

HALL OF FAMER JERRY RICE WILL BE FEATURED SPEAKER

MID-VALLEY SPORTS AWARDS

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NFL Hall of Fame wide receiver Jerry Rice, who set a standard of excellence during his career, will be the featured speaker at the Statesman Journal's first Mid-Valley Sports Awards banquet on June 7 at the Salem Convention Center.

Rice is the most accomplished wide receiver in the NFL history, and to many, he is the greatest football player of all time.

He is rated the No. 1 player of all time by NFL Network as the league's career leader in receptions, receiving yards and receiving touchdowns.

During his 20-year career, Rice scored 208 touchdowns, more than any other player in NFL history. Emmitt Smith is second on the list with 175.

Rice was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in 1985 with the 16th overall pick. The legendary former 49ers coach Bill Walsh was seeking a dynamic offensive threat to add to Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Montana's arsenal.

For 16 seasons in San Francisco, Rice lived up to Walsh's vision as he established himself as the best receiver of all time.

Rice's biggest season came in 1987 when he was named league MVP after scoring 22 touchdowns in a strike-shortened 12-game season.

The next two seasons, in 1988 and 1989, Rice helped the 49ers win back-to-back Super Bowl championships, beating the Cincinnati Bengals and Denver Broncos, respectively.

Rice was the MVP of Super Bowl XXIII, which featured the 49ers' memorable late game-winning drive, which was capped by Montana finding John Taylor in the end zone. In that game, Rice caught 11 passes for 215 yards and one touchdown.

After Montana went down with an injury in the NFC Championship Game on Jan. 20, 1991, Rice teamed up with another Hall of Fame quarterback, Steve Young.

With Young and Rice leading the way, the 49ers won their fifth Super Bowl championship after the 1994 season. It was Rice's third ring.

In 2001, Rice and the 49ers parted

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ABOUT THE EVENT

The first-ever Mid-Valley Sports Awards, to be held June 7 at the Salem Convention Center, will be like no other Salem event.

Tickets are available for what promises to be an unforgettable evening for area high school athletes and their friends, family and fans.

The stars of the gala will be the truly outstanding athletes of the Mid-Valley, the best of the best, young women and men brought together under one roof for the first time.

Students selected as finalists for any of the awards, and all Statesman Journal Athletes of the Week from the 2015-16 school year, will each receive a complimentary ticket. Tickets for the event are \$65, and can be purchased at tickets.statesmanjournal.com.



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Local athletes to be honored at event

More than 100 athletes will be honored at the Mid-Valley Sports Awards program, including a selected top athlete from each of the 19 OSAA sports, a female and male Athlete of the Year, Coach of the Year and the biggest award, the Capitol Cup, which will honor one school's excellence across the entire school year.

Four awards, which will be voted on by the community, will recognize athletes who exhibited exceptional character and leadership.

» The Courage Award will recognize the intersection of athletes and life. This award will recognize an athlete who exhibited leadership during difficult or

sensitive times.

» The Heart and Desire Award will go to the athlete who leads on and off the field. These types of leaders often are not starters or even stars of the team.

» The Comeback Player Award will honor an athlete who returned to competition from an injury or other situation that forced him or her to miss significant playing time.

» The Fan Experience Award will recognize the area's most outstanding school sports environment, shining a spotlight on the bands, cheerleaders, dance squads and fans.

All of the school year's Athletes of the Week winners, announced each Friday in the Statesman Journal, will be recog-

nized at the Mid-Valley Sports Awards.

This Capitol Cup will honor sustained success throughout the school year. Schools will earn points toward the Capitol Cup based on how each team finishes the season. Points are awarded for conference titles, playoff appearances, playoff wins and state titles.

Local Athletes to be Honored

Several students from Silverton High School, Stayton High School and Cascade Senior High School are currently set to be honored at the event.

Player of the Year Finalists:
Girls Soccer: Baylie Cameron, Silverton; Brooklynn Petterson, Cascade
Girls Basketball: Alia Parsons, Silver-

ton; Halle Wright, Cascade

Girls Cross Country: Maddie Fuhrman

Boys Soccer: Freddy Navarro and Ivan Navarro, Stayton

Football: Garrett Coffey, Cascade
Heart and Desire Award: Tess Hendricks, Stayton

Courage Award: Kyle Schwarm, Stayton

Athletes of the week:
Silverton: Stayton Downey, Alex Molloy, Parsons. **Stayton:** Madison Anderson, Alyssa Lindeman, Ivan Navarro, Schwarm. **Cascade:** Lucas Bjorklund, Cameron Molan, John Schimer, Alyssa St. Peter, Coffey