



NEWS RELEASE

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College Hoops Icon Dick Vitale Encourages Detroit Titans To Make Financially Savvy Plays With The Hartford's Playbook For Life

Broadcaster to appear at University of Detroit Mercy on Thursday, April 2 at 4:30 p.m.

Hartford, Conn., April 1, 2009 – Veteran sports broadcaster and former University of Detroit Mercy basketball coach Dick Vitale will return to Detroit on Thursday, April 2, to share lessons from The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc.'s Playbook for Life program at the University of Detroit Mercy, the NCAA® Men's Final Four® host institution. Bill Zimmerman, a former offensive lineman for Columbia University and Retirement and Wealth Management Consultant with The Hartford, will join Vitale with practical tips and insights. This event is open to the media and University of Detroit Mercy students only.

Created by The Hartford, in collaboration with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the Playbook for Life program equips student-athletes and all college students with the basic knowledge required to build a foundation for a bright financial future.

"I'm proud to bring the lessons of The Hartford's Playbook for Life to NCAA student-athletes and college students across the country," said Vitale. "Students today need to be prepared with the knowledge to meet the financial challenges ahead of them and achieve their goals successfully."

"I've worked with college students across the country as part of The Hartford's Playbook for Life program," said Zimmerman. "It's important for student-athletes and all college students to start preparing a solid foundation to their financial futures as soon as they can."

The Hartford's Playbook for Life travels from coast to coast to help NCAA student-athletes and college students in general get a jump start on planning for financial independence and security. Since the program's inception in March 2005, The Hartford has brought the Playbook message to students at more than 30 colleges and universities, including Towson University on March 25.

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“The Hartford's Playbook for Life is a great tool to help student-athletes create a game plan and achieve financial security after graduation,” said NCAA President Myles Brand. “We applaud The Hartford for embarking on this very important initiative and encouraging college students to start planning for tomorrow, today.”

With less than one percent of student-athletes moving on to compete in professional sports, the vast majority move on to work in the “real world.” Most of them are largely unprepared for the financial challenges ahead. The Hartford's Playbook for Life helps student-athletes meet those challenges by introducing them to practical topics such as evaluating job offers, budgeting, responsibly managing credit cards and debt, and understanding the fundamentals of savings and investing. The program features visits to college campuses, a free guidebook with practical, easy-to-use information, and a Web site with a video webinar version of the Playbook for Life on-campus presentation, and additional resources, at www.playbook.thehartford.com.

Vitale coached the NBA's Detroit Pistons, Rutgers University and the University of Detroit Mercy basketball teams before broadcasting ESPN's first college basketball game in December 1979, and creating a legacy as an enthusiastic analyst and color commentator. In addition to his many contributions to the ESPN network, ESPN The Magazine and ESPN.com, Vitale has been a college basketball analyst for ABC Sports since 1988, also covering the NBA Finals and the 1992 Summer Olympics for ABC Radio, and as a columnist for Basketball Times. He is a 2008 Basketball Hall of Famer and has authored eight books.

Vitale adds his involvement with the Playbook for Life to a roster of philanthropic efforts, such as his devotion to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Sarasota and his role on the Board of Directors for The V Foundation, a non-profit organization, founded by ESPN and the late Jim Valvano, dedicated to finding a cure for cancer.

About University of Detroit Mercy

University of Detroit Mercy is Michigan's largest private Catholic university, offering more than 100 majors and programs in 60 academic fields. Sponsored by the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, the university has three campuses located in downtown and northwestern Detroit.

About the NCAA

The NCAA is a membership-led nonprofit association of colleges and universities committed to supporting academic and athletic opportunities for more than 400,000 student-athletes at more than 1,000 member colleges and universities. Each year, more than 54,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA championships in Divisions I, II and III sports. Visit www.ncaa.org and www.ncaasports.com for more details about the Association, its goals and members and corporate partnerships that help support programs for student-athletes.

About The Hartford

The Hartford is one of the nation's largest financial services companies and a leading provider of investment products, life insurance and group benefits; automobile and homeowners products; and business property and casualty insurance. International operations are located in Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil and Ireland. The Hartford's Internet address is

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