



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **A's Catcher Kurt Suzuki Nominated for Roberto Clemente Award**

Award Recognizes On-Field Contributions, Sportsmanship and Community Involvement

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — Oakland A's catcher Kurt Suzuki has been named as one of 30 nominees for the national 2009 Roberto Clemente Award, which will be announced during the 2009 World Series.

Suzuki will be recognized as the A's nominee for this prestigious award during an on-field ceremony prior to the A's 12:35 pm game against Kansas City on Wednesday, September 2.

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.

Kurt and his wife Renee helped begin the "Jon Wilhite Recovery Fund" immediately after learning about the tragic car crash on April 9, 2009 that took the lives of Angels' pitcher Nick Adenhardt and two others. The fund was set up to assist their good friend and former teammate from Cal State Fullerton, Jon Wilhite, who was the lone survivor of that crash. Wilhite suffered injuries that required an operation to reattach his skull and spinal column after a rare separation and is currently undergoing speech, physical and occupational therapy. In just over two months, the Suzukis raised over \$61,000 to help alleviate some of Wilhite's medical costs with the help of A's and Angel's fans, the A's Community Fund and Athletics Nation.

Funds were raised through the sale of over 450 autographed baseballs, an on-line auction of game-used and autographed memorabilia on the A's website during the month of June, a three-day silent auction at CSU Fullerton in May, through the A's silent auction, an A's Community Fund donation and other donations by fans through athleticsnation.com. In addition, the Suzukis hosted the Wilhite family to the A's vs. Angels' game in Oakland on July 18, and Jon received a rousing ovation from the crowd when he threw out the ceremonial first pitch.

Suzuki is also a strong supporter of the A's community relations and charity endeavors. He attends annual charity events such as FanFest and Dinner on the Diamond in addition visiting local schools and rewarding children for their academic achievements on behalf of the A's "Mathletics" and Home Run Readers Programs.

Fans are encouraged to participate in the selection of the national winner of the Roberto Clemente Award presented by Chevy. From September 2 through October 4, fans can log on to [www.chevy.com/clemente](http://www.chevy.com/clemente) and vote for one of the 30 club nominees. The winner of the fan vote will receive 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.

One Roberto Clemente Award recipient was selected from each Major League club and each player received a donation towards the charity of his choice. Suzuki chose the Wilhite Recovery Fund to receive the donation.

The national winner of the Roberto Clemente Award will receive a \$30,000 to the charity of his choice at an on-field ceremony during the World Series. A \$30,000 contribution will also be made to Roberto Clemente Sports City in Puerto Rico in the name of the national winner.

Tickets for all A's home games can be purchased at all usual ticket outlets, including the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum Box Office, online at [oaklandathletics.com](http://oaklandathletics.com), or over the phone by calling (877) 493-BALL (2255). Season, group and luxury suite tickets can be purchased by calling (510) 638-GoA's (4627).

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