



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 13, 2011

Josh Willingham Nominated for Roberto Clemente Award **Award Recognizes On-Field Contributions, Sportsmanship and Community Involvement**

OAKLAND, Calif. — Oakland A's outfielder Josh Willingham has been named as one of 30 nominees for the national 2011 Roberto Clemente Award, which will be announced during the 2011 World Series. Willingham will be recognized as the A's nominee for this prestigious award during an on-field ceremony prior to the A's 12:35 p.m. game against the Angels on Wednesday, Sept. 14.

The Roberto Clemente Award recognizes the player who best exemplifies the game of baseball, sportsmanship, community involvement and positive contribution to their team. The award is named after the 12-time All-Star and Hall of Famer, Roberto Clemente, who was killed on New Year's Eve 1972 while delivering supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua. This award helps perpetuate Clemente's memory and character by recognizing current-day players who truly understand the value of helping others.

Willingham, and his wife Ginger, raised more than \$100,000 to aid relief efforts in Alabama after the devastating tornadoes ripped through the northern part of the state in April. The Willinghams, who make their home in Florence, Ala., raised funds through a silent auction of gift baskets filled with different A's players' autographed and favorite items, donations by the A's Community Fund, Major League Baseball Players Association and players from around the league, and contributions made online through the Josh Willingham Foundation's website.

The Josh Willingham Foundation was started in 2009 to provide once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and experiences to underprivileged children from the Florence community. The couple has hosted numerous charity golf tournaments and dinners to raise funds for deserving non-profit organizations such as the Cerebral Palsy Center, Head Start, Safe Place, Christian Children's Home and Children's Miracle Network. It wasn't until the treacherous tornadoes touched down that they decided to dedicate their foundation solely to the relief efforts.

In May and June, Ginger led over 200 volunteers in a cleanup effort in various Alabama towns, distributing clothing, toys and other items to needy families. During the All-Star Break, both Josh and Ginger returned to Alabama to visit with those directly affected by the tornadoes and assist in the cleanup. During the visit, the Willingham family presented a personal check to two high schools from the hardest hit areas to repair the baseball fields that were destroyed. Josh also signed autographs and took photos with students from both high schools. The couple is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Alabama to plan on building at least nine tornado protection shelters throughout the northwest region of the state. This off-season, the Willinghams plan to assist Habitat for Humanity in the rebuilding process.

Fans are encouraged to participate in the selection of the national winner of the Roberto Clemente Award, presented by Chevrolet. From Sept. 14 through Oct. 9, fans can log on to www.chevybaseball.com/clemente and vote for one of the 30 club nominees. The fan vote winner will be tallied as one vote among those cast by the selection panel, which includes Vera Clemente, wife of the late Hall of Famer, and Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig, among others.

One Roberto Clemente Award recipient was selected from each Major League club and Chevy will donate \$7,500 in the name of each local recipient to the charity of the player's choice. Willingham chose his own foundation, the Josh Willingham Foundation, to receive the donation.

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