

Owls Add Three to 2023 Recruiting Class

Signing Day 2023

HOUSTON – Dunlevie Family Head Football Coach Mike Bloomgren announced on Wednesday the addition of offensive lineman Lavel Dumont, kicker Reese Keeney and long snapper Wyatt Freeman to the Owls roster for the 2023 season.

Dumont, who is a grad transfer from Toledo, and Freeman, who transferred to Rice after attending the Naval Academy Prep School last fall, enrolled at Rice in January and will participate in spring drills. Keeney will join the Owls for the summer session.

"All three of these players are great additions who have the ability to make an immediate impact," Bloomgren said. "Lavel and Wyatt are already enrolled and will go through spring drills. We have seen over and over how beneficial those extra practices have been for our transfers and both will have a chance to make their mark right away. Reese will join us with the rest of the incoming recruits in the summer and jump into the mix."

Bloomgren and the Owls will open spring practice on March 6.

2023 RICE OWLS FOOTBALL ADDITIONS

Lavel Dumont **OL** **6-4** **321** **Tampa, Florida (Toledo)**

Made 10 career starts on the offensive line at Toledo, including a pair in 2022 (Ohio State and San Diego State) and also saw action against Massachusetts, Central Michigan and Northern Illinois... Played in a career-high seven games (all starts) in 2021 before suffering an injury... He was Toledo's nominee for the 2021 AFCA All-State Good Works Team... Only began playing football in 2016 and the following fall was ranked as a three-star prospect by Scout.com and 247Sports and was named of the top 50 players in the Tampa Bay area.

Reese Kenney K/P 5-11 175 **Knoxville, Tennessee (Farragut)**

First team All-Prepxtra selection by the Knoxville News Sentinel as a senior at Farragut HS for coach Eddie Courtney as the Admirals finished second in Region 2-6A... Converted all 45 extra points and was perfect on three field goal attempts with a long of 46 yards and averaged 42.6 yards on 21 punts.... Converted 121 of 124 PAT's in his career along with 97 touchbacks in 162 career kickoffs... Ranked as the 28th best punter by Kohl's...2021 Region 2-6A kicker/punter of the year... Member of DECA and the Key Club.

Wyatt Freeman DS 5-10 202 Bakersfield, California (Naval Academy Prep)

Joins the Owls after attending the US Naval Academy Prep School in Newport, Rhode Island last fall... Two-year starter at center and two-year team captain for coach Richard Starrett at Centennial High School in Bakersfield... The Golden Hawks finished 6-4 in his senior year and were the runners-up in the Southwest Yosemite League... MaxPreps Special Teams Player of the Game for his efforts vs. St. Joseph... One brother (Colby) played rugby at USC while another (Chance) competed in rodeo at Tarleton State.



Rice Athletics Communications

For Immediate Release
December 21, 2022

Contact: Chuck Pool
(832) 244-6476

10 additions to join team in January

Owls Sign 24 in Early Signing Period

HOUSTON- Dunlevie Family Head Football Coach Mike Bloomgren announced on Wednesday the signing of his largest class during the early signing period as the Owls added 24 to their roster, 10 of whom will enroll in January and participate in Spring Football.

"We believe this class will take us soaring to new heights," Bloomgren said. "It's the highest-ranked class in Rice history. It includes two of the top four prospects we've signed since we've been here as a staff (Ty Morris and Joseph Mutombo) and it has (our) highest-rated recruit in the rating era, JT Daniels. I think our recruiting staff has done a great job identifying, recruiting, and now signing this class. We've got a lot of guys in this class we think could be immediate impact guys. That always excites us when there are guys that can challenge for positions and make you better from an athletic standpoint. All the great things that are happening in our program helped us attract these talented young men and their families and our football team got stronger today because of these recruits."

Rice's largest December signing class prior to this year was 18 in 2020. The Owls signed 17 in both 2018 and 2019, 11 in 2021, and six in 2017 which came 13 days after Bloomgren was named Rice's 19th head coach.

The class of 24 includes five graduate transfers, headlined by quarterback JT Daniels, who will begin classes in January, in addition to 18 high school seniors, four of whom will enroll in January (Jamarion Clark, Peyton Farmer, Chase Jenkins, and Landon Ransom-Goelz) and one junior college transfer (Jordan Campbell)

Four of the six transfers (Brant Banks, Jordan Campbell, Coleman Coco, and Matt Hall) have two years of eligibility remaining.

The 24 players represent six states with 16 from Texas, two from both Pennsylvania and Tennessee, and one each from Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio. Seven of the 18 high school recruits are Houston-area products as is Nebraska transfer Brant Banks, who prepped at Westbury Christian before signing with the Huskers.

By position, the Owls added six offensive linemen, four defensive linemen, three tight ends and three wide receivers, a pair of quarterbacks, linebackers and cornerbacks, and one running back and safety.

2022 RICE OWLS FOOTBALL EARLY SINEES

NAME	POS	HT	WT	HOMETOWN (SCHOOL)
Daelen Alexander	RB	5-9	200	Pflugerville, TX (Weiss)
Brant Banks	OL	6-7	300	Houston, TX (Nebraska)
Beau Barton	LB	6-2	200	Van, TX (Van)
Nate Bledsoe	OL	6-4	285	Collierville, TN (Briarcrest Christian)
Jordan Campbell	DL	6-3	240	Middlesex, NJ (Nassau CC)
Christopher Clark	DL	6-2	250	Houston, TX (Furr)
Jamarion Clark	DB	6-0	180	Temple, TX (Dallas South Oak Cliff)
Coleman Coco	DL	6-5	265	Pittsburgh, PA (Colgate)
JT Daniels	QB	6-2	226	Irvine, CA (West Virginia)
Drayden Dickmann	WR	5-11	170	Georgetown, TX (Georgetown)
James Falk	TE	6-6	235	Springfield, PA (The Haverford School)
Peyton Farmer	OL	6-6	270	Fresno, TX (Ridge Point)
Phillip Gallegos	OL	6-6	300	Von Ormy, TX (Somerset)
Matt Hall	TE	6-3	225	Columbia, MO (Truman State)
Chase Jenkins	QB	6-0	185	Katy, TX (Alief Taylor)
Ty Anthony Morris	SAF	6-2	195	Houston, TX (Dekaney)
Joseph Mutombo	DL	6-5	240	Fort Worth, TX (Keller Central)
Luke Needham	OL	6-5	300	Germantown, TN (Houston)
Ethan Powell	TE	6-5	215	Mason, TX (Southwestern)
Landon Ransom-Goelz	WR	6-0	170	Trophy Club, TX (Byron Nelson)
AJ Stephens	DB	5-11	175	Spring, TX (Aldine MacArthur)
Ashton Ojiaku	SAF	6-0	195	Houston, TX (Foster)
Patrick Valent	OL	6-4	290	Warren, OH (John F Kennedy Catholic)
Justin Williams Jr	WR	6-3	180	Cypress, TX (Aldine MacArthur)

Daelen Alexander **RB** **5-9** **20** **Pflugerville, TX (Weiss)**

All-District 12-6A performer as a senior for coach Steve Van Meter at Pflugerville Weiss in the Wolves' first season at the 6A level... Ran for 1,092 yards on 163 carries and added 177 yards on 24 receptions and scored 10 touchdowns overall as the Wolves advanced to the playoffs where they fell to eventual 6A D2 state champion DeSoto 37-20... Finished his career with 2,364 yards and 24 touchdowns on the ground and 680 receiving yards and five TDs... Named the 11 5A Offensive Newcomer of the Year as a junior after running for 1,272 yards and scoring 16 times on the ground as the Wolves were 10-2 overall and 7-0 in the district.

Brant Banks **OL** **6-7** **300** **Houston, TX (Nebraska)**

Graduate transfer from Nebraska who will join the Owls for the spring semester... Played in 26 games for the Huskers over four seasons, including all 12 in 2022... Made one career start (vs. Illinois in the 2021 season opener)... Became the 14th true freshman in school history to play on the offensive line when he made his debut vs. Maryland in 2019... Was added to the Nebraska basketball roster just prior to the 2020 Big Ten tournament and played three minutes vs. Indiana... Three-time Academic All-Big Ten selection... Two-time, all-district selection at offensive tackle and second-team pick at defensive tackle as well as a junior at Westbury Christian in Houston and was ranked as one of the top 50 offensive tackles in the country and one of the top 70 players in Texas by Rivals.

Beau Barton**LB 6-2 200****Van, TX (Van)**

All District 8-4A DII as a senior for the Vandals and coach Jared Moffatt, compiling 161 tackles, 41 for loss(10 sacks)... Finished his career with 361 tackles, 81 of them for loss (22 sacks)... Third-team all-state (TSWA), All-East Tex, and district MVP as a junior in 2021 while helping lead Van to a 12-0 start before falling to state semifinalist Gilmer in the third round. (150 tackles, 33 tackles for loss, 9 sacks)... Also played basketball and golf... Second team Academic All-State and National Honor Society.

Ned Bledsoe**OL 6-4 285****Collierville, TN (Briarcrest Christian)**

D2-AAA All-Region, All-Metro, and All-District selection and team captain as a junior and senior for coach Brian Stewart... The Saints reached the quarterfinals of the D2-AAA Playoffs in his junior year and compiled an overall 33-13 record in his three years as a starter for the Saints... Played against fellow signee Luke Needham (Houston HS) during the season with Briarcrest downing Houston 29-28 in the second game of the 2022 season... Selected to play in the AutoZone Liberty Bowl All-Star Game (as was Needham).

Jordan Campbell**DL 6-3 240****Middlesex, NJ (Nassau CC)**

2022 NJCAA DIII All-America as a sophomore at Nassau CC (Garden City, NY)... Compiled 41 tackles and broke up a pair of passes... Named to the NJCAA All-Academic second team... Two sport standout at Middlesex High school, earning All-State honors in football as well as Gold Division Player of the Year honors as a junior before missing his senior season due to an injury... Totaled 55 tackles (six sacks) as a junior and 155 tackles (16 sacks), three forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries in his first three high school seasons... Three-year letterman in wrestling and finished third in the regionals to earn a berth in the state championship as a junior.

Christopher Clark**DL 6-2 250****Houston, TX (Furr)**

Defensive MVP of District 11-4A D1 as a senior and a three-time all-district selection for coach Cornell Gray... The Brahmas finished 8-3 in his senior season (6-1 in district play)... Credited with 45 tackles as a senior, 14 for loss (six sacks) as a senior, and 111 tackles. 28 for loss (11 sacks) in his career... A member of JROTC, National Honor Society, and the Ignite Scholar Program.

Jamarion Clark**CB 6-0 180****Temple, TX (Dallas South Oak Cliff)**

One of four high school signees who will join the Owls for the spring semester and participate in Spring Football... All-District 6-5A DII selection and a two-year starter for the back-to-back state champions under coach Jason Todd... Part of a stellar group of Golden Bears seniors who became the first school from Dallas to win back-to-back state championships... Intercepted two passes and was credited with 35 tackles as a senior after being credited with 24 as a junior... Ranks in the top 7% of his class.

Coleman Coco **DL** **6-5** **265** **Pittsburgh, PA (Colgate)**

Named to Phil Steele's All-Patriot League first team and a second-team choice by league coaches after recording 40 tackles (eight for loss, three sacks) and recovering a pair of fumbles while playing left defensive end... Credited with a pair of tackles picking up a solo tackle for loss and sharing a second in the season-opener vs. Stanford... Credited with 92 career tackles (18 for loss, nine sacks) in 30 career games for the Raiders.

JT Daniels **QB** **6-2** **226** **Irvine, CA (West Virginia)**

Comes to Rice as the highest-ranked recruit in the rating era and brings 6,947 career passing yards and 45 touchdowns to South Main... Threw for 2,107 yards (200-327) and 13 touchdowns in 10 starts at West Virginia last season... Threw a touchdown in nine of 11 games and had at least 20 completions in seven of 11... Top game was a 365-yard, three-touchdown effort vs. Kansas... 2017 Gatorade Player of the Year after leading Mater Dei to the national title as a senior... Second true freshman to start the season opener at quarterback for USC (Matt Barkley in 2009), throwing for 282 yards vs. UNLV... Set career highs with 2,672 yards, 216 completions, and 14 touchdowns as a freshman at USC in 2018... Threw for 1,953 yards and 17 touchdowns in 10 starts at Georgia in 2020 & 21 including six starts for the 2021 National Champions.

Drayden Dickmann **WR** **5-10** **170** **Georgetown, TX (Georgetown)**

Two-time All-District 11-5A D1 selection as a senior for coach Chuck Griffin as the Eagles went 10-3 and advanced to the third round of the 5A D1 playoffs before falling to eventual state runner-up College Station... Caught 79 passes for 1,299 yards and 13 touchdowns as a senior and ended his career with 127 receptions for 2,149 yards and 23 touchdown catches... Competed in track and was a pair of a pair of state finalist relays (4x100 and 4x400) and was an area finalist in the 200 meters... Three-time academic all-district and Honorable Mention Academic All-State.

James Falk **TE** **6-6** **235** **Springfield, PA (The Haverford School)**

All Delco as a senior for coach Brian Martin as the Fords posted their first undefeated season since 2015, finishing 10-0 and ranked fourth in the state... Caught 10 passes as a senior and 28 in his career for 250 yards and a pair of touchdowns... Three-year starter and a four-year letterman.

Peyton Farmer **OL** **6-6** **270** **Fresno, TX (Ridge Point)**

One of four high school signees who will join the Owls for the spring semester and participate in Spring Football... Two-time All-District 20-6A selection for coach Rick LaFavers at Ridge Point, helping pave the way for the Panthers to a 21-5 mark and a pair of undefeated seasons in district play... Only allowed two sacks as a senior... Nominee for the Whataburger Super Team... Named to the THSCA 2022 Academic All-State National Honor Society.

Phillip Gallegos **OL** **6-6** **300** **Von Ormy, TX (Somerset)**

Two-time, All-District 14-4A D1 selection and 2022 district lineman of the year for coach Coy Detmer at Somerset... Made 24 straight starts and the Bulldogs were 18-6 over that span while he allowed only two sacks while being credited with 150 knockdowns... Nominee for the Whataburger Super Team... Selected to play in the San Antonio Sports All-Star Football Game... District shot put champ as a junior... Named to the THSCA 2022 Academic All-State second team... National Honor Society, Men of Honor.

Matt Hall **TE** **6-3** **225** **Columbia, MO (Truman State)**
Grad transfer who will join the Owls in January after earning first-team All-Great Lakes Valley Conference as a senior at Truman State.... Caught 38 passes for 367 yards for Truman, which ended the season by winning its third consecutive America's Crossroads Bowl and finished the season ranked 25th in the AFCA DII coaches' poll... Caught 37 passes and set career highs with 475 yards and six touchdowns as a junior while earning second-team, all-conference honors... Caught 43 passes for 644 yards and eight touchdowns at Rock Bridge HS.

Chase Jenkins **QB** **6-0** **185** **Katy, TX (Alief Taylor)**
One of four high school signees who will join the Owls for the spring semester and participate in Spring Football... All-District 23-6A selection as a junior for coach Shawn Gray, but was limited to five games as a senior... Threw for 1,216 yards and 14 TDs in those five games and for 4,735 yards and 46 TDs and just six interceptions in 22 varsity games in his career... Team MVP in football and track as a junior... Played at Bellaire Episcopal as a freshman and sophomore and was named to the SPC Super Team... Helped lead Episcopal to the SPC 4A championship as a freshman... Competed in track, running the 100 meters and 4x100 and 4x200 relays... Second Baptist Media Ambassador and -Second Students in Action volunteer... Operates a pressure washing/ dog sitting/ dog walking business in the summer.

Ty Anthony Morris **LB** **6-2** **195** **Houston, TX (Dekaney)**
Joins his brother Elroyal at Rice after earning District14-6A Co-Defensive MVP as a senior for coach Anthony Williams helping spark the Wildcats to the third round of the 2022 6A D2 playoffs... A member of *Dave Campbell's Texas Football* Hot 300... Credited with 149 tackles, 22 for loss (2 sacks) as a senior and amassed 300 tackles (31 for loss, five sacks) in his career... Earned all-district honors in baseball as a junior... Ranks in the top 1% of his class.

Joseph Mutombo **DL** **6-5** **240** **Fort Worth, TX (Keller Central)**
All-District 4-6A selection as a senior for coach Mike Sports... A three-year starter for the Chargers... Credited with 70 tackles and four sacks as a senior and 200 tackles and 20 sacks in his career... Also plays basketball and helped lead Central to the regional quarterfinals as a junior... Honorable Mention THSCA Academic All-State... Black Excellence Club, Skills USA.

Luke Needham **OL** **6-5** **300** **Germantown, TN (Houston)**
Three-time All-Region and All-Metro selection for coach James Thomas... Four-year starter for the Mustangs... Led Mustangs to a 9-3 record as a senior and the second round of the D1 6A playoffs... Played against fellow signee Nate Bledsoe during the season with Houston falling to Briarcrest 29-28 in the second game of the 2022 season... Selected to play in the AutoZone Liberty Bowl All-Star Game (as was Bledsoe)... Plays rugby in the spring.

Ashton Ojiaku **SAF** **6-0** **195** **Houston, TX (Foster)**
MVP of District 10-5A D1 as a senior for coach Shaun McDowell, after rushing for 1,767 yards (199 carries, 8.9 per carry) and 26 touchdowns, catching 13 passes for 133 yards and one touchdown, and adding a pick six on defense... Finalist for the Touchdown Club of Houston's Offensive Player of The Year... Two-time honorable mention all-district selection on defense before moving primarily to offense as a senior... Named to the THSCA 2022 Academic All-State second team... National Honor Society and National Society of High School Scholars.

Ethan Powell **TE** **6-5** **215** **Mason, TX (Southwestern)**
Grad transfer from Southwestern University after earning team MVP honors this past season by averaging 18.3 yards per catch (48/879) and scoring five TDs. Averaged 16.6 yards per catch (85/1.413) in his career... Caught a career-best 10 passes vs. Texas Lutheran and topped 100 yards five times, including a career-best 156 yards at Austin College... Multi-sport standout at Mason (TX) High School, earning all-state honors as a wide receiver in football while leading the Punchers to the 2A D1 state title in 2018... District MVP in basketball and was a three-time individual state champion in tennis and a member of four state championship teams and also was a member of Mason's 4x400 relay that placed third in the state... National Honor Society.

Landon Ransom-Goetz **WR** **6-0** **170** **Trophy Club, TX (Byron Nelson)**
One of four high school signees who will join the Owls for the spring semester and participate in Spring Football... Team MVP and All-District 4-6A selection as a senior for coach Travis Pride as the Bobcats advanced to the Region 1 final for the second consecutive year (best finish in school history)... Led the district with 73 receptions for 1,339 yards (18.1 per catch) and tied for the team lead with 16 touchdown receptions... Caught four passes for 125 yards and two TDs vs. Keller Central and fellow signee Joseph Mutombo... Totaled 3,170 yards in receptions and 34 touchdowns in his career... 4-6A Utility Player of the Year as a junior... German Club, Art Club.

AJ Stephens **CB** **5-11** **175** **Spring, TX (Aldine MacArthur)**
Two-year starter for coach as both a wide receiver and cornerback for coach Wayne Crawford... Earned second-team All-District 14-6A selection as a junior... One of two signees from MacArthur (Justin Williams Jr) and one of three signees from the district (Ty Anthony Morris of Dekaney)... Picked off three passes as a senior and broke up 30 passes in his career... Averaged 20 yards per catch as a wide receiver.

Patrick Valent **OL** **6-4** **290** **Warren, OH (John F Kennedy Catholic)**
Division VII All-Ohio as a senior for coach Dominic Prologo as the Eagles reached the state championship game for the second time in Valent's four years as a starter... Made 59 consecutive starts (19 in the playoffs) at left tackle and did not give up a sack... Credited with 94 pancake blocks as a senior... Valent's class posted a 47-12 record over their career, the winningest stretch in school history... Earned All-Ohio honorable mention honors as a sophomore and junior... Team captain in both football and basketball (three-year letterman)... National Honor Society... Business club President, Church Minster/ Lector... Game Changers Foundation

Justin Williams Jr. **WR** **6-3** **180** **Cypress, TX (Aldine MacArthur)**
All- All-District 14-6A selection as a senior for coach Wayne Crawford after earning second-team honors as a junior... One of two signees from MacArthur (AJ Stephens) and one of three signees from the district (Ty Anthony Morris of Dekaney)... National Honor Society.