

National Football Foundation *Down & Distance* - 3/13/24



Several chapters hosted their annual scholar-athlete banquets the past couple weeks. Pictured above (clockwise from the upper left): The Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Chapter scholar-athletes pose for a group photo before the outpost's 51st annual event on March 8; The Collier County (FL) Chapter awarded \$44,500 in scholarships on March 4; UC Davis LB **Jayce Smalley** (center) joins UC Davis football head coach **Dan Hawkins** (right) and defensive coordinator **Matt Coombs** at the Sacramento Valley (CA) event on March 5. College Football Hall of Fame Inductee **Anthony Davis** (right), who played at San Fernando High School before starting at USC and then in the pros, joined **Patrick Mekari**, who played at Westlake High School before starting at Cal and then with the Ravens in the NFL, served as keynote speakers at the NFF in Fernando Valley Chapter on March 6. They are pictured with **Nico Vacca**, a scholar-athlete from Simi Valley High School.

Collectively, the chapters will award more than \$1 million in scholarships locally this year while recognizing 3,500 high school and college student-athletes. The NFF Chapter Network, spread across 120 outposts in 47 states, serves as the pulse of a nationwide effort to promote amateur football and encourage leadership, sportsmanship and academic excellence among America's young football players.

The first meeting to discuss the formation of chapters was held by the Cincinnati Club in 1954, and today more than 12,000 passionate members carry on the legacy of the early pioneers, which is simply to *Build Leaders Through Football*. Collectively, they host more than 300 events each year, reaching more than 500,000 football players at 5,000 high schools.