

Johnny "The Jet" Award

The inaugural Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers National College Football Return Specialist Award ceremony and banquet is set for 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 12, at Anthony's Steakhouse, 7220 F Street, Omaha, Neb., according to William Reed, award chairman. Presenting sponsor for the inaugural event is TD Ameritrade, Inc.

Rodgers is regarded as one of the greatest kick returners in college football and now this new award has been named for him. (play audio :09 seconds)

The award event will benefit the Johnny Rodgers Youth Foundation's charitable programs. Currently through his youth foundation, Rodgers has joined the fight to keep kids in school until graduation.

Rodgers says there has been an award for every position except the kick returner. (play audio :10 seconds)

Rodgers is hopeful the award will grow in popularity. (play audio :09 seconds)

The 2011 Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers Award winner will be announced March 29 by Rodgers, who has been reviewing records and videos of the country's top punt and kick return specialists in order to select the winner.

Finalists for the Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers National College Football Return Specialist award are: Joe Adams, Senior, Arkansas; Dustin Harris, Junior, Texas A & M; Tyrann Mathieu, Sophomore, LSU; and T.J. Thorpe, Freshman, North Carolina.

"The Jet" Award is named for Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers, the 38th Heisman Award winner, and the first Heisman winner from the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Rodgers was elected to the National College Football Hall of Fame.

The Jet award trophy was designed and cast by Omaha artist Joe Putjenter and depicts Rodgers escape from OU's Greg Pruitt in the 1971 NU/OU game.

Also to be awarded at this event is the Nebraska High School Offensive Player of the Year. Sportscasters, reporters and editors across the state will select the recipient of this award.

For more information, please visit <http://www.TheJetAward.com>.

For reservations call Anthony's Steakhouse, (402) 331-7575, by April 10th.