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Kenneth Walker III Named 2021 Doak Walker Award Recipient

DALLAS – Michigan State running back Kenneth Walker III was named the 2021 Doak Walker Award Recipient, the PwC SMU Athletic Forum announced Thursday on *The Home Depot College Football Awards*.

Walker had an outstanding regular season and ranks second nationally in total rushing yards (1,636) and rushing yards per game (142.5). Walker, the first Michigan State player to win the Doak Walker Award, joined the program in January of 2021 after transferring from Wake Forest. He made an immediate impact rushing for a career high 264 yards in his first game with the Spartans, leading them to a victory over Northwestern. On October 30, Walker rushed for 197 yards and a career high five touchdowns in a victory versus rival Michigan.

Walker, a native of Arlington, Tennessee, finished the season leading the nation in both yards after contact (1,154) and carries over 20 yards (21). He was named Big Ten Running Back of the Year and co-Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year. Walker and the Spartans will complete the 2021 season vs. Pitt in the Chick-fil-a Peach Bowl on January 1. He will receive the award at the Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet on Friday, February 18, 2022, in Dallas.

The Award is named after three-time SMU All-America running back and 1948 Heisman Trophy winner Doak Walker. Walker, who also punted, returned kicks and kicked extra points, led the Mustangs to two Southwest Conference Championships. He was drafted by the Detroit Lions and led the league in scoring his rookie year. During his six years with the Lions, he led the team to two NFL championships and was chosen All-Pro four times. Walker is a member of both the College and Pro Football Halls of Fame.

The recipient of the Doak Walker Award is chosen by a National Selection Committee comprised of members of the media and former players.

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Honoring the legends of sports for 32 years, the PwC SMU Athletic Forum celebrates outstanding success in athletics. Based in Dallas, the series features major figures from a variety of sports. The PwC SMU Athletic Forum includes four events and the prestigious Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet.

The Doak Walker Award is a member of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA), which includes college football's most prestigious awards. Founded in 1997, the NCFAA and its 25 awards boast 800 recipients, dating to 1935. Visit NCFAA.org to learn more about the NCFAA.

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