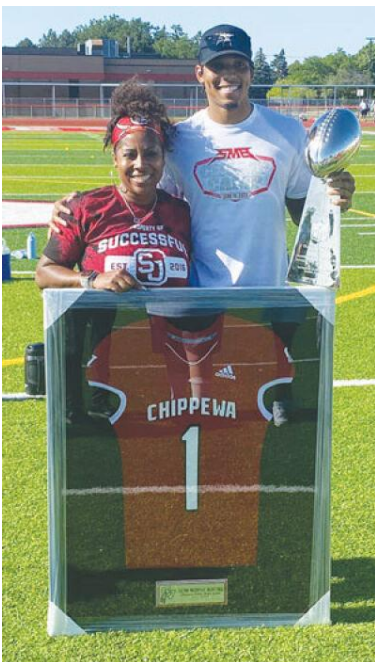


Chippewa Valley retires number of Super Bowl champ

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Super Bowl champion Sean Murphy-Bunting signs autographs during his SMB Champ Camp. Photo provided by Peggy Blue



Sean Murphy-Bunting and his mother, Kim Murphy, stand together showcasing his framed Chippewa Valley jersey and the coveted Lombardi Trophy.

Photo provided by Peggy Blue

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Super Bowl champion and Clinton Township Chippewa Valley High School graduate Sean Murphy-Bunting said his high school and community will always hold a special place in his heart.

“I do a lot of coming back to Chippewa and talking to the kids,” Murphy-Bunting said. “I’ll never stop because I’ll never forget where I came from.”

On June 16 at Chippewa Valley High School, the school made sure it would never forget what Murphy-Bunting gave back to the community.

Murphy-Bunting, a Macomb County native, was in town for his SMB Champ Camp at Chippewa Valley.

As Murphy-Bunting met with his youth football players at midfield, Chippewa Valley football coach Scott Merchant made a memorable surprise for the former Chippewa Valley star.

Merchant surprised Murphy-Bunting on the field holding his framed #1 jersey he wore during his time at Chippewa Valley. Friends and family were in attendance to congratulate Murphy-Bunting.

“Just to have my jersey retired at the high school where I made a name for myself, it was a dream come true,” Murphy-Bunting said.

The jersey will be displayed in Chippewa Valley’s gym, along with a red and white sign underneath it. Murphy-Bunting played under Merchant for two years before graduating in 2015.

“Nobody is going to wear #1 as long as I’m there,” Merchant said.

Murphy-Bunting attended Central Michigan University on a grayshirt offer after receiving zero Division I offers, and he shined on the field before his departure in 2018.

He was named All-Mid-American Conference First Team and Central Michigan’s Defensive Player of the Year in 2018 after recording 37 tackles, two forced fumbles and two interceptions.

Forgoing his senior year, Murphy-Bunting was drafted 39th overall in the second round by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the 2019 NFL Draft.

His accomplishments range anywhere from Super Bowl champion in 2020 to Pro Football Writers of America All-Rookie Team in 2019, but some of his most remarkable achievements take place off the field.

President of Successful Jocks, a nonprofit organization, Murphy-Bunting has teamed up with his mother, Kim Murphy, in a community-based journey.

Murphy, the chief director, founded Successful Jocks in 2016, and alongside Murphy-Bunting has established the So Many Blessings, Women Behind the Uniform and Game of Life programs in efforts to make a difference in the community.

“This is something we talked about; my family has always given back,” Murphy said.

The organization donated \$20,000 in scholarships to two recipients in Michigan and two in the Tampa Bay area while also holding coat drives with Kansas City Chiefs defensive end Mike Danna, youth football camps, and Christian-based events. Danna is a Warren De La Salle graduate.

Successful Jocks held a 25 days of Christmas Blessings dinner for 25 Tampa Bay families where over 100 children were able to open presents, meet Santa and decorate cookies.

“It’s just amazing to see how many young kids have been impacted between the two of them,” Merchant said. “As proud as I am of Sean with his athletic accomplishments with making it to the pros and winning the Super Bowl, I’m way more proud of the man he has become and the way he’s matured. That’s what really makes me proud to be his coach.”

Murphy, who is also a parent liaison for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, has worked with the team for various events, as well. Successful Jocks held an Ultimate Tailgate Family Funday, where families were invited to a barbecue to enjoy music, food, football drills and meet Buccaneers players.

Murphy-Bunting pledged his 2020 season to donate money back to Successful Jocks for every interception and pass deflection, and the Buccaneers matched his donation.

“Me growing up, there was never anyone or body who was doing it for us. I always wanted to be that advocate for the community,” Murphy-Bunting said. “I look at it as being able to give people what I wasn’t given and be able to have opportunities that I didn’t have.”

Already an impact player on the field, Murphy-Bunting continues to be impactful throughout his community both back home in Michigan and his new home in Tampa Bay.

The next Successful Jocks event will be in partnership with Neiman Marcus Tampa Bay on Aug. 14 at the International Plaza Mall. The event, “Stepping into a new season: Fashion and Football,” will have a VIP meet-and-greet along with cocktails and a fashion show to follow.

All proceeds will be donated to Successful Jocks. For more information, visit successfuljocks.org.