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Christian Brothers High School athletes – from left, football players Asante Cleveland and Dylan Orr and soccer player Jennifer Ericson – congratulate one another Wednesday after they signed their national letters of intent.

# For signees, the future is now

## ASANTE CLEVELAND AND EDDIE PLANTARIC AMONG AREA GROUP OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

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A year ago, they were in two entirely different places, with intriguing if not unsettled football futures.

Eddie Plantaric was solidly on the Stanford radar – he’s a hard-charging defensive end from Del Campo High School with the sort of advanced placement academic load that made his transcripts pop as much as his football prowess. Asante Cleveland, meanwhile, was a similarly gifted 6-foot-5 mover and bruiser in cleats with good grades for Christian Brothers. But he wasn’t necessarily on anyone’s must-have list.

Flash forward to now, and turn away if you must at the glare of their grins.

A year after Stanford offered a scholarship, Plantaric made it official by signing a national letter of intent Wednesday morning at Del Campo, then feeding the material to the Farm via fax. At Christian Brothers, Cleveland looked regal and sure in a Miami Hurricanes polo shirt and hat after he signed and faxed his letter of intent with the one-time national power inching back towards prominence.

Cleveland had given a verbal commitment to Washington State last fall. But in recent weeks, when he was courted heavily by Miami, it became a sudden pressure

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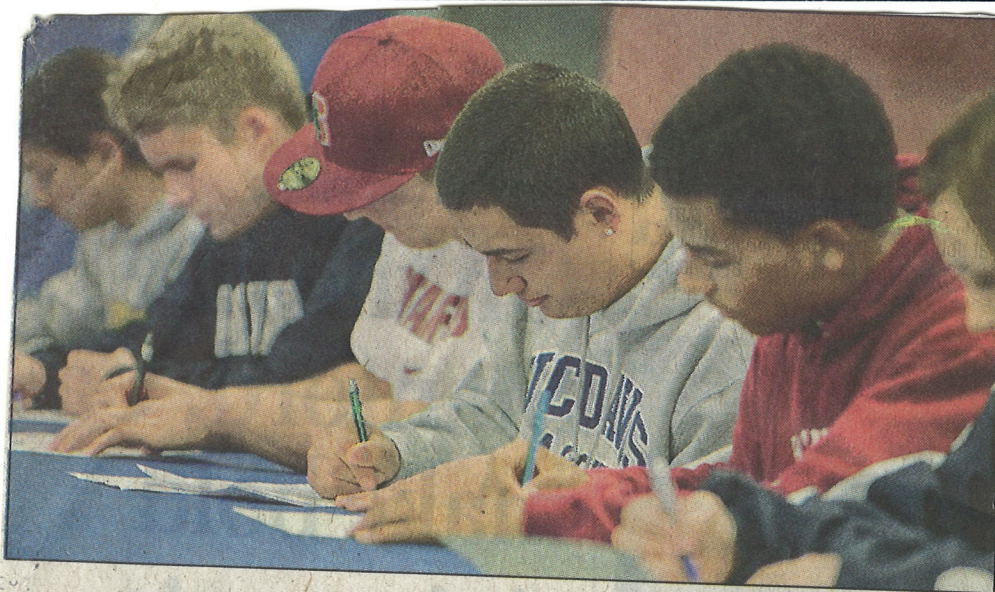
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Ed Plantaric takes a photo of his son Eddie after the Del Campo High student signed his national letter of intent to play football for Stanford. Eddie’s mom, Lorraine, looks on.

### SIGNING DAY COVERAGE

- El Dorado lineman Ian Joseph signs with his eye on the medical center.
- Complete list of local football signings. **Page C6**
- Sac State gets bigger by signing linemen.
- UC Davis fills holes for future.
- Stanford and Cal signings. **Page C7**
- Florida wins national recruiting derby despite coach’s status.
- Complete list of local signees in other sports. **Page C8**

» Check out photo galleries from signing day and a database of letter of intent signings for all high school athletes. [sacbee.com/preps](http://sacbee.com/preps)



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Del Campo football players sign their letters of intent Wednesday morning - from left, Dylan Bunfill (Menlo College), Eddie Plantaric (Stanford), Ryan Dimino (UC Davis) and Jaron Wilson (Harvard).

## Signing: Rivals could meet

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cooker for the one-time long shot. Cleveland chose the sun of Coral Gables, Fla., over the wintry chill of Pullman, Wash.

Plantaric and Cleveland epitomized the mood of the morning, echoing the theme shared by the fortunate few across the country. Scholarships, hard to come by, are to be treasured. There are tens of thousands of prospects across the land and hundreds of scholarships to chase down. The numbers game leaves a good many left out.

"It's extremely difficult to get a scholarship because you've got to do the job in the classroom and be exceptional on the field, too," said Del Campo coach Mike Dimino, whose son Ryan signed with UC Davis to play linebacker and whose defensive-back ace Jaron Wilson is headed to Harvard to play in the secondary.

And beyond statistics or winning streaks, college recruits covet certain things in particular: size and grades. Have to have the grades, qualifying classes and test scores, or no deal. It's that simple.

"The very first day a college recruiter comes by a campus, he looks at the transcript," Mike Dimino said. "Then he'll look at the athlete."

All told, it was a good haul for the Sacramento region, if not a particularly deep list.

In Plantaric, Stanford salivated over the thought of the complete scholar-athlete, with coach Jim Harbaugh attending a game for an up-close view. Plantaric, wearing Cardinal red, could hardly contain his glee Wednesday.

"I'm very excited," Plantaric said. "Stanford's the perfect school academically and athletically. I'm so proud. I was telling my family that if I never get a shot in the NFL, I'd be much more proud with a Stanford degree."

In trying to decide between Miami and WSU, Cleveland said he consulted daily with his father, Allen Cleveland, who played defensive end for Pacific a generation ago.

"It's a very nice feeling to know where I am

going now," Cleveland said. "It was hard having to call (WSU coach) Paul Wulff about my decision to go to Miami, but I feel I am going to the right place. I'll sleep well tonight."

Wulff, a former Davis High standout, did land the area's most prolific tailback in Grant's Devontae Butler, who rushed for 2,884 yards and 45 touchdowns last fall.

Someday, it could be Terrance Mitchell bearing down on a tackle against Butler, much like their Metro Conference encounters. Mitchell, a Burbank defensive back, signed with Oregon. As good a student as he is a player, Mitchell graduated early from Burbank last Friday, and will head to Eugene in March in time for spring drills. He committed to the Ducks in the summer, then was wowed by the Eugene scene when the Ducks beat rival Oregon State in the annual "Civil War" showdown. Mitchell was even approached by a student who recognized him and asked for an autograph.

"I'm feeling good, looking forward to being a Duck," Mitchell said. "And I'm going to try to represent Sacramento."

Rocklin has two players moving on from its 14-1 team, with wide receiver Holden Huff signing with Boise State and tailback Jackson Cummings off to Yale. Nevada Union had two leaders sign: defensive end/tight end Dan Pettinato with Arizona and linebacker Eric Niederberger with Colorado State.

The Elk Grove Unified School District had four players sign.

Franklin's Cody Galea is off to San Diego State to play linebacker, following in the footsteps of a great uncle who played for the Aztecs. Jalen Saunders, an all-purpose Pleasant Grove wonder, is headed to Fresno State. Left Letuligasenoa of Elk Grove will compete for Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. And Evan Favors made history. The defensive back headed to Nevada is the first full scholarship football player to come out of Monterey Trail.

Call The Bee's Joe Davidson, (916) 321-1280.

## NON-FOOTBALL SIGNINGS/COMMITMENTS

Sacramento-area athletes who have signed or made verbal commitments:

Name	High school	Sport	College
Obiajulu "AJ" Agha	Jesuit	Soccer	Harvard
Cole Alexander	Oakmont	Soccer	Missouri
Austin Bravo	Jesuit	Soccer	Saint Mary's
Alex Brown	St. Francis	Soccer	Loyola-Chicago
Alexandria "AJ" Cibulsky	Ponderosa	Soccer	CSU Monterey Bay
Megan Chisek	St. Francis	Soccer	Oregon State
Conor Delaney	Rocklin	Soccer	CSU Monterey Bay
Jennifer Ericson	Christian Brothers	Soccer	Utah
Jacob Feener	Jesuit	Soccer	Seattle
Megan Foy	El Camino	Soccer	Sonoma State
RJ Fraser	Jesuit	Track	UCLA
Shonna Fraser	Lincoln	Soccer	Creighton
Lauren Garcia	Folsom	Soccer	Sacramento State
Morgan Garcia	El Camino	Soccer	Barry
Megan Hedding	Vista del Lago	Soccer	Cal Poly SLO
Jeremy Hines	Jesuit	Track	Stanford
Evan Hodge	Center	Soccer	Vermont
Brynne Konkel	Franklin	Soccer	Oregon
Careese Little	Granite Bay	Soccer	Idaho State
Nmeka Ofodire	Franklin	Soccer	Cal
Casey Meuser	Del Oro	Soccer	San Diego State
Gabe Padilla	Jesuit	Soccer	Georgetown
Tanner Roland	Roseville	Soccer	Fort Lewis
Courtney Strombeck	Bella Vista	Soccer	UC Davis
Matthew Thayer	Jesuit	Soccer	UC Santa Barbara
Monica Tingley	Granite Bay	Soccer	San Francisco State

- Bill Paterson