved community football fields, thanks to \$2.4 million in grants awarded by NFL teams, the National Football League Players Association, and the National Football League's Grassroots Program, it was announced today.

The program, a partnership between the NFL Youth Football Fund and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), has resulted in the construction or renovation of 155 football fields nationwide in the last nine years.

The fields – in Baltimore, MD; Brooklyn, NY; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Detroit, MI; Dickson, TN; Durham, NC; East St. Louis, IL; Hollywood, FL; Houston, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Jacksonville, FL; Kansas City, MO; Nashville, TN; Newark, NJ; Phoenix, AZ; Providence, RI; St. Paul, MN; San Diego, CA; and Seattle, WA.–will be newly built or significantly renovated with improvements such as irrigation systems, lights, bleachers, scoreboards, goal posts and synthetic turf.

The NFL Grassroots program is funded by the NFL Youth Football Fund (YFF), a non-profit organization established by the NFL and NFL Players Association in 1998 to support the game at the youth level and promote positive youth development. Through the YFF, hundreds of thousands of youngsters have been given the opportunity to learn the game of football, get physically fit, and stay involved in productive after-school activities with adult mentors.

Since 1998, the NFL Grassroots program has provided more than \$17 million to help community organizations build, or rebuild 155 youth fields in more than 40 cities in NFL markets, typically in neighborhoods where funding sources are few and far between.

“These fields are a tangible sign of our Youth Football Fund in action,” said NFL Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL**. “The development and refurbishing of the fields gives youngsters across the country a safe place to play the game, and brings families and communities together.”

The NFL Grassroots Program, a joint venture among the NFL, the NFLPA, and LISC, the nation’s leading community development support organization, identifies local, non-profit, neighborhood-based agencies which have an interest in building or refurbishing football fields in schools and parks in underserved neighborhoods. Through the program, the local agencies are provided with the necessary financing and technical assistance to improve the quality and safety of fields in their neighborhoods. The local agencies oversee the construction, maintenance and programming of the fields.

“These fields are a critical part of our efforts to create sustainable communities – places where people want to live, work and raise families,” said **MICHAEL RUBINGER**, LISC’s president and CEO. “Through their contributions, the NFL and NFLPA are not only creating places for young people to compete in football and other sports, they’re also making countless neighborhoods better and stronger.”

**GENE UPSHAW**, the NFLPA’s executive director, agrees. “The NFL and the NFLPA are proud to assist communities where young people aspire to play football,” he said. “This program allows us to make an immediate impact in neighborhoods where assistance is most needed.”

### **About The NFL Youth Football Fund**

Established in 1998 by the NFL and the NFLPA, the NFL Youth Football Fund seeks to use football as a catalyst to promote positive youth development, support youth and high school football needs nationwide and also ensure the health of grassroots football in future generations. Through the YFF, many youth football initiatives and support programs have been developed, providing youngsters with opportunities to learn the game of football, get physically fit and stay involved in productive after-school activities with adult mentors.

Innovative and effective youth football programs have resulted from teaming with organizations like LISC on the NFL Grassroots program. The YFF also supports the National Youth Football Partners which include the Amateur Athletic Union, American Youth Football, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Jewish Community Centers Association, National Police Athletic League, National Recreation & Park Association, Pop Warner Little Scholars and YMCA of the USA. Additionally, the NFL and NFLPA endowed USA Football, a non-profit organization created to help youth football organizations keep the sport fun, safe and accessible. It provides resources focused on youth league enhancement, coaching education, officiating development and health and safety awareness.

### **About LISC**

LISC combines corporate, government and philanthropic resources to help non-profit community development corporations revitalize underserved neighborhoods. Since 1980, LISC has raised more than \$6 billion to build or rehab nearly 160,000 affordable homes and develop 25 million square feet of retail, community and educational space nationwide. For more information, visit [www.lisc.org](http://www.lisc.org).

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