

## Te'o Snags Lombardi Award

Written by Sean Stires

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Manti Te'o has received his third major award of the week. The Notre Dame linebacker won the Rotary Lombardi Award at a ceremony Wednesday night in Houston, TX. Te'o was selected for the honor over South Carolina defensive end Jadeveon Clowney, Alabama center Barrett Jones and Georgia linebacker Jarvis Jones.

The Lombardi Award goes to the top collegiate lineman who displays courage, character and team spirit both on and off the football field. The award, established in 1970, has raised millions of dollars over the last 43 seasons to help support cancer research, public education and direct services to cancer patients.

The award is named for hall of fame coach Vince Lombardi, who was known as one of the "Seven Blocks of Granite" as a college lineman at Fordham. The trophy Te'o received is a 40-pound block of granite that sits atop a silver pedestal built over a foundation of discipline.

A panel of nearly 400 college football coaches, football writers, sports broadcasters and previous Rotary Lombardi Award winners and finalists participated in a three-tiered balloting process to determine the 2012 winner.

Past winners include current NFL players like Ndamukong Suh, A.J. Hawk and Julius Peppers. Te'o is the fifth Notre Dame player to receive the honor. He joins Aaron Taylor (1993), Chris Zorich (1990), Ross Browner (1977), and Walt Patulski (1971) with that distinction.

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The Rotary Lombardi Award brings Te'o's awards haul to three this week. On Monday he received both the Bronko Nagurski Award (football writers' top defensive player) and Butkus Award (top linebacker) while he was in Charlotte, NC. He will be in Orlando, FL on Thursday for the Home Depot College Football Awards Show where he is up for the Maxwell Football Club Player of the Year Award as well as the Chuck Bednarik Award (best defensive player).

Te'o will be in New York on Saturday along with Texas A&M quarterback Johnny Manziel and Kansas State quarterback Collin Klein for the Heisman Trophy presentation. His week concludes on Sunday at the Lott IMPACT Trophy ceremony in Newport Beach, CA.