



Detroit Lions Football Education Division

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For Immediate Release
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CHRIS SMITH OF UTICA EISENHOWER HIGH SCHOOL NAMED DETROIT LIONS/FARM BUREAU INSURANCE OF MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACH OF THE WEEK FOR WEEK #7

Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan to Present Detroit Lions High School Football Coach of the Week Program in 2017

Detroit, MI—The Detroit Lions have named Chris Smith of Utica Eisenhower High School the week seven recipient of the 2017 Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan High School Football Coach of the Week Program. Smith's Eagles defeated rival Sterling Heights Stevenson 34-7 on homecoming to improve to 7-0 on the season and at least a share of the MAC Red title. Utica Eisenhower is currently ranked No. 1 in Division 1.

Smith has coached for 21 seasons and currently is in his 6th season as a head coach at Utica Eisenhower. The Eagles have made the state playoffs in five of six seasons under Smith, reaching the state semifinals in 2016. Smith's career record is 44-17 (72.1%). On Friday, October 13, the Eagles travel to Warren Mott to take on the 4-3 Marauders in a Macomb Area Conference-Red Division battle.

High School Football Coach of the Week Program

Each week throughout the 2017 nine-week high school football regular season, one coach that best develops his players' character, discipline, and football skill in addition to emphasizing player health and safety in their program, will be recognized for his commitment to the team, school, and community. The winner is selected by a panel of high school football media members—**Mick McCabe (former Detroit Free Press sports writer), Hugh Bernreuter (Saginaw News), Bret Bakita (WOOD Radio-106.9 FM, ESPN 96.1 FM-Fox 17/Grand Rapids), and James Cook (Traverse City Record-Eagle).**

This season's program will award \$22,000 to aid in the development and promotion of high school football in the state of Michigan, thanks to contributions from the Detroit Lions, the NFL Foundation, presenting partner, Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan and associate partner, Gatorade.



Each winning coach during the regular season will receive a \$2,000 donation to his school's football program and a sideline kit, courtesy of Gatorade. At the conclusion of the 2017 Michigan High School Football season, the Lions will also select the High School Football Coach of the Year. This season's Coach of the Year will receive a \$4,000 donation to his school's football program, in addition to the Gatorade sideline kit. All winners receive a certificate signed by Lions' head coach **Jim Caldwell** and National Football League (NFL) commissioner **Roger Goodell**, a personalized game ball as well as acknowledgement at an upcoming Lions home game.

Currently in its' 21st year, the Detroit Lions High School Coach of the Week program has awarded \$389,000 to high school football programs throughout the state of Michigan. For more information on the Detroit Lions High School Coach of the Week program, contact Chris Fritzsching, Lions' Director of Football Education, at 313-262-2248.

About Farm Bureau Insurance: Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan was founded in 1949 by Michigan farmers who wanted an insurance company that worked as hard as they did. Those values still guide the company today and are a big reason why they are known as Michigan's Insurance Company, dedicated to protecting the farms, families, and businesses of this great state. Farm Bureau Insurance agents across Michigan provide a full range of insurance services—life, home, auto, farm, business, retirement, Lake Estate®, and more—protecting nearly 500,000 Michigan policyholders.

About the NFL Foundation: The National Football League Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those touched by the game of football – from players at all levels to communities across the country. The NFL Foundation represents the 32 NFL clubs and supports the health and safety of athletes, youth football, and the communities which support our game.