

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**AUGUSTA** **AUG**  
SPORTS COUNCIL

# Our MISSION

The Augusta Sports Council enriches the quality of life and economic well-being for the Augusta metropolitan area by supporting and attracting sporting activities



## OUR CEO'S STATEMENT



### Dear Friends of the ASC,

As I look back at the year, it truly has been a year of growth. Tourism, as a whole, was bouncing back after what felt like a never ending grind between finding the positives in every lost business situation to never losing hope that things would acutally "bounce back" fully. Our team knew going into 2022 that all signs pointed to a stronger return for sports tourism across our industry and we needed to be prepared. Our team was ready to see the return of annual events at capacity such as the Nike Peach Jam, USA Cycling and IRONMAN 70.3 Augusta!

I am so proud for what our team accomplished this year with hosting 4 signature events on top of prioritizing our annual GAMES Scholarship Program and Football Awards. Within the span of just 13 days, our team and local event partners were able to work together to host the Soul City Criterium and a USA Cycling National Championship cycling. Both events welcomed over 400 cyclists plus their families and friends to our city, leaving behind a little over half a million dollars in estimated economic impact in our community!

Some good news to share! Our team and Board of Directors is proud to announce that the ASC has secured Augusta as the end celebration for the annual Bike Ride Across Georgia (BRAG) in June '23, landed a 2 year contract to host the USA Cycling Masters National Championships again, and the return of USSSA Military World Softball Championships to Diamond Lakes Regional Park in Sept. '23. These returning events are proof of the strength of our team and the relationships we've been able to maintain in our industry.

While we look forward to a very busy Q3 and Q4 for our team, we are excited to be able to host these events along with our local partners to benefit the health and economic development for our community! Thank you to all of our local partners, sponsors, community sports groups, and volunteers who help us make a sports tourims impact in our hometown!

See you at our next event!

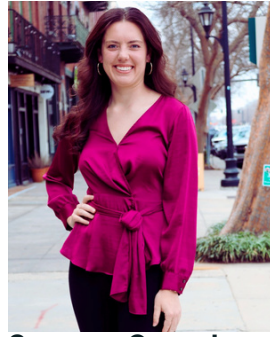
*Michelle Pippin*

Michelle N. Pippin  
Chief Executive Officer  
Augusta Sports Council

# Our Team



**Monica Canty**  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
COORDINATOR



**Savanna Gonzales**  
MARKETING  
COORDINATOR/  
RAY GUY AWARD  
COORDINATOR



**Bobby Martin**  
EVENTS MANAGER



**Michelle Naval Pippin**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER

## Board of Directors

Chairman: Charlie Walker- Modern Business Systems  
Vice Chairman: Tom Denlinger- Augusta GreenJackets Baseball  
Secretary: Fred Russell- FL Russell Consulting  
Treasurer: David Bullington- Queensborough National Bank  
Immediate Past Chair: Bob Evans- Mcomm Wireless  
Chairman Emeritus: William S. Morris, Morris Communications Co.  
Sam Anderson- SofTact Solutions  
Chris Bird- Spectrum Entertainment  
Bennish Brown- Destination Augusta  
Keith Blackwell- Augusta Coca-Cola  
Dave Brunk- Peach Belt Conference  
Amy Corbitt- Merrill Lynch

Yvonne Davis- Cadence Bank  
Davis Dunaway- Hull Barrett Attorneys  
Chris Lewis-Cherry Bekaert  
Brian Marshall- Columbia County Community Services  
Stacie McBride- Stacie Social  
Maurice McDowell- Augusta Parks & Recreation Dept.  
Tim McLane- AU Sports Medicine  
Kelly Pickard- Champions Retreat Golf Club  
John Smith- Gold Cross EMS  
Neil Smith- Fort Gordon MWR  
Cathy Wall - The Bradley Schools  
John Whitwell- Merrill Lynch

## 2022 Local Partners & Sponsors\*

Augusta Richmond County Parks & Recreation  
Augusta Sports Leagues\*  
Augusta University Event Emergency  
Augusta University Sports Medicine  
Augusta Coca Cola\*  
City of Augusta  
Deke Copenhaver Consulting\*  
Destination Augusta

Georgia Rehabilitation Institute\*  
Gold Cross EMS  
Fleet Feet Augusta\*  
FL Russell Consulting\*  
Ft. Gordon MWR  
Publix\*  
Richmond County Sheriff's Dept.  
WJBF Channel 6

# SPORTS TOURISM IMPACT

**\$23**  
MILLION

\*Estimated economic impact from events recruited, supported, and hosted by the ASC in 2022

## EVENT SAMPLING OF IMPACT

Professional Disc Golf Association Annual Meeting	<b>\$7,998</b>
Peach Invitational	<b>\$2,063,957</b>
EYBL Nike Peach Jam	<b>\$11,557,831</b>
Papa John's GeorgiaLina Tennis	<b>\$334,208</b>
Masters of the Axes Tournament	<b>\$23,504</b>
Rowing- Winter & Spring Training Season	<b>\$379,621</b>
Aiken-Augusta Swim League Winter Invitational	<b>\$545,460</b>
Not'lanta OPEN Pickleball	<b>\$60,761</b>

\*Total Estimated Economic Impact (EEI), the sum of all the direct, indirect and induced spending estimates, is calculated based on research commissioned by both the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEd) and Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) in conjunction with globally recognized research vendors, the U.S. Travel Association and Tourism Economics. Tourism Economics, a partner company of Oxford Economics, created the industry standard in event economic impact analysis using localized metrics that are updated annually.

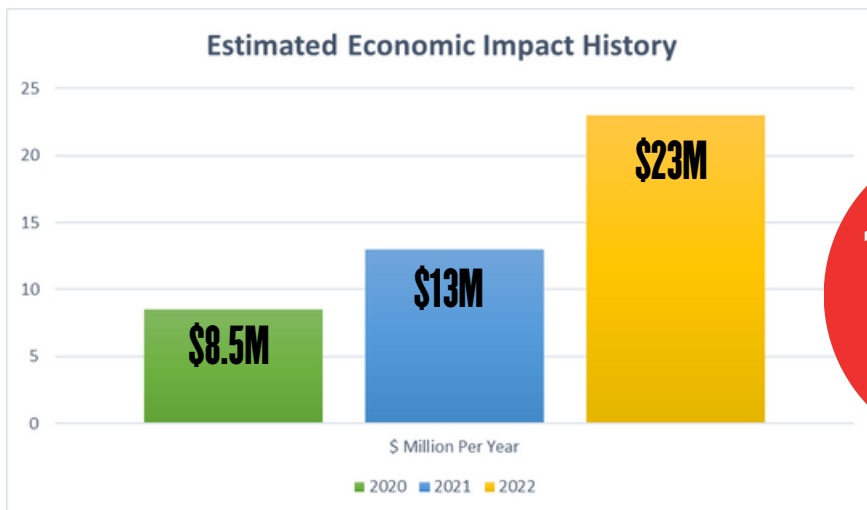




# GROWTH FOR THE YEAR

The Greater Augusta Sports Council, or ASC for short, is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that works to promote the City of Augusta and the surrounding counties and communities as a sports destination in the Southeast for sporting events and also backs local sports teams, clubs, and individual local athletes working to attract visitors and competitors to our community.

As the sports industry continues to bounce back even after two years after the pandemic, the ASC continues to work on strengthening local relationships with partners and volunteers, relying on data to make informed development decisions, and finding new opportunities to attract regional and national event owners to the Augusta area for their next event.



**10,000**  
competitors that  
competed in ASC  
supported events

**17,125**  
room nights  
filled for sporting  
events that the  
ASC serviced



# ROWING WINTER/SPRING TRAINING

**January–March 2022**

With over 11 miles of calm water that is rowable through all four seasons, the Savannah River that borders Augusta and North Augusta is a welcomed destination to rowing crews each and every winter and spring season. In 2022, the Augusta Rowing Club hosted 5 different rowing crews from the Northeast to train on the Savannah River and nearby Langley Pond. The size of these crews ranged from 10 to 50 members, all averaging a weeklong stay in the Augusta River Region. In addition to training on the water, crews also utilized the work out facilities provided at the Augusta Boathouse and carbed up on meals with local caterers during their stay in Augusta.

## 2022 Visiting Rowing Crews

- Craftsbury Green Racing Camp
- GMS Training Camp
- Lawrenceville Crew
- St. Johns Collegiate Crew
- R.I.T Training Camp

**ESTIMATED ECONOMIC  
IMPACT= \$379,621**

**LOCAL EVENT IMPACT SAMPLING**





# AUGUSTA HALF MARATHON, 10K & 5K

## FEBRUARY 25, 2022

SIGNATURE EVENTS

The 14th annual Augusta Half Marathon, 10K & 5K saw 1,001 runners run through Downtown Augusta, Old Town, Summerville, and the Lake Olmstead area for the ASC's annual scholarship fundraiser event. The charity affiliates for the 2022 race were Team 65 Roses, Project Lifting Spirits, Friends of Frances and Wear Blue Run to Remember. The Augusta Half Marathon also featured the wear blue:run to remember Blue Mile along the Augusta Canal that honors fallen veterans from the CSRA.

### Registration numbers [1,001 Total]

- 483 Half Marathon participants
- 233 10K participants
- 286 5K participants

### TOP 3 Half Marathon Male Finishers

- Jacob Olson (Augusta, GA) 1:11:45
- Mark White (Martinez, GA) 1:11:59
- Raman Baldzizhar (Rochester, NY) 1:21:03

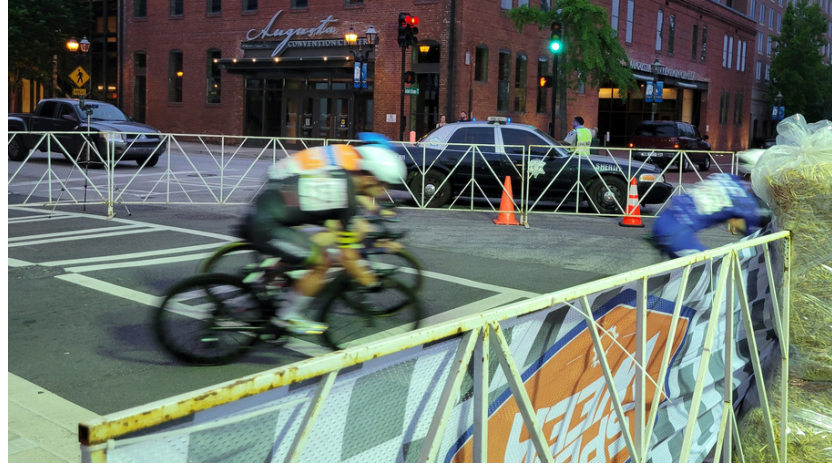
### TOP 3 Half Marathon Female Finishers

- Lara Powell (Martinez, GA) 1:25:30
- Liliana Beemer (Evans, GA) 1:31:46
- Ali Cooper (Augusta, GA) 1:35:07

# ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT= \$209,656



# Soul City AUG CRITERIUM



## SOUL CITY CRITERIUM

APRIL 26, 2022

Augusta was named the fourth stop of the week long Speed Week Series that consisted of 7 other cities in the state. It was the first time that Augusta had been a part of the series and the event saw over 200 participants compete in a high speed, one mile criterium in Downtown Augusta featuring the best men's and women's criterium racers in the world. The spectator friendly course consisted of sharp turns surrounding the Augusta Common along Broad Street, Reynolds Street, 9th and 7th streets. The Soul City Criterium event was the first of two back to back cycling events to take place in the Augusta area over the course of 2 weeks.

**ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT= \$37,681**

SIGNATURE EVENTS



**SPEED WEEK**

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 - SPARTANBURG REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM CRITERIUM

SATURDAY, APRIL 23 - SPIN THE DISTRICT CRITERIUM: HAPEVILLE

SUNDAY, APRIL 24 - LAGRANGE CYCLING CLASSIC

TUESDAY, APRIL 26 - SOUL CITY CRITERIUM

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27 - DOWNTOWN WALTERBORO CRITERIUM

SATURDAY, APRIL 30 - AOC TWILIGHT CRITERIUM

SUNDAY, MAY 1 - SPIN THE DISTRICT: COLLEGE PARK

REGISTRATION  
[HTTP://SPEEDWEEK.BIKE](http://SPEEDWEEK.BIKE)





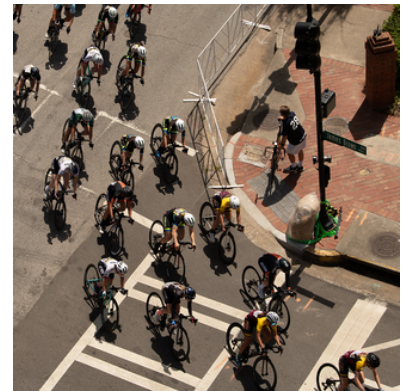
# USA CYCLING COLLEGIATE ROAD NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

**May 5-8, 2022**  
**Ft. Gordon**  
**Downtown Augusta**

Just 9 days after the Soul City Criterium, ASC staff along with our partners hosted Year two of the USA Cycling Collegiate Road National Championship. The National Championship event consisted of 235 collegiate riders representing cycling programs from 50 colleges and universities. Fun fact, Olympic Bronze medalist Megan Jastrab also competed representing Milligan College.

The first three days of race consisted of time trial and road race disciplines held on Ft. Gordon. The high speed criterium course was held on the last day in Downtown Augusta.

**ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT= \$490,129**



**SIGNATURE EVENTS**





# IRONMAN 70.3 AUGUSTA

SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

The 13th IRONMAN 70.3 Augusta returned to the Augusta River Region with a new look and spectator friendly location on the newly finished 5th Street Bridge. The event once again sold out for its 13th straight year, on August 23, 2022, generating \$6.16 million dollars in economic impact to the Augusta area. The field for 2022 was made up of high-level amateurs, first-time participants and world-class Professionals competing for a purse of \$30,000. The 2022 event had 2,788 registered athletes representing 48 countries and 44 states.

The IRONMAN® 70.3® Augusta triathlon began with a 1.2-mile swim from the Augusta Riverwalk Marina to The Boathouse Community Center on Riverfront Drive. From there, the athletes switched to the 56-mile cycling leg through South Augusta. Upon return to the transition area, participants began the last leg of the competition, a 13.1-mile run leg of the spectator friendly race course through Downtown Augusta.



About IRONMAN- The IRONMAN Group operates a global portfolio of events that includes the IRONMAN® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® 70.3® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® Virtual Racing™ (VR™) Series, 5150™ Triathlon Series, the Rock 'n' Roll® Running Series, the Rock 'n' Roll Virtual Running™ Series, IRONKIDS®, World Triathlon Championship Series, premier running events including the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon™ and The Sun-Herald City2Surf®, Ultra-Trail® World Tour events including Tarawera Ultra and Ultra-Trail Australia™, mountain bike races including the Absa Cape Epic®, road cycling events, and other multisport races. The IRONMAN Group is the largest operator of mass participation sports in the world and provides more than a million participants annually the benefits of endurance sports through the company's vast offerings. Since the inception of the iconic IRONMAN® brand and its first event in 1978, athletes have proven that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE® by crossing finish lines around the world. Beginning as a single race, The IRONMAN Group has grown to become a global sensation with hundreds of events across 55+ countries. The IRONMAN Group is owned by Advance, a private, family-owned business.

# #IM703AUGUSTA BY THE NUMBERS....

**IRONMAN**  
70.3<sup>®</sup> AUGUSTA

Pro Men: 01:50:26  
Pro Women: 01:43:26  
Age Group: 01:35:26

**\$6.16  
MILLION**  
ESTIMATED  
ECONOMIC IMPACT

**2,788**  
NUMBER OF  
REGISTERED  
PARTICIPANTS

**48**  
COUNTRIES  
REPRESENTED\*

**1,000+**  
VOLUNTEERS

**44**  
STATES  
REPRESENTED

**\$20,000**  
COMMUNITY  
GIVE BACK FROM  
IM FOUNDATION

**600**  
PIZZAS ORDERED  
FOR POST RACE  
ATHLETE FOOD

\*Countries represented: Argentina, Aruba, Australia, Bahamas, Bermuda, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Dubai (UAE), Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Germany, Guam, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela



## GA SPORTS

The Augusta Sports Council not only promotes the Augusta community as a sports destination, but also the state of Georgia. Georgia Sports represents a coalition of 20 sports-friendly communities, who work together to represent the state of Georgia as a sports destination at tradeshows held annually throughout the US. During FY 2022, GA Sports came together to support the Savannah Sports Council for the SPORTS Relationship Conference welcome party and had a collaborative booth during the TEAMS Conference.



### ASC Staff attended the follow tradeshows and meetings in 2022:

- GA Sports Annual Meeting (LaGrange, GA)
- SPORTS ETA Women's Summit (Minneapolis, MN)
- SPORTS ETA Symposium (Ft. Worth, TX)
- Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference (Athens, GA)
- SPORTS Relationship Conference (Savannah, GA)
- TEAMS Conference (Oklahoma City, OK)



## ADAPTIVE FACILITY ASSESSMENT

In partnership with Georgia Rehabilitation Institute, an adaptive facility assessment was conducted with Dawna Callahan (All In Sports) during the fall of 2022. The assessment consisted of site visits to 4 local hotels and 10 sports facilities in the River Region. The report included data on current facility usage, facility improvement needs to be more adaptive friendly, and a local list of groups/teams who currently offer adaptive programs. During the facility visit, opportunities to host specific adaptive sports were suggested by the consultant which included adaptive rowing, beep ball, wheelchair tennis, adaptive golf, and adaptive archery to name a few. The adaptive facility assessment report will be used for the ASC's upcoming strategic plan and feasibility assessment on local facilities during FY '23.



# ALL-CSRA FOOTBALL AWARDS

**FEBRUARY 25, 2022**

In partnership with WJBF, the ASC co-hosted the All-CSRA Football Awards Show that was held at the Columbia Co. Performing Arts Center. The 60-minute awards show included naming of the All-CSRA Football Team, awarding four \$1,000 scholarships, and featuring the winners of the FCS Punter of the Year and Ray Guy Award Punter of the year during the broadcast.

All-CSRA Defensive Team Scholar of the Year  
Ivan Arroyo  
\$1,000 scholarship presented by  
F.L. Russell Group

All-CSRA Offensive Team Scholar of the Year  
Brooks Pangle  
\$1,000 scholarship presented by  
Augusta Sports Council

All-CSRA Punter of the Year  
Brett Sterner  
\$1,000 scholarship presented by  
the Augusta Sports Council

Player of the Year Award  
Dalen Cobb  
\$1,000 scholarship presented by  
Deke Copenhagen Consulting



# GAMES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

**MAY 2022**

What began in 2011 as part of the Augusta Sports Council's annual G.A.M.E.S. Awards Banquet has grown to \$68,000 in college scholarships being awarded to 58 graduating high school student athletes in the Augusta community. Ten \$1,000 scholarships were awarded during FY '22 thanks to sponsors support from the IRONMAN Foundation, Augusta Sports Leagues, and Augusta Coca-Cola. The scholarship program wrapped up with a celebration with each recipient and their guests during a GreenJacket game in June.

## 2022 GAMES Scholarship Recipients:

Reese Basinger, Evans High School  
Layla Bland, Greenbrier High School  
Austin Brown, North Augusta High School  
Hannah Dickson, South Aiken High School  
Luke Hanna, Aiken High School  
Ashley Marshall, Greenbrier High School  
Felix Scheyer, Academy of Richmond County  
Eli Scott, Westminster Schools of Augusta  
Jonah Weinstein, Greenbrier High School  
Quincy Wells, Fox Creek High School



ANNUAL PROGRAMS

# EXPERIENCE AUGUSTA ANNUAL EVENT

**NOVEMBER 15, 2022**

Our annual joint tourism celebration with Destination Augusta took place at the historic Miller Theater and featured a live band, a live sneak peak at new Authentic Augusta Experiences and organization year in reviews from Bennish Brown (Destination Augusta) and Michelle Pippin (Augusta Sports Council). The co-hosted event celebrated the local tourism industry and spotlighted tourism partners and their achievements.



# FCS PUNTER OF THE YEAR

## DECEMBER 2022

University of Montana freshman Patrick Rohrbach was named the FCS Punter of the Year by the Augusta Sports Council in December, marking back-to-back seasons the school have won the national award. Rohrbach topped the Big Sky with a 45.2 yards per punt average, which was the second-best season average in program history at Montana. The Griz also ranked second in the nation for net punt average at 41.52, while holding opponents to just 3.68 yards per punt return. Rohrbach also totaled 2,170 yards on 48 punts in 2022, dropping 18 inside the opponent's 20 and booming 15 punts 50-plus yards with a long of 68 yards. In addition to the FCS Punter of the Year award, Rohrbach was also named a semifinalist for the Jerry Rice Award, which is given to the top freshman in the FCS.



## RAY GUY AWARD

### DECEMBER 2022

Adam Korsak (Rutgers) was named the 2022 Ray Guy Award as the best collegiate punter in the nation live on The Home Depot College Football Awards Show on ESPN on December 8, 2022. The award marks the first on-field national award won by a Rutgers football player in program history. The NCAA all-time leader in punting attempts (349) and yardage (15,318), Korsak led a unit that held opponents to minus 11 return yards this season, best in the nation, with just one positive return against in 75 attempts. He pinned a national-best 32 punts inside the 20 to help Rutgers rank third overall in net punting (43.57).

In addition, the three-time Academic All-Big Ten selection previously earned a spot as a semifinalist for the William V. Campbell Trophy, which recognizes an individual as the absolute best football scholar-athlete in the nation for combined academic success, football performance and exemplary leadership.

He is also a member of the College Sports Communicators Academic All-District Team® for holding a GPA of at least 3.5 and is working on a second master's degree. In punts this season from the Rutgers 40 and closer (28 attempts), Korsak downed 13 inside the 10, 20 at the 15 or closer and four at the 20 (two touchbacks) with nothing higher than the 21. The average drive start for the opponent in the pooch situation was the 12. Korsak forced 35 fair catches and a muff recovered to lead to a touchdown. He booted 14 at least 50 yards, blasting a season-long 77-yarder at Minnesota to set a stadium record. In addition, Korsak was recognized on the weekly Ray's 8 seven times in 2022, winning national punter of the week on two occasions.

For his career, the Aussie downed 41.5 percent of his punts inside the 20 with only seven touchbacks (2.0 percent). In a 27-game span between 2019 and 2022, Korsak had a streak of 150 consecutive attempts without a touchback. He never had a punt blocked or returned for a touchdown, with 63 attempts of at least 50 yards. That included a school-record 79-yard boot in 2018.



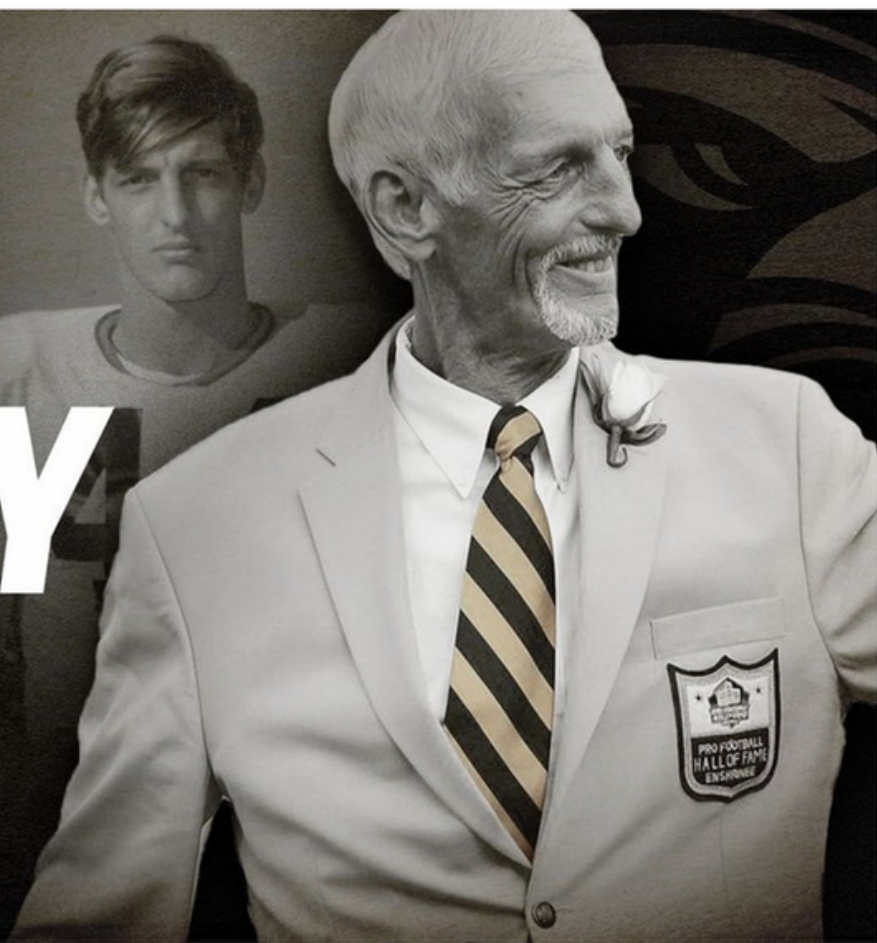
Patrick Rohrbach (left) and Adam Korsak (right) during the All-CSRA Football Awards

\*The Ray Guy Award winner is selected by a voting body of Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) communications directors, national media and former Ray Guy Award winners. Punters are evaluated on their overall statistics and contribution to the team. Particular emphasis is placed on the following statistics; net average, percentage of total punts inside the 20-yard line and percentage of punts not returned.

# RAY GUY

1949 - 2022

FOREVER OUR LEGEND



**AUGUSTA**   
SPORTS COUNCIL

