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United Way, Nationwide and NFL Foundation award \$50,000 to Seahawks Linebacker KJ Wright

Teammates nominate Wright for the prestigious Walter Payton Man of the Year Award

Seattle, WA December 6, 2018– United Way of King County today announced Seahawks Linebacker KJ Wright as the Seahawks’ nominee for the *Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award*. Because of his selection, Wright will receive \$50,000 from United Way, Nationwide and the NFL Foundation. The pro-bowler is now eligible to win the national award.

“We’re thrilled that Seahawks players and personnel have nominated KJ Wright for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year award,” said Jon Fine, CEO of United Way of King County. “Not only is he a defensive leader on the field, KJ tackles tough issues off the field, like poverty. We have gotten to know KJ through his participation with United Way’s and the NFL’s Character Playbook and are excited his teammates have recognized him for his leadership.”

Considered one of the League’s most prestigious honors, the *Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award* recognizes an NFL player for outstanding community service activities off the field as well as excellence on the field. Wright has made a positive impact in the community, something he continually strives for.

“It has always been my pleasure to serve my community,” said LB KJ Wright and 2018 Seahawks Man of the Year award winner. “I’m striving to make this world a better place.”

Wright has been involved in numerous charitable causes since coming to the Seahawks. During the offseason in 2018, Wright traveled to Kenya where he delivered books and helped teach English to children in Kenya’s Maasai Mara region. He plans to return in 2019, pledging to donate \$300 for every tackle he records this season. The money will go to the construction of a fresh-water well for the primary school.

In addition to his time spent volunteering in Africa, Wright has helped Seahawks veteran Cliff Avril with community projects in Haiti, including building a school. Closer to home, Wright has mentored youth through Rainier Athletes, a nonprofit that draws on sports and mentorship to support and motivate at-risk students to achieve their greatest potential. Wright has also worked with middle school students through the NFL & United Way’s Character Playbook, which teaches kids how to build healthy relationships and make good decisions.

Wright, along with other NFL team nominees, will receive a \$50,000 donation to a charity of his choice and an additional \$50,000 donation in his name to expand [*Character Playbook*](#).

In January 2019, three of the NFL nominees will be selected as finalists for the national award, renamed in 1999 after the late Hall of Fame Chicago Bears running back **Walter Payton**. The winner will be announced at NFL Honors on February 2, 2019.