



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 20 DEC 2024

## 22<sup>nd</sup> TED HENDRICKS AWARD

D.E. IS THIS YEAR'S TOP DE



### DONOVAN EZEIRUAKU – BOSTON COLLEGE

PHOTOS COURTESY BOSTON COLLEGE ATHLETICS

CHICAGO, IL – The Ted Hendricks Foundation welcomes our latest addition to the illustrious roster of Hendricks Award, which honors the most exceptional defensive end in college football. This year's recipient is the first true D.E. in our 22-year history: Donovan Ezeiruaku from Boston College, who edged out fellow finalists (and deserving individuals) Abdul Carter of Penn State and Mike Green of Marshall. Our Selection Committee's final vote tally had Ezeiruaku receiving 56% of the vote, with Carter and Green splitting the remainder.

Ezeiruaku impressed the Hendricks Award's Selection Committee with his performance – on and off the field this season. His 16½ sacks are second-most in the FBS, as are his 20½ tackles for loss. Ezeiruaku's sack total equals the BC single-season record set by former Hendricks Award finalist Harold Landry in 2016. He is the 2024 ACC Defensive Player of the Year and was recently named a Consensus All-American (First-Team AFCA, AP and Sporting News).

Donovan Kenechukwu Ezeiruaku grew up in Williamstown, NJ, the son of Sonyx (from Nigeria) and Cindy (Philadelphia, PA). Church life was extremely important in the Ezeiruaku household. Donovan was raised as a singer in a Nigerian church. His grandfather was a Baptist pastor. In fact, Ezeiruaku credits his grandfather with setting him on the path to future success. As Donovan tells it, his grandfather challenged him to "Go be that great football player" on Donovan's first birthday. By age seven, Ezeiruaku's love of the game began in earnest. Though he participated in other sports (track & field at Williamstown HS), Donovan decided that football was his path forward.

As a tight end/wide receiver at Williamstown HS, Ezeiruaku was a fan of NFL stars Randy Moss and Jerry Rice and thought his future in the game might be at one of those positions. But his coaches at BC saw potential on the other side of the ball. Though he resisted at first, Donovan accepted the new role as an edge player. And by his sophomore season at BC, he was leading the team in sacks, tackles-for-loss and forced fumbles.

In his final two seasons at BC, Ezeiruaku established himself as a team leader and was selected twice as team captain. But we need to mention that his off-field accomplishments are equally impressive. This season he was BC's nominee for the Wuerffel Trophy, college football's premier award for community service. Donovan maintains a cumulative 3.0 grade-point average in Management, is active in the community through his involvement with Team Impact and Catholic Charities as well as the Campus School at BC. These organizations perform some incredibly valuable services surrounding the BC community.

We believe this season is just the beginning for this exceptional young man. Many football analysts believe that Donovan Ezeiruaku is the premier edge rusher in the class of 2025. More importantly, we know he will continue to represent his family, school and community well in all his future endeavors. For these and other reasons, we are proud to add Donovan to our elite list of Hendricks Award recipients. Congratulations to the Ezeiruaku family, Boston College and all that have supported his rise to the top.

The 2024 Hendricks Award trophy presentation will take place early in the year 2025 (time and place to be announced). As always, the Ted Hendricks Foundation would like to express our gratitude to our Selection Committee members. We hope to hear from you again next season!

Ted Hendricks  
Pro Football Hall of Fame '90

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For more information about the Ted Hendricks Award, please visit [TedHendricks.com](http://TedHendricks.com)

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