

Warriors 2011 Football Season Awards Ceremony

Dear Warriors Families and Friends;

Tonight we continue a tradition to mark the end of each season. Our Awards Ceremony is the final gathering of the Warriors for the 2011 season. Over my 30 years of youth football this is the most anticipated part of ending each season. It is a time to recognize the players and coaches of all our teams, and share some of the experiences from this season. It is also a time to say good bye to our 6th grade players, as they have concluded their time with the program and move on to the next level.

I'll start my comments with recognizing those who have done so much to help make this program a success. First, my wife Linda. We've been married 30+ years and she has put up with me and supported me in working with kids and youth football for all those years. I cannot express enough, my love for her and appreciation for her help and support to do what I've enjoyed for so long. Love you Linda!

I'm thankful to Erv Szpek who is a good friend and my right hand man. He has been willing to take on many tasks to help the coaches and myself. Erv is the driving force of the Warriors program, and his giving spirit has kept the program alive. Thanks Erv! In Thanking Erv, I can't forget about his wife Donna. She has not only supported Erv, but the Warriors program each year in more ways than can be noted. Thank you Donna!

A special "Thank You" to each coach for all their time given to help develop the kids as a team and individuals. I know from coaching for many years, coaches do not just give the time we see on the field. They spend many hours off the field preparing for each practice and game. Coaches, all too often, are regarded as a success in terms of wins and losses. However, I believe success should be measured by how much they influence the lives of their players. Football is a game, but it has many aspects that help players prepare for real life experiences. Thank you all Warriors Coaches.

I also want to thank each parent and family who contributed to the Warriors this year. Not only did we seek your help working in the concession stand, donating products, running the game clock, or handling the chains during games. We asked for your help in the Field of Many Dreams letter campaign and raffle for the installation of Field Turf at the three high schools. Each of you has contributed much to the success of the Warriors, now and into the future. No program can succeed without these contributions of time, effort, products, or financial donations. Thank you all for your help!

Thank you players for your hard work and effort this season. I sincerely hope each of you has gained valuable experience in football and a few life lessons for the future. The "Playing in Pink" activity was an exceptional way to share in one of those life lessons. In a very short time over \$2500.00 was raised and contributed to support Breast Cancer Awareness. This Warriors tradition has inspired others to share in this lesson. Many members in our parent league (AAYFL) have followed our example this past season. That's the Warrior's Way!

This year we "graduate" and say good bye to our sixth grade players. We wish each of you much success in all your endeavors in the future. Three of the sixth grade players have completed their fourth season with the Warriors. The accomplishments of the team this season are the results of the experience gained over those four seasons. As each of you move on to the next level, share the "Warriors Way" with those you encounter. "Hard Work, Teamwork, Pride"

One final thought I will share before closing. I've always had a goal to give every player an opportunity to play youth football at a reasonable cost, and even free. As many of you are aware, the Warriors have a graduation and referral refund program to help families reduce the cost of participating. This year over \$1000.00 was returned to families! I know of no other program which has developed such a policy. If you enjoyed your time with the Warriors this season, pass the word to others. The best way to promote anything is by those who have experienced it.

Thank you all again as we close out the 15th Anniversary Warriors Season! As the time of Thanksgiving and Christmas nears we'll have the opportunity to reflect on this past year. We have much to be thankful for! Have a very blessed holiday season.

Just for kids,

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ps The 2012 Warrior season is just around the corner! 2012 season registration forms are attached to tonight's Awards Agenda or can be downloaded from the Warrior's website.