

## COMMUNITY FUND WINS AWARD

# Lewis' work off the field honored

By Joe Reedy

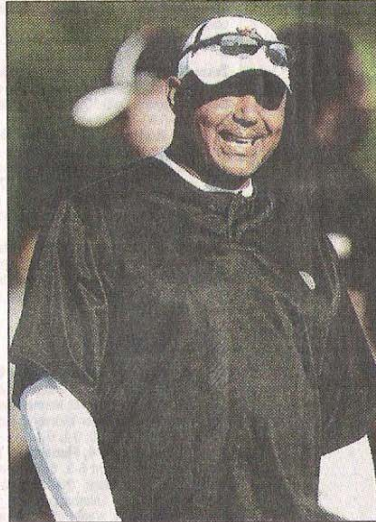
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Since 2003, the Marvin Lewis Community Fund has invested more than \$5 million and impacted more than 250,000 people in Greater Cincinnati.

On Monday, the organization's leader got something in return.

Lewis, the Bengals' head coach, has been selected to receive the Steve Patterson Award for Excellence in Sports Philanthropy. He's the first professional coach to be honored with the award, which will be presented before Thursday's preseason game against St. Louis at Paul Brown Stadium.

"I am flattered," Lewis said. "It's a great honor and recognizes the hard



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**Bengals coach Marvin Lewis** has had a direct impact on thousands of lives in the Tri-state.

work our staff has done and the support we've gotten from the community."

The Patterson Award is given by the Sports Philanthropy Project and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It was established in 2005 in memory of Steve Patterson, a former college and pro basketball player and coach who was known for his sports philanthropy. He died of cancer in July 2004 at 56.

"We see a lot of flashy stuff that

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## Lewis: Deeply involved in area

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doesn't amount to a hill of beans, but this is real," said Greg Johnson, the SPP's executive director.

During the past year, Lewis' foundation has started the Learning is Cool program and hosted a football camp for kids ages 9-14. The foundation also continued its clinic for youth and high school coaches and a campaign to help women in the inner city access a mammogram center. The fund has awarded college scholarships since 2005.

Margaret Buchanan, The Enquirer's president and publisher, is a foundation board member.

Besides a tough economy, the MLCF also experienced adversity this year with the death of executive director Sharon Thomas. Lewis remembered her on Monday.

"Sharon had the great vision and work that she did. Lindsay (Reisert) ... picked up the ball and kept it going," Lewis said.

Said Reisert, who is the interim executive director: "With Sharon's passing and all the adversity, it shows we can go on and thrive even with these times. We had a lot of positive feedback with the camps which Marvin wanted to do for awhile."

The other two individual winners of the award were the Moyer Foundation in 2007 and the Steve Nash Foundation in 2008.

Carlette Patterson, president of Patterson Sports Ventures, said overcoming those setbacks made the MLCF stand apart.

"We all hit adversity, but you have to dig deeper. You miss a beat in your heart but in terms of the result you stay focused," Patterson said.

"The last thing you want to do is to let people down. They were trained by the best and they're committed to keeping on. Adversity is what makes or breaks us and makes them a champion organization."