



Steelers President Art Rooney II Announces Creation of the Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research

November 17, 2016

PITTSBURGH – Pittsburgh Steelers team President, Art Rooney II, announced today the establishment of a new foundation, **The Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research**, to support continued research and education regarding brain injuries and treatment of sports-related concussions. The Steelers organization will help launch the foundation with an initial contribution of \$1 million.

Chuck Noll, for whom the Foundation is named, enjoyed a 23-year coaching career with the Steelers that culminated with his induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1993. Under his leadership, the Steelers became the first team in NFL history to win four Super Bowls. Noll's commitment to the well-being of his players ultimately led to the development of the ImPACT test (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) used by NFL team doctors since 2007, and now internationally used to help monitor concussions for athletes at all levels. ImPACT and ImPACT Pediatric were recently recognized as safe and effective by the FDA, and are the only FDA approved tests to assess cognitive function for suspected brain injury in patients ages 5 to 60. To date, over 12 million athletes and patients have been baselined with these tests.

The Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research will fund research which it believes is the most promising in the area of sports-related concussions and related conditions. To help best evaluate which research programs to fund, the Foundation will be served by a national medical advisory panel comprised of some of the most renowned neurosurgeons in the Country. The medical advisory panel will include:

- Neurosurgeon **Dr. Julian Bailes** (bio attached)
 - Dr. Bailes, specializing in brain and spine care, is a former team neurosurgeon for the Steelers and is internationally recognized for his pioneering work in Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) and is also the head of the medical advisory board to Pop Warner Football.
- Neurosurgeon **Dr. Regis Haid** (bio attached)
 - Dr. Haid is a founding partner of the Atlanta Brain and Spine Care Center, a spinal research foundation regional center of excellence. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, the Neurosurgical Research and Education Foundation, and the Lumbar Spine Research Society.
- UPMC Neurosurgeon **Dr. Joseph Maroon** (bio attached)
 - Dr. Maroon was the first team-appointed neurosurgeon in the National Football League by the Steelers in 1982. Dr. Maroon is a professor and Vice Chairman of the Heindl Scholar in Neuroscience.

– more –

“The current practice for the evaluation for concussions and brain injuries in sports is due in large part to the support and encouragement of Chuck Noll,” said Maroon.

Funding decisions will be approved by the Foundation’s Board of Directors, which will include former Steelers and NFL Player and current ESPN commentator, **Merril Hoge** (bio attached). Hoge retired from his eight-year NFL career following two concussions that he suffered while playing for the Chicago Bears in 1994.

“I was part of the campaign in 1989 that addressed the importance of having kids wear helmets when active in all wheel sports,” said Hoge. “In 1990, Chuck Noll encouraged Dr. Maroon to come up with another tool to help evaluate player’s severity and state of a concussion. A year later, cognitive testing evolved from Dr. Maroon and Dr. (Mark) Lovell. It's only fitting that the Steelers continue to be the pioneer towards helping the game of football become safer for all those who love it. I am truly honored to be part of the Chuck Noll Foundation Board.”

In addition, Steelers co-owners **Art Rooney II**, **Rob Citrone** and **Larry Paul** will become members of the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

The Pittsburgh region has become a leading center for the research and treatment of sports-related concussion injuries. This is highlighted by the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program, considered one of the most respected in the world for the treatment of sports concussions. In 2015, the UPMC Sport Medicine Concussion Program hosted a conference in Pittsburgh which included over 30 renowned Neurologists, clinicians and researchers from around the country. The experts gathered to share the latest research in concussion treatment, and propose standards and guidelines on the best practices, protocols and active therapies for successfully treating concussions. A key result of the conference was a joint statement affirming that concussions are treatable.

“The Pittsburgh Steelers are extremely committed to the science of brain research and the evaluation of treatments for sports-related concussions,” said Rooney II. “We are pleased to be part of the launch of this important research foundation, and are committed to helping support the funding of research efforts. I cannot think of anyone more fitting for the Foundation to be named after than Chuck Noll. His contribution to advancing the way sports-related injuries are diagnosed and treated is immeasurable.”