



June 30, 2025

**ESPN REVEALS SPECIAL HONOREES FOR
'THE 2025 ESPYS PRESENTED BY CAPITAL ONE' AIRING WEDNESDAY, JULY 16,
AT 8 P.M. ET/PT LIVE ON ABC AND STREAMING LIVE ON ESPN+**

Oscar Robertson To Receive the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage

Katie Schumacher-Cawley To Receive the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance

David Walters and Erin Regan To Receive the Pat Tillman Award for Service



During “The 2025 ESPYS,” hosted by Shane Gillis, ESPN will honor athletes and sports leaders for their courage, perseverance and service with three special accolades. Oscar Robertson will receive the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, Katie Schumacher-Cawley will receive the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance, and David Walters and Erin Regan will receive the Pat Tillman Award for Service. “The ESPYS” will air live from The Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on Wednesday, July 16, at 8 p.m. ET/PT on ABC and will stream live on ESPN+. “The ESPYS” will also be available to stream on-demand the next day on [Disney+](#), [Hulu](#) and [ESPN+](#).

Former NBA player Oscar Robertson will be honored with the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage for his fight to establish free agency in the NBA. The award is given to a deserving member of the sports world who has made a difference beyond the field of play by fighting for what they believe in, ultimately impacting people worldwide. As the president of the NBA Players Association from 1965 through 1974, Robertson presided over one of professional sports’ most significant labor battles — the fight for free agency. In 1970, he filed an antitrust lawsuit against the league aimed at blocking the

NBA-ABA merger and liberating players from exploitive contract restrictions, and they did not take kindly to his challenge — owners threatened and dismissed him, warning that the league would crumble under the weight of this new labor power. Many players shied away from the fight, worried that they would lose their jobs; but Robertson persisted, acutely aware that the status quo was unjust and unnecessary. In 1976, after successfully delaying the merger, the Players Association reached a groundbreaking settlement with the league. Aptly deemed “the Oscar Robertson Rule,” this labor-rights achievement created what we know as “restricted free agency” and paved the way for greater labor gains down the road. Robertson said, “[Owners] thought free agency was going to kill basketball and basketball would never be the same. And it’s true. Basketball has never been the same since then.” Past recipients of the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage include the USA Gymnastics sexual abuse survivors (2018), Bill Russell (2019), Kevin Love (2020), Maya Moore (2021), Vitali Klitschko (2022), the U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team (2023) and Steve Gleason (2024).

Pennsylvania State University women’s volleyball head coach, Katie Schumacher-Cawley, will receive the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance for making history as the first female head coach to lead a team to win the NCAA Women’s Volleyball Championship, and she did it all while battling breast cancer. Schumacher-Cawley has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of adversity. Diagnosed with Stage 2 breast cancer in September 2024, she continued to lead her team without missing a single practice. Schumacher-Cawley approached the challenge with “strength, determination and an unwavering sense of hope”; and throughout her treatment, Schumacher-Cawley maintained her commitment to the team, inspiring both players and fans. Her perseverance was a source of motivation for the Nittany Lions, who rallied behind their coach during this challenging time. Her journey has been an inspiration, exemplifying the power of perseverance and hope in overcoming personal and professional challenges. Past recipients of the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance include Jim Kelly (2018), Rob Mendez (2019), Taquarius Wair (2020), Chris Nikic (2021), Dick Vitale (2022), Liam Hendriks (2023) and Dawn Staley (2024).

Los Angeles County Fire Department first responders and former athletes David Walters and Erin Regan will receive the Pat Tillman Award for Service, an award given to a person with a strong connection to sports who has served others in a way that echoes the legacy of the former NFL player and U.S. Army Ranger, Pat Tillman. Both Walters and Regan chose the path of public service and currently serve as members of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, where they protect lives, the environment, and property by providing fire protection and life safety services. Past recipients of the Pat Tillman Award for Service include Jake Wood (2018), Kirstie Ennis (2019), Kim Clavel (2020), Marcus Rashford (2021), Gretchen Evans (2022), the Buffalo Bills Training Staff (2023) and Prince Harry (2024).

Walters is an Olympic gold medalist, world record-holder and NCAA champion swimmer for the University of Texas. He achieved international acclaim when he won a gold medal as part of the U.S. men’s 4x200-meter freestyle relay team at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. He is also a seven-time medalist at the World Aquatic Championships, where he broke the world record for the 4x200 meter freestyle relay with Michael Phelps, Ryan Lochte and Ricky Beren. Following his swimming career, he joined the Los Angeles County Fire Department nearly a decade ago.

Regan was a goalkeeper for the Wake Forest University women’s soccer team from 1998-2002, earning first-team All-ACC honors and setting several school records. After college, she joined the Washington Freedom in the Women’s United Soccer Association (WUSA) and was part of the team

that won the WUSA Founders Cup. Following the dissolution of the WUSA, Regan wanted a more dynamic and impactful career, and joined the Los Angeles County Fire Department in 2008. Passionate about increasing female representation in fire service, she co-founded “Girls Fire Camp,” a one-day event for girls, and helped launch the Women’s Fire Prep Academy to provide mentorship and hands-on experience to aspiring female firefighters.

In early 2025, Southern California faced devastating wildfires, with over 7,500 emergency personnel, including Walters and Regan, mobilized to combat the blaze. Both honorees were on the front lines battling extreme winds and fire behavior while tragically losing colleagues and working tirelessly to defend their city in one of the most devastating fires in Los Angeles history.

“It’s a true privilege to recognize these incredibly inspiring individuals — a courageous NBA legend, a National Champion while battling cancer, and two world-class athletes representing the service of the brave men and women who are first responders,” said Craig Lazarus, ESPN vice president and “The ESPYS” executive producer. “Oscar Robertson, Katie Schumacher-Cawley, David Walters and Erin Regan have shown incredible resilience, determination and perseverance in their personal and professional lives. We are beyond thrilled to honor and celebrate them at ‘The 2025 ESPYS.’”

“The ESPYS” helps raise awareness and funds for the V Foundation for Cancer Research, the charity founded by ESPN and the late basketball coach Jim Valvano at the first “ESPYS” in 1993. ESPN has helped raise more than \$200 million for the V Foundation over the past 30 years. “The ESPYS” are co-produced by ESPN and Full Day Productions.

Any media interested in applying for credentials for “The 2025 ESPYS” can [apply here](#).

About “The ESPYS”

“The 2025 ESPYS Presented by Capital One” will be broadcast live on ABC on Wednesday, July 16, at 8 p.m. ET / PT from the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. Top celebrities from sports and entertainment will come together to commemorate the past year in sports by recognizing major athletic achievements, reliving unforgettable moments, and saluting the leading performers and performances. “The ESPYS” help to raise awareness and funds for the V Foundation for Cancer Research, the charity founded by ESPN and the late basketball coach Jim Valvano at the first ESPYS back in 1993. ESPN has helped raise more than \$250 million for the V Foundation over the past 30+ years. The ESPYS are co-produced by ESPN and Full Day Productions. Follow “The 2025 ESPYS” on X/Twitter @ESPYS.

About The Arthur Ashe Award for Courage

The Arthur Ashe Courage Award is presented each year to individuals whose contributions transcend sports. Past honorees include: Jim Valvano (1993); Steve Palermo (1994); Howard Cosell (1995); Loretta Claiborne (1996); Muhammad Ali (1997); Dean Smith (1998); Billie Jean King (1999); Dave Sanders (2000); Olympian Cathy Freeman (2001); Todd Beamer, Mark Bingham, Tom Burnett and Jeremy Glick, four passengers who lost their lives September 11 on United Flight 93 (2002); Pat and Kevin Tillman (2003); Liberian-born soccer legend George Weah (2004); disabled athletes Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah and Jim MacLaren (2005); Afghan female athletes (2006); and Trevor Ringland and Dave Cullen for their work with PeacePlayers (2007); U.S. Olympians Tommie Smith and John Carlos (2008); former president Nelson Mandela (2009); the Thomas family of Parkersburg, IA (2010); boxer Dewey Bozella (2011); women’s basketball coach Pat Summitt (2012);

Robin Roberts (2013), Michael Sam (2014), Caitlyn Jenner (2015), Zaevion Dobson (2016), Eunice Kennedy Shriver (2017), “Sister Survivors” (2018), Bill Russell (2019), Kevin Love (2020), Maya Moore (2021), and Vitali Klitschko (2022).

About the V Foundation for Cancer Research

The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1993 by ESPN and the late Jim Valvano, legendary North Carolina State University basketball coach and ESPN commentator. The V Foundation has funded over \$310 million in game-changing cancer research grants nationwide through a competitive process strictly supervised by a world-class Scientific Advisory Committee. Because the V Foundation has an endowment to cover administrative expenses, 100% of direct donations are awarded to cancer research and programs. The V team is committed to accelerating Victory Over Cancer®. To learn more, visit v.org.

About The Pat Tillman Foundation

The Pat Tillman Foundation identifies remarkable veterans and military spouses as the next generation of leaders and helps them scale their impact as they enter their next chapter of service beyond self through academic scholarships, lifelong leadership development, and a global community of peers and supporters. For more information on the Pat Tillman Foundation and the impact of the Tillman Scholars, visit pattillmanfoundation.org.

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