

"Imagine 100 Faces": A Call to Change the Lives of Youth

Written by Ryan Donada

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NFL Hall of Famer Nick Lowery is in the Pro Bowl in Hawaii, gearing up to kick what could be the game-winning play. The ball is hiked, and he launches the ball perfectly between the yellow field goal poles and wins the game. Another achievement by Lowery, along with beating one of the best kickers in NFL history, Jan Stenerud, head-to-head, and being featured on *ABC* and *Sports Illustrated*, Lowery stands on the field after the field goal kick, crowd roaring, and he feels empty. "What's missing?" he thinks. Sure there is celebration after the game and fun stories, but when the locker room is empty, he felt empty; something struck him. Here he is with all the success and glory a person could want, and something is missing.

"You know, you got to share," he says, "Just remember that you could win a hundred awards, break a hundred records, and make a hundred million dollars and it won't feel like it matters if you haven't learned to share with the people around you." You'll end up being one-dimensional, it doesn't matter how much money someone has if they are bankrupt emotionally.

And so he shared his success by creating the Nick Lowery Youth Foundation that sponsors anti-bullying, homeless, sports- and diversity-leadership programs all geared to the mission of helping youth achieve excellent lives of high purpose.

"The power of whom we surround ourselves with is enormous," Lowery says, "I've always felt a deep conviction of the role that I should play in trying to make a difference." He stresses that he was successful because a mentor told him to not look at the rejections in life, but to maintain that dream and vision. Lowery wants to be that mentor to as many kids as possible — which is what the NLYF stands for.

On April 4 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Prestigious Paradise Valley Mansion, the NLYF will be hosting the event "Imagine 100 Faces", for a chance to make a difference to underprivileged people, done by the foundation and the community itself. The night will have a red carpet entrance, an open bar, champagne, delicious food, decadent desert, and a live performance of a Jazz legend and prominent Native American guitarist, all while raising money for the NLYF so that they can stop bullying and start advocating more programs on leadership, respect, and diversity in schools.

Part of bullying is about destroying a person's creativity. This event is aimed to make a personal impact, to see the faces of real people in all the diverse ethnicities and marginalized kids across the land. According to Lowery, a third of kids ages 12-18 in Arizona are bullied as well as 40 percent of middle school students. This event's purpose is to imagine a world where all kids are important, not just the varsity athletes; and how athletes can use this blessing of doing well in sports and turn it into a life long lesson of giving and leadership.

"Even though this is a fundraiser, we are actually focusing a lot on the music, because this event is about harmony," he says, "and people who give notice in their own life when they use their success to share it with other people that need it." Playing the event is two-time Grammy Award-winning saxophonist Marion Meadows as well as Native American Artist of the Year, classical guitarist Gabriel Ayala, who preformed for President Obama at the Inauguration.

All of us are on a life journey to discover, overcome and transcend the disability that we may have. And it might not be physical, but it could be emotional or spiritual. "This is the journey that teaches us; it humbles us," Lowery says, "For our culture today, I hope it helps athletes regain a sense of their real mission in life and overcome this rapid narcissism that's manifested in even high school football players. "

Tickets for the event is \$75, or \$135 for a couple and can be bought here: <http://nlyf.eventbrite.com/>

<http://www.nickloweryfoundation.org/>