



NWSL Players Honor and Celebrate Om Arvind, Champion of Women's Soccer
*Players Establish Om Arvind Gift on World Mental Health Day, Continuing Om's Vision of
Elevating the Women's Game & Creating A More Equitable World*

October 10, 2024 – Today, the Players are proud to announce the creation of the Om Arvind Gift in honor of the life and legacy of soccer journalist and women's soccer advocate Om Arvind. The announcement falls on World Mental Health Day in recognition of the global contributions that Om made to growing the women's game in Europe and the U.S. through his coverage and deep commitment to justice and equal rights for professional women's soccer players.

Om was widely known and respected in the global sports industry for his work as an esteemed editor and podcaster for Managing Madrid, revered for his brilliant analysis of the game. Notably, he spearheaded the creation of Managing Madrid's dedicated in-depth coverage of Real Madrid Femenina, a reflection of his commitment to providing a voice to the voiceless. In May of this year, Om tragically passed away. Yet even in the face of this tragic loss, Om ignited a legacy that will live on through his far-reaching community of family, friends, fans and professional athletes, in particular those in the women's game.

Om's family shared, "We are immensely proud of our son, Om, and the profound impact he had on so many lives. His big heart, deep understanding of social issues, and unwavering compassion drove his passionate advocacy for the marginalized and forgotten. With his exceptional analytical skills and gift for storytelling, Om became a leading voice for equal pay and mental health support in women's soccer. He truly cared for the players and understood the importance of solidarity in their fight for rights. We hope the OAG continues to make a positive difference for many years, complementing the incredible work of the NWSLPA. May Om's memory remain a blessing!"

One of Om's final wishes was the creation of a GoFundMe that would raise funds to support the NWSLPA. The funds raised, which as of today stand at \$25,000, are officially designated as the Om Arvind Gift (OAG) and donated to The Support the Players National Emergency Trust (NET) to provide mental health support for NWSL Players. Any future contributions made to the NWSLPA for mental health support will be named as part of the Om Arvind Gift, cementing that Om's name and work carries on through the NWSLPA to provide critical mental health resources to Players for years to come. "With the Om Arvind Gift, the NWSLPA seeks to honor Om's life, legacy, and the vision he had for a better world," said NWSLPA Executive Director Meghann Burke. "We are deeply moved by the gift he has left us, and we believe it will save lives."

Mental health resources were first implemented in the NWSL with the ratification of the first-ever Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in 2022, which included the introduction of a monumental mental health policy providing Players with the right of up to 6 months of paid mental health leave and the requirement that all teams have a licensed Team Clinician to provide mental health services. In the recently announced 2024 CBA, the Players achieved expanded mental health resources including further protection of paid mental health leave and the requirement that all teams provide a Mental Performance Consultant in addition to a Team Clinician.

If you're struggling with thoughts of ending your own life, please know that you are deeply valued and loved. You are not alone. There is help available to you 24/7 even if it doesn't feel that way. If you're in the United States, please call or text the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988 or contact help at <https://988lifeline.org>. The world is brighter with you in it.

About the NWSLPA

Established in May 2017, the NWSLPA is the labor union representing all NWSL Players. The NWSLPA is a proud affiliate of the AFL-CIO. For more information, go to www.nwslplayers.com.

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