The National Football League Commits $30 Million Donation to the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health to Support Medical Research

BETHESDA, MD (September 5, 2012) – The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) announces that the National Football League (NFL) has agreed to donate $30 million in support of research on serious medical conditions prominent in athletes and relevant to the general population.

This is the largest philanthropic gift the NFL has given in the league’s 92-year history.

With this contribution, the NFL becomes the founding donor to a new Sports and Health Research Program, which will be conducted in collaboration with institutes and centers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Specific plans for the research to be undertaken remain to be developed, but potential areas under discussion include: chronic traumatic encephalopathy; concussion; understanding the potential relationship between traumatic brain injury and late life neurodegenerative disorders, especially Alzheimer’s disease; chronic degenerative joint disease; the transition from acute to chronic pain; sudden cardiac arrest in young athletes; and heat and hydration-related illness and injury. The FNIH hopes to welcome other donors, including additional sports organizations, to the collaboration.

“We are grateful for the NFL’s generosity,” says Dr. Stephanie James, FNIH acting executive director. “The research to be funded by this donation will accelerate scientific discovery that will benefit athletes and the general public alike.”

“We are looking forward to working with the NFL and other organizations to conduct research on a host of medical conditions affecting athletes,” Dr. Story Landis, director of NIH’s National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, said. “Findings from this research will provide us with better ways to detect, diagnose and treat these conditions, and in some cases, even prevent their occurrence.”

“We hope this grant will help accelerate the medical community’s pursuit of pioneering research to enhance the health of athletes past, present and future,” said Roger Goodell, NFL commissioner. “This research will extend beyond the NFL playing field and benefit athletes at all levels and others, including members of our military.”

###

About the Foundation for the NIH
Established by the United States Congress to support the mission of the NIH – improving health through scientific discovery in the search for cure – the Foundation for the NIH is a leader in identifying and addressing complex scientific and health issues. The Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization that raises private-sector funds for a broad portfolio of unique
programs that complement and enhance the NIH priorities and activities. For additional information about the Foundation for the NIH, visit www.fnih.org.