



# OAKLAND ATHLETICS

## Media Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

September 6, 2011

### **Josh Willingham to Receive Dave Stewart Community Service Award** Stewart to Present Willingham with Award Prior to Wednesday's Day Game

**OAKLAND, Calif.** – Oakland A's outfielder Josh Willingham has been named the recipient of the 2011 Dave Stewart Community Service Award, which is given annually to an A's player in recognition of charitable contributions throughout Northern California and across the nation.

Stewart will present Willingham with the award prior to Wednesday's 12:35 pm game against the Kansas City Royals in a special on-field ceremony at 12:20 p.m.

Willingham, and his wife Ginger, raised more than \$100,000 to aid relief efforts in Alabama after the devastating tornadoes ripped through 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.

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 tornado 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.

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.

The Dave Stewart Community Service Award originated in 1996 in honor of Stewart's many years of community service in the Bay Area. Throughout the years, Stewart has been involved in many non-profit organizations including the Oakland Boys & Girls Club and Team-Up for Youth, a program that supports healthy development for young people living in low income communities through after-school sports and physical activity programs.

*Previous Dave Stewart Community Service Award Winners:*

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|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1996 ..... Ernie Young   | 2002 ..... Tim Hudson      | 2008 ..... Dana Eveland           |
| 1997 ..... Scott Spiezio | 2003 ..... Scott Hatteberg | 2009 ..... Dallas Braden          |
| 1998 ..... Tom Candiotti | 2004 ..... Eric Chavez     | Kurt Suzuki                       |
| 1999 ..... Art Howe      | 2005 ..... Barry Zito      | 2010 ..... Craig Breslow          |
| 2000 ..... Jason Giambi  | 2006 ..... Mark Kotsay     | <b>2011 ..... Josh Willingham</b> |
| 2001 ..... Terrence Long | 2007 ..... Mark Ellis      |                                   |

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