



Braylon Edwards Honored at Rainbow PUSH for \$1 Million in Scholarships to 100 Students

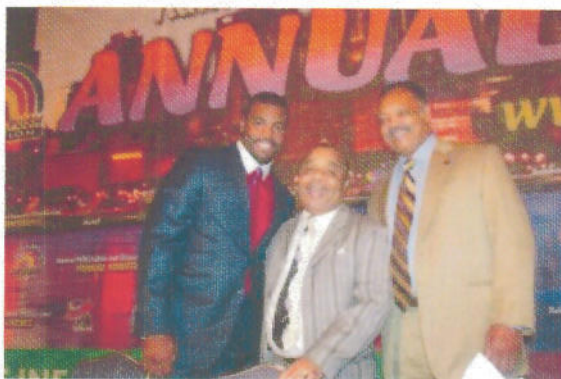
Wednesday, June 22, 2011 [Terry Shropshire](#)

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Braylon Edwards, left, with Rev. Jesse Jackson, right.

CHICAGO – Braylon Edwards of the New York Jets made good on the promise he made to spend \$1 million to send 100 junior high school students from Cleveland to college. For that altruistic gesture, he was duly honored by Rev. Jesse Jackson at the Rainbow PUSH Coalition's 40th annual conference.

Edwards, who was much maligned as a wide receiver when he was with the Cleveland Browns, bathed under a resounding standing ovation from his peers at the "Beyond the Playing Field" sports banquet hosted at the Hilton Hotel. The banquet featured a keynote speech by Hall of Fame basketball player and Detroit mayor Dave Bing and also featured an illustrious panel that included former Dallas Cowboy Michael Irvin, Los Angeles Lakers' Norm Nixon and future NASCAR driver Darrell Wallace.

Five years ago, the highly-emotional and volatile football player told 100 eighth-graders that if they maintained a 2.5 grade point average and performed 15 hours of community service per year that he would send them to school for free.

Edwards will be donating \$1 million dollars in scholarships to the 100 students that completed the ADVANCE100 program, which was established by Edwards' foundation.

"The fundamentals of success can only be achieved through a quality education," Edwards said of his generosity. "I am fortunate to be in a position where I can give back to create access and opportunities for young people."

Edwards, who was arguably the most despised athlete of the modern era in Cleveland, until a certain basketball player took his "talents to South Beach" last year, even tweeted the good that he did:

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100 students in Cleveland years ago. The last of my Advance 100 students will graduate from my program and head off to college on scholarships that I will provide them with. Guys, enjoy and embrace your new beginnings and remember your promise to me, to reach back & help someone else along the way.”

Despite the NFL lockout, Edwards has been busy recently from a philanthropic and business standpoint. Cicely Tyson accepted an award from his foundation at the annual Braylon Edwards Foundation brunch at The Whittier in Detroit. As if that isn't enough, he's opening a Detroit-style coney island in Los Angeles this month — called Lafayette Coney Island, no less — partnering with a posse of Detroit-bred celebs including actor-director Mike Binder, comedian Tim Allen, *Spider Man* director Sam Raimi and Detroit Red Wing Kris Draper.

“I am in a grown-up place in my life now,” Braylon said. “Being recognized as a serious philanthropist, life feels real good from where I am sitting.” *-terry shropshire*

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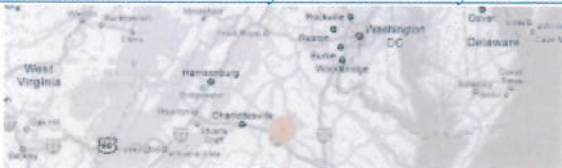
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