

## News Release

### Former NFL Quarterback Ryan Leaf to Speak

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Monday, October 2, 2017

– Former National Football League (NFL) quarterback Ryan Leaf will be the featured speaker for National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week on Wednesday, October 18, at 7 p.m. in Kiehle Auditorium at the University of Minnesota Crookston. The event is free and open to the public. Parking is free and recommended in Lot G.

Leaf, a graduate of Washington State University (WSU), was a standout quarterback leading the WSU Cougars to the 1998 Rose Bowl. He went on to play professionally in the NFL, but injuries cut his career short. He also battled a painkiller addiction that further affected his life.

Now an author and motivational speaker, Leaf shares his message of perseverance, gratitude, and hope. Whether he is conducting assemblies at local schools, or speaking directly to students in a classroom, Ryan Leaf is dedicated to helping young adults reach, and maintain, their potential.

Leaf currently serves as the program ambassador for Transcend Recovery Community and its mentoring Program. Given his personal growth and road to recovery, He also appears as a guest analyst on numerous national radio shows while writing and speaking nationwide. He is passionate about helping young adults manage the stress and difficulty of high school, college, and the transition to adulthood.



Leaf is the voice for the recovery community. His mission is to reach anyone in need of hope. At one time, he felt completely consumed by his mental health issues and the only way to pacify his pain was with drugs. Out of that desolation, he hopes to inspire others to begin their road to recovery to see that happiness and health can always be achieved. He chooses to share his story dealing with mental health issues and substance abuse in order to reach the person who cannot yet imagine a better life for themselves.

He is also a strong advocate for military service men and women. His father is a veteran and works with the foundation Merging Vets & Players (MVP), an organization comprised of a blend of combat veterans, players, coaches, and mentors, who understand what it means to overcome adversity, and who rise to face every challenge affecting the veteran community.

Leaf's wish is to be an example that a better life is always possible.

Event sponsors include Career Development Services; Athletics Department; Wellness Center; Residential Life; Liberal Arts & Education Department; the Honors Program; Business Department; Math, Science & Technology Department; Student & Family Experience; and the Coca-Cola Beverage Partnership.

The University of Minnesota Crookston now delivers 34 bachelor's degree programs, 23 minors, and 40 areas of emphasis on campus as well as 14 degree programs entirely online. These degrees are offered in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from more than 20 countries and 40 states,

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