



## THE LEVI'S® BRAND AND THE 50 FUND ANNOUNCE ROOKIE PLAYMAKER RECIPIENTS

*The Levi's® Brand Partners with the 50 Fund and the San Francisco 49ers to Recognize Five Young Leaders Making a Difference in the Bay Area Community*

SAN FRANCISCO (November 3, 2015)—Today the Levi's® brand and the 50 Fund revealed the five individuals selected as Rookie Playmakers, youth who are making a difference in the Bay Area by protecting the environment and advocating for community members in need. These young leaders are being recognized as part of the [Playmaker grant program](#) from the 50 Fund, the legacy fund of the San Francisco Bay Area Super Bowl 50 Host Committee.

The Rookie Playmaker program [called upon Bay Area community organizations](#) to nominate youth ages 13-24 who volunteer or support their organization. The Rookie Playmakers drafted by the Levi's® brand were selected from among nearly 50 nominations and recognized based on their leadership and impact of the work they're doing to support the community.

"These Rookie Playmakers truly exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit and generosity that makes the Bay Area a continued leader in social innovation and we hope they continue to raise their voices, advocating and supporting the community for years to come," said James Curleigh, President of the Levi's® brand. "We're proud to continue the legacy of giving back that began with our founder Levi Strauss by recognizing the inspiring work these next generation leaders are doing to drive change and support their local communities."

The nonprofit organizations that nominated Rookie Playmakers will be awarded a \$10,000 grant as part of the 50 Fund's Playmaker program, which is providing \$10,000 grants to 50 nonprofits in the lead-up to Super Bowl 50. In addition, each Rookie Playmaker will receive tickets and the San Francisco 49ers will provide a VIP gameday experience for a San Francisco 49ers game at [Levi's® Stadium](#). The young leaders will also be invited to attend an appreciation event during Super Bowl week, celebrating all 50 Playmakers who have been recognized as leaders in their community.

"In the lead up to the Super Bowl 50 game there will be a lot of attention placed on the community where the game is held — this provides the perfect opportunity to shine a spotlight on the amazing work leaders and organizations are doing to make the Bay

Area an even better place,” said Kamba Tshionyi, Chair of the 50 Fund. “In recognizing Rookie Playmakers, the Levi’s® brand has shown that everyone, regardless of age, has the power to create positive change in the community.”

The Rookie Playmakers drafted by the Levi’s® brand include:

- **[Dante Kaleo, Ecology Center \(Berkeley\)](#)** — A well-loved and well-respected community leader with a passion for sparking change on individual and societal levels, Dante not only helps run Ecology Center’s local Farmers’ Markets and Farm Fresh Choice stands in low income neighborhoods, but also serves as a role model and leader for the incoming participants in the Ecology Center’s Youth Environmental Academy.
- **Ricardo Ramirez, California Youth Connection (Oakland)** — Raised in foster care in Fresno County, Ricardo first engaged with CYC as a concrete way to improve the foster care system in which his three younger siblings still reside. During his time with CYC, Ricardo has actively sought opportunities to learn and grow, develop skills and knowledge, and take on increasing responsibilities within CYC’s unique model of youth empowerment and policy advocacy.
- **Sabrina Yerena, Loco Bloco (San Francisco)** — A high school senior whose parents immigrated to San Francisco from Mexico, Sabrina is using art as a tool to create change in her community. Taking what she learned from a variety of Loco Bloco programs in leadership and arts education, she is applying those skills to have an impact on her community and providing mentorship to elementary school students.
- **Patricia Manubay, Jefferson Awards Foundation (Oakland)** — This recent graduate of El Camino High School in South San Francisco believes that her purpose in life is to help others and has been volunteering since she was in second grade at local churches, parks, beaches and food banks. Patricia is a dedicated volunteer who helped transform her school by founding a Students In Action team, which last year earned the Bay Area Regional Role Model High School Award.
- **Jazmin Chavez, Third Street Community (San Jose)** — In 2013, when Jazmin entered eighth grade she started to volunteer for Third Street Community’s After School Academic Program, which is where her leadership skills started to bloom. Since then, she has volunteered more than 135 hours during the school year.

The Rookie Playmakers and the organization that nominated them will appear in a video produced by BAYCAT, a Bay Area social enterprise. The videos, which are part of the 50 Fund’s Playmaker program, showcase the important resource that both the organization and the individual are in the community, and how they are making a difference. The first Rookie Playmaker (Dante Kaleo) [video is now live](#) on the [Super](#)

[Bowl Host Committee's website](#), and additional videos will be released on the website in subsequent weeks.

# # #

**About The Levi's® Brand:**

The Levi's® brand epitomizes classic American style and effortless cool. Since their invention by Levi Strauss & Co. in 1873, Levi's® jeans have become the most recognizable and imitated clothing in the world – capturing the imagination and loyalty of people for generations. Today, the Levi's® brand portfolio continues to evolve through a relentless pioneering and innovative spirit that is unparalleled in the apparel industry. Our range of leading jeanswear and accessories are available in more than 110 countries, allowing individuals around the world to express their personal style. For more information about the Levi's® brand, its products and stores, please visit [levi.com](http://levi.com).

**About 50 Fund:**

50 Fund is the signature philanthropic initiative of the San Francisco Bay Area Super Bowl 50 Host Committee. Its goal is to help close the opportunity gap that exists for Bay Area children, youth and young adults living in low-income communities. Through its grantmaking programs, 50 Fund will support organizations and initiatives making a difference, tackling big issues and scaling their impact. For more information, visit [www.50fund.org](http://www.50fund.org)

**About the San Francisco Bay Area Super Bowl 50 Host Committee:**

Working in partnership with Bay Area public officials and the NFL, the San Francisco Bay Area Super Bowl 50 Host Committee is responsible for Super Bowl 50 and its celebration elements, including the Super Bowl Village, public exhibits and planning of game day logistics. The Host Committee seeks to make Super Bowl 50 the most giving ever, and is investing in Bay Area community initiatives and high-performing nonprofits through the [50 Fund](#), its signature philanthropic fund. To be hosted in the state-of-the-art Levi's® Stadium in Santa Clara in 2016, Super Bowl 50 will be celebrated through a series of events that showcase all the Bay Area has to offer. For more information, visit [www.sfbaysuperbowl.com](http://www.sfbaysuperbowl.com).

**About the San Francisco 49ers Foundation**

The San Francisco 49ers Foundation is the non-profit community funding extension of the San Francisco 49ers. Now in its 24th year, the 49ers Foundation supports development programs for underserved youth that keep them "Safe, On Track, and In School." Since 1992, the Foundation has donated \$30.6 million to support non-profits, contributing \$4.6 million in 2014, including a \$1 million grant to launch the 49ers STEM Leadership Institute at Cabrillo Middle School.

**Media Contacts:**

**Host Committee**

Nathan Ballard, (415) 235-6283, [nathan@nathanballard.com](mailto:nathan@nathanballard.com)

PJ Johnston, (415) 260-8417, [pj@pjcommunications.com](mailto:pj@pjcommunications.com)

**Levi Strauss & Co.**

Michelle Wright, (415) 501-7777, [newsmediarequests@levi.com](mailto:newsmediarequests@levi.com)

**###**