

# Stanford University Football

## Media Conference

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Stanford, California, USA

**Tavita Pritchard**

**Andrew Luck**

Media Conference



I want to just extend my personal congratulations to you and to your family, and say welcome back to The Farm. We look forward to an exciting next several years.

With that, I'll turn it over to our general manager Andrew Luck.

ANDREW LUCK: Thank you, John. Appreciate it, boss.

Good morning, everyone. It's a beautiful day to introduce a special leader and our next head football coach.

There are two legends in the room that I do have to shout out. Coach Tara VanDerveer in the back there, amazing. The great Jim Plunkett and Gerry Plunkett are sitting at the front here. A long history of Tavita and the Plunketts that he can go into.

For us, this is special, special day for our university. What a beautiful morning, what a beautiful day.

It's been a unique year at Stanford and for Stanford football, to say the least. I'm especially proud of the program and the folks. The players, our staff, our university leadership, John Donahoe, President Levin, Provost Martinez, Condoleezza Rice, and our outgoing interim head coach Frank Reich. They started something real and laid an incredible foundation for success, to launch forward into this next phase.

This year has also offered me a long runway in coming to a head coaching decision for the future, right? Not everybody gets that. We canvassed the country, went to leagues both big and small to find the best head coach for us at this moment.

As John mentioned, this process was both broad and deep. And cream rises to the top, right, which leads us to the man sitting next to me, Tavita Pritchard.

Amongst many things, Tavita has special leadership qualities. He is a connector of people, has a high, high football IQ and acumen. He has worked with some unbelievable quarterbacks and got to work under Vic Fangio to start his coaching career. Really everything in

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. What a great day to be a Card. Thank you so much for joining us here this morning.

We'll start with opening remarks from Jaquish and Kenninger Director and Chair of Athletics John Donahoe, followed by remarks from General Manager for Stanford football Andrew Luck, who will then introduce the Bradford M. Freeman Director of Football, Tavita Pritchard.

At this time, I'll turn it over to John Donahoe.

JOHN DONAHOE: Good morning, everyone. Today is an incredibly exciting day for Stanford football, for Stanford athletics, and for Stanford University.

Andrew is going to properly introduce Coach Pritchard here in a minute. I just want to say a few words about the process of how we got here.

Over the past several months, we have conducted a very thorough and high-integrity hiring process. Our search was led by our general manager Andrew, but involved active participation from President Levin, Condoleezza Rice, Professor Jay Mitchell, who is a faculty representative for Stanford athletics, and myself. Coach Reich also played an important advisory role to Andrew and the committee.

We saw very strong interest in this role from candidates with multiple backgrounds. We thank everyone that expressed interest.

I will tell you at the end of the day the answer was clear: Coach Pritchard was by far the best leader for Stanford football and for this next phase.

Coach Pritchard, I want you to understand that not only do you have the full support of everyone in this room, but you have the full support of Stanford Athletics, Stanford University, and the entire Stanford community.



between.

He has the heart of a teacher, the patience and care that's required to teach the great game of football, and the soul of a dogged competitor, a dogged competitor. All of this has been affirmed through the years since I've known him. I met him when I was 18, and beat you out (smiling).

It's been affirmed through this interview process, both to me and to the committee, as John Donahoe has mentioned. Finally it's been affirmed from the references across the NFL, from players that he's coached like Marcus Mariota, Zach Ertz, from coaches you've coached with and for, like Kliff Kingsbury and Dan Quinn.

It is now my honor and privilege to introduce the 37th head football coach in Stanford history, the Bradford M. Freeman Director of Football, Tavita Pritchard.

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Good morning, everyone. It's great to see some of these familiar faces around here.

President Levin, search committee, Provost Martinez, John Donahoe, Brad Freeman, thank you for your trust in me and for partnering with me to make Stanford football what we all know it can be.

To my head coaches here who I've had the privilege of working with and learning from directly, Coach Harbaugh and Coach Shaw, you taught me what belief in this place and these student-athletes can do for Stanford football. Thank you.

To my siblings and family at-large, I can still remember you piling into the 15-passenger van after a late-night high school football game and drive the 13 hours from Washington to watch me in that stadium right there. Thank you for believing in me from the very beginning. Faafetai tele lava. Ou te alofa tele ia te outou uma.

For those who I haven't yet met, my name is Tavita Liumotumotua'anaileafi Pritchard Jr. I'll give you a second to write that down (laughter). I grew up in Lakewood, Washington, alongside 10 brothers and sisters. I'm a product of my mother Kelli, who comes from a working-class family that moved from Terre Haute, Indiana, to the West Coast in search of opportunity.

My mom is the most curious, compassionate, people-centered person I know. She's a woman who walks out of a taxi and knows the driver's entire life story and their childhood dreams and probably their blood type, too (smiling). I work every day to live and love like you, mom.

My dad is David, which is the English translation of Tavita.

That's your Samoan lesson for the day. His parents are from American Samoa and moved here when my grandfather joined the military and they planted roots in Washington.

He would wake us up at the crack of dawn every day to read five psalms and one proverb. Didn't matter whether we were out late at a tournament or a fa'alavelave the night before...we were going to be up with the raccoons the next day.

He taught me what integrity in action looks like. There are not enough words for how grateful I am to have my parents, my wife's parents, who I claim as my own, my auntie, uncle, and some of my siblings here with me today. I love you all.

From my dad's side I come from the fa'asamoa, which means the Samoan way. That embodies our values around respect, family and connection.

When something happens to one of us, we collectively surround them with love and ferocity. The fa'asamoa speaks to us never being too big or small for the group.

My parents used to own a pizza store. My siblings and I were in the back running the most efficient pizza box folding operation in town. We ran that assembly line for school lunches, washing dishes, getting the little kids ready for school. Everything was about team over self.

Don't get it twisted, it wasn't all Kumbaya. We were all competing. My little brother and I still butt heads over who got the better of who after a family basketball game over the holidays about 10 years ago. Tana, if you are watching, we both know I got you, dog.

I've always sought out and felt most comfortable on teams. But it's also probably no surprise that when I arrived here as a freshman in 2005, I had a little bit of impostor syndrome.

I showed up to this premier institution of higher education, expecting to be surrounded by classmates who were competitive-- but with more of a dog-eat-dog, individual, every-man-for-himself kind of attitude.

What I found here was quite the opposite. I walked into a freshman dorm, shout-out Rinconada, with doors thrown wide open. Around every corner were kind, hilarious, exceptional people from every single walk of life.

People like Fred Campbell, my training camp freshman roommate. A linebacker from the Bronx whose mom was native Alaskan. Fred was quiet, thoughtful, quirky, and hit



like a ton of bricks.

Then he very casually went on to get his degree in computational science and mathematics, his master's degree from Stanford in statistics, and then Rice for his Ph.D. in statistics. By the way, he was a North Face-sponsored climber who went on an expedition to Everest.

Stanford is where I met Elkhart, Lake Wisconsin bred Kit Garton, the beautiful, brilliant, irreverent Gaities-performer who went on to help grow a major clothing brand with fellow classmates from Stanford, and who has been one of my first phone calls for every major life event since.

Stanford is where I met Cape Verdian star volleyball player Cynthia Barboza, who some of you may remember, who banter's like no other and is gracefully competent at everything she does. She first introduced me to my wife, Caroline, one night at the Enchanted Broccoli Forest. For those of you who don't know, we do have a residence called the Enchanted Broccoli Forest.

I came to learn that Stanford is a living, breathing organism that embodies team. It is collaborative, connected and full of people who push each other to reach their wide-ranging goals and take on the world.

We went hard every day. We studied hard, we worked hard, we trained hard. We were the best kind of exhausted.

Then in my sophomore year, our team went 1-11, which is when a new staff arrived to Stanford. They poured into me and my teammates with an unrelenting belief of what we were capable of together. They built a disciplined system around us that turned into a brotherhood which created a Stanford football juggernaut.

Yes, I did eventually lose my starting job to some scrub named Andrew Luck (smiling). I have the mic last. Experiencing that turnaround on this campus was one of the most formative experiences of my life. Losing my spot to Andrew actually became a catalyst for my coaching career.

While I had a singular dream to be the head coach here at Stanford, I needed to leave and stretch and learn in order to realize that dream. I expected to go to the NFL and get my Ph.D. in football. All football, all the time.

I actually loved and grew around X's and O's and scheme and game management, but what I was surprised by was how much it strengthened my convictions around all of the things I learned in the back of that pizza store as a kid and

about our fa'asmoa. It's all about people, supporting people, believing in people and building a staff who are passionate about developing student-athletes, fostering connection and trust as a means of developing true brotherhood.

I received a master class in this exactly learning under Dan Quinn the last two years.

I got to be a proud alum looking in as the alignment at this place on every level comes together with such momentum. Stanford is a place that's world class on every level. Now everyone from the President and Provost to the faculty to the AD and GM, to our incredible fans and alum, have tasked us to bring Stanford football back to a world class operation.

When I think about this program today and look at the remarkable young men on this team, I feel hopeful and I feel ready. As I shared with my players in our first team meeting yesterday, which was pretty freaking cool by the way, we are going to be all about belief and brotherhood and competition. We will be committed to the process of winning, as I heard Magic Johnson once put it very well.

That looks like going hard every single day, playing full speed, getting after it in practice, in meetings, and on gameday. A defense that's fast and physical, and arrives violently. Think about Shayne Skov, Bo McNally, Trent Murphy, a couple of those guys are in here.

An offense that's innovative and relentless and imposes our will on anyone who lines up against us. Think Michael Wilson, Jim Dray, David Castro and Christian McCaffrey.

We will thrive in moments of discomfort and vulnerability because nothing great ever happens when people are comfortable. We know that fierce competition is a habit that we are building together, that it only works because of the trust and connection behind it. It geeks me up thinking about how to cultivate that environment. I can't wait to get to work with Andrew, the staff and players to make it happen.

I wanted to save a few thanks for the end. When I think about where I am picking up, where I'm picking up as a leader of this program, John mentioned this, but there has been clear groundwork that has been laid thanks to Coach Frank Reich. Frank is an accomplished coach and player whose praises I first heard from Andrew and Zach Ertz. But to see that in action at a place I know so intimately and the student-athletes I believe in so deeply, it's clear to me that Coach Reich is and always will be a Stanford man. Thank you, Frank.



Andrew, thank you, brother, for trusting me and believing in me to do this job. I cannot wait to build an elite system of support around our Stanford student-athletes. We'll fill out an army of people to support them so they can each find their superpower and channel it in the service of our team.

I believe our connection will set the standard of trust, communication and collaboration that will help this program reach the highest of heights. Even just the past few days of dreaming big together and making recruiting calls has me juiced up like we're kids again, man, 18 and 20.

But for the record I still believe I should have started over you (smiling). Make sure we get that written down, please.

To my little family, I love you all. You remain the centerpiece of all of this for me. Afi, Manu, Leone, Tala, I'm eternally grateful to be your dad. You teach me and grow me every day. I'm so excited to be on this adventure with you.

Caroline, my Cubberly crush, you are the most remarkable human. You're an accomplished children's book writer, do all the heavy lifting with our four kids, and still somehow manage to support me and my dreams. Together with you I feel invincible taking on the world. Thank you. I love you, and here is to many more post-victory pictures out there on that field.

I'm happy to get more into the X's and O's during the Q&A. I'm so happy to have you here with us. Thank you for being here.

THE MODERATOR: We'll now open it up for questions.

**Q. You talked in your intro about being here when the team was 1-11, then Rose Bowls, BCS bowls. What did you learn that Coach Harbaugh was able to do then that you can carry over?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: The first thing I would say is I learned about the fortitude of my classmates and teammates of what we were capable of together.

In that time, I think what I learned more than anything also was the power of competition, the power of iron sharpening iron. We just went after it every single day. When we got into those moments of competition in games that we shouldn't have won, right, everything was forged in that brotherhood on the practice field, in the 6 a.m.s.

I learned the value of healthy competition and just going to work every day and letting the stuff out on the game field take care of itself.

**Q. Andrew, in your deep and broad search, how important was it for you to get someone who was a Stanford person, someone who understood the culture of Stanford, which is a pretty unique place?**

ANDREW LUCK: It sat there. It sat there as a real question, but it was not a necessary. It was not a necessity. When it came to Tavita, it was a bonus. There's not that many folks coaching out there with an intimate and deep history of this place.

I saw Frank Reich come in and do an unbelievable job, really only knowing the school through James Lofton, his teammate, then how much Zach Ertz and I would talk about it when we played for him. It wasn't a necessity.

Certainly, it's a bonus because we do know there's a learning curve. There's a bunch of learning curves that Tavita is on the continuum of. There is sort of a Stanford learning curve. I certainly had a bit of re-acquaintance with it coming back as GM.

I do know Tavita starts pretty far along in that Stanford learning curve that's unique.

**Q. Andrew, you mentioned Tavita's special leadership qualities. I'm curious if you have a story or a memory from your younger days that illustrates that.**

ANDREW LUCK: I do. I do (smiling).

TAVITA PRITCHARD: I thought you might. I thought I had the mic last (smiling).

ANDREW LUCK: Two things come to mind. I was a freshman. It was in the summer. I just came from Houston, Texas, maybe week one or week two. We had voluntary practices. I had no idea what the playbook was. I didn't know how to do anything.

I sat in the couches in our old locker room. Must have been a Thursday night after a voluntary team practice, maybe 8 p.m. There was an early morning workout the next day. I worked the courage up to go ask the starting quarterback what hound two protection was. It's an old-school west coast, fox and hound, west coast protection. I didn't understand it. I never played with a fullback. I didn't know what it meant.

Tavita spent 20 minutes with me on the couch, 8 to 8:20 or something like that, and explained hound protection to me. I couldn't hear anything the first 10 minutes because I was too intimidated that the starting quarterback was actually taking time out of his day to teach me something. That stuck with me for a long time. (To Tavita) I think I've told



you that story.

Then when I ended up starting and Tavita was on the team for the last year, launched his coaching career, you feel when a room supports you. You feel when a quarterback room is fully behind you. That's certainly what I felt from Tavita. It's a big part of why I felt comfortable going out there and playing great football.

As a player, as a young man, those two things really stick out, his humility and leadership through service, leadership through supporting those around him, and making those around him feel like they can go unleash their superpowers. I felt that as a young player, with him as a teammate, then as a GA.

**Q. What does your relationship look like over the last few years? How close have you remained? Have you heard from Coach Harbaugh or Shaw since this announcement was made?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: I'll start that. Our relationship I think has just gotten stronger and stronger since we left here as players. When Andrew left for the NFL, I stayed here and started my coaching career. I would say as a former teammate, I was just all supportive and a fan of watching Andrew in those years playing in the NFL.

We stayed in touch. Obviously as both of our careers in those respective places kicked off, you're really busy. But I'd say we would check in every so often.

When Andrew finished playing and came back here, that really allowed us to kind of rekindle a lot of what made us so close in the first place. Andrew was going to school, I was still coaching. It was a chance for us to reconnect.

We picked up right where we left off. I felt that our history of our relationship really was a springboard to even what you're seeing now, which is there's an implicit trust that I have in not just who he is as a football mind, a leader of this program, but as a human being, who he is as a person and as a dad.

I have so much trust for who he is that there have already been times where he says, Hey, I think we should do it this way.

I say, Great, let's do it, man.

There's so much trust that's already been built.

Then I've heard from a lot of people in the last 24 to 48 hours. I probably couldn't specify any one or two. We've heard from a lot, absolutely.

**Q. What do you think is going to be the biggest difference between coaching in the Pac-12 compared to the ACC?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: That's a good question. That's a good question.

Can I just say the travel (smiling)? I mean, looking at some of those cross-country trips, we're going to North Carolina a couple of times next year, Louisville. I think the furthest we ever had to go, other than our non-conference Notre Dame games and such, were Arizona. We didn't have to go very far. That's one.

I think that's a real consideration as you think about preparing a team, think about supporting student-athletes. That's a real thing.

Even just being in the NFL, going to play the New York Giants from D.C. was different than coming out here to play the Seattle Seahawks.

It does go back to how we support them, that it's process-oriented so whether or not we have an hour-and-a-half flight or five-hour flight, we're going to prepare the same way. We may have tweaks, but they don't have to worry about those things. That's for me and Andrew.

**Q. Andrew, you conducted one of the longest coaching searches in the history of college football. Could you give a ballpark of how many different coaches you may have talked to over that time and why that ultimately led back to a guy who you've known all along.**

ANDREW LUCK: Talked to, interviewed close to 30, I want to say around that. A bunch of other informal conversations.

My wife knows this. I would get into football-land at home. Someone would be talking to me and my mind would just go. For the last nine months my mind would go to who is going to be our next head coach. That was on the whole time. Who would be the right leader for these young men.

It was laid very bare to me about a week or two into the job. I think I had a bit of one of those moments at night, there are these two existential things that happen. Holy smokes, I'm in charge of a Stanford football program that's been around since 1892. With a legacy of Pop Warner, Bill Walsh, Jim Plunkett, Christian McCaffrey. There's 109 young men on this team whose lives are very much shaped by football and the Stanford football program.



Who that leader was, getting Frank was huge for this year, to make sure we went a step forward, right? Who our next leader, who would bring us into this new era, was always front of mind. Talked to a lot of folks. Went around the country. I enjoyed the process. I think it helps I'm an extrovert, I enjoy talking and listening to people.

A bunch of interest, a bunch of folks. It was affirmed especially towards the end with the references from around the NFL, really was, and with the alignment from our committee behind me, that Tavita was perfect.

Look, we're going to stub our toes. There is a lot of work ahead of us, a lot of work ahead of us. I certainly feel like I've stubbed my toe every day in this job. But I know we as leadership will continue to get better in our jobs and orient this around serving our young men and building championship culture and process. That's all we can do.

**Q. Tavita, you were here on staff for some really great seasons, then also towards the end things started to turn a little bit. With a little distance, what did you learn from the last few seasons in terms of why things got away and what you can learn from them to apply now?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Sure. I mentioned it a little bit in the statement.

Being away, you hear about the NFL and you hear about it's the "No Fun League." I expected it to be cold and transactional. To some degree there were parts of it that were. They were kind of like, We're paying these players, they have these contracts, they're in and out.

In our last season in Washington, on our run to the NFC Championship game, there were so many moments that really were defined by the brotherhood in the locker room. We won some really tight games there towards the end of the season.

I bring that up because when I look across, that run that you're referencing both in my years as a player and as a coach here, when I think back to some of those locker rooms, you could really define so many of these teams by the connection in those locker rooms, right? The Rose Bowls in '15 and '13 and '12. I think about some of the guys and leadership that was present at those times.

When I think about that run and now coming back, I'm just strengthened in my resolve to make sure we are creating and cultivating that brotherhood and trust in that locker room as a means to challenge each other, as a means to compete, as a means to motivate our young men. Even in

our leadership on staff, that's going to be a whole system that's working towards that.

I really think being away, getting time to see it with such clarity, it's simple: it goes back to people, supporting people. That's what we got to get back to. That's what we will.

**Q. Tavita, your thoughts from a schematic standpoint what you did learn as a quarterback's coach, going to the NFL, X's and O's, that you can take into your head coaching role?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: From the X's and O's and football standpoint, when you're in coaching, as long as I've been, I don't want to count how many years now, there's so many different ways to do things. There are.

Obviously working under Kliff Kingsbury, he was an air raid, Mike Leach trained quarterback. We couldn't have come from two different worlds in terms of our football upbringing. I came from a 12-, 13-, 22-personnel, get up there and run-it-down-your-throat offense. He came from a 10-personnel, we're-going-to-throw-it-70-times-a-game offense.

There were a lot of common threads, right? When it comes to playing great football, it comes back to blocking and tackling and fundamentals. When I think about schematically where we will go, we will lean into who our Stanford student-athletes are, right?

One of our committee calls, John may recall this, but I asked them to recall Toby Gerhart, think about all these players, Tyler Gaffney, Steffán Taylor, Christian McCaffrey, Bryce Love. All phenomenal running backs and players here in their own right. All very, very different players, right?

That's just one small glimpse of what Stanford can be. We just have to lean into our players' superpowers. The scheme is going to be built fully around them.

What I found in the NFL is, this will speak to what Andrew is talking about, there will be some toe stubbing, so to speak, in the big picture. When it comes down to it, we're problem solvers. That's what we have to be about, especially at Stanford. We have to go find the guys.

I think it was Tara that you talked about when we recruit, we don't spread a net, we don't cast a net, we fly -fish, right? That's who we are at Stanford. When we go find those special student-athletes, what do they look like, what is their superpower, how do we build it around them.



**Q. You talked about all the philosophies you've been able to learn from. How will your offensive philosophy moving forward affect quarterback recruiting? You mentioned fullbacks...bodes well for offense. You talk about the iron sharpen iron, those years when you were very tough. How do you get back to that from a practice standpoint?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Well, the first one, so on the quarterback perspective, Andrew and I are excited to find great quarterbacks for this place. We are no different than the rest of the team organism that I mentioned. It's about competition. Andrew and I get to joke these days about him beating me out. Go ahead, okay (smiling). In that time, the way that we competed, I'll say this, Andrew wouldn't be where he was if I didn't make him a great player (laughter).

In all honesty, we pushed each other. That's true in the quarterback room. What we want is competition. We want great quarterbacks, as many as we can get, that makes sense for our roster composition to come in here and compete every day.

The starter, it not only makes him the best he can be, you're only as good as your second, third, fourth quarterback. You get banged up in football. My time finishing in Washington, Marcus Mariota was playing, he was the backup quarterback.

I think about competition. I think about creating competition in that room, bringing in the best of the best, letting them go compete, right?

The other part of that, which Andrew mentioned, is supporting each other. Once that competition is decided, we have to go support the guy in the room to go out there on the field and get it done.

**Q. Andrew, I'm sure many of the 30 people you talked to had head coaching experience. How much of a concern was that to hire someone with no head coaching experience? How did you get over that?**

ANDREW LUCK: A bunch of different archetypes we looked into, a bunch of amazing people with head coaching experience, big, little, small, different leagues.

Certainly something I took into consideration, right? Certainly something I took into consideration. Certainly something that Tavita, this is his first time, first chance. I'm also first-time GM. That's real.

There's also qualities that I think needed to be the right head coach at this time for Stanford University that Tavita

embodies. Just like to the question before, candidates did not need to have Stanford experience, our candidates did not necessarily need to have head coach experience. Certainly it was an intriguing part of the process.

Couldn't be more thrilled about where we ended up.

**Q. Stanford just improved from the previous season's win total for the first time since 2015. How does this year's team lay the groundwork for what you're hoping to accomplish?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: And brought the Axe back. Don't forget that important part.

One of the words I mentioned that Andrew and I have talked a lot about and thinking about this team, what Coach Frank Reich has done, is 'belief'. I think when you talk about the groundwork that's been laid, it starts there, right?

Even just watching that game. I will take this moment to say now being on the east coast for the last three years, it's clear why we got shafted in all those Heisman Trophy races. It's really hard to watch west coast sports on the east coast. Cal was one of the games I was able to stay up and watch. Our kids stayed up much past their bedtime to see that happen.

To see the belief in that team, the way the defense played, the way the special teams played, the offense built off of that. It's complementary football. It was built on belief, like you saw it happening in that game on that field. That was bubbling under the surface all year, right? That's something that we absolutely will build on that, what's already been happening.

**Q. You talked about the first team meeting yesterday. How nervous were you? What was the moment like in that room? I assume Andrew was right next to you.**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Andrew was there.

There were nerves. I think have a healthy relationship with my nerves at this point. I welcome them. What it tells me is I know that I care about it. When I get nervous, that tells me that I'm in the right place.

Walking into that team meeting, we've done a lot of things around being here, walking in, getting pictures taken. It felt the most right standing in front of that room.

I've dreamt about being in front of that room. To be up there in front of those young men, having sat in those seats in that exact situation, I could just see at that moment how important it will be for Andrew and I to build something

great for them and with them, to allow them to realize their fullest dreams, just put systems of support over and over in every way to help them realize that.

We're really excited about that.

**Q. Andrew, can you speak about Frank Reich and his senior adviser role?**

ANDREW LUCK: Frank did an amazing job. He sort of did a little senior advising for me through this process. Had a chance to get to know Tavita towards the end. Was an incredibly helpful asset along with our search committee.

Frank is a phone call away. Linda gets him back in Carolina and the five grandkids. It's his birthday I think Thursday. Happy birthday, Frank!

But he's here. I feel very fortunate that Frank came for our young men. In many ways Tavita and Frank are cut from a similar cloth. The humility, the desire to lead through service, the joy they both get when others succeed. That's part of what I felt. Frank is a phone call away from Tavita.

I got to see them have a nice 20-minute chat yesterday as he handed the office off to Tavita. It was a special moment for them. I went and took my nap while they were talking (smiling).

Sitting on top of this organization and thinking about how do we just keep doing the next right thing and making progress, right? I know that this step that we're in right now, these first few days, the transition, we're doing the next right thing and we're taking steps forward.

When I go back to go look back into March when Jay Green called me up on the phone and we didn't have a head coach, what do we do? Jay, we don't tank for the first pick in the NBA Draft here. We have to take steps forward. I owe that to the locker room.

We are. We're going to continue to do that. Couldn't be more excited.

**Q. Tavita, you said you're willing to talk some X's and O's.**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: C'mon (smiling).

**Q. Do you envision running that classic Stanford smash-mouth offense? Jayden Daniels, how does that impact the quarterback position?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Yeah, let me start with the Jayden question. This will sound repetitive to some degree.

Jayden's superpower is, one, the way that he works and processes and plays. He's one of the most, like, twitchy athletes, but he's also a twitchy processor. So much of what we did on offense, going into his first season, was built around what he did really, really, really well, just leaning into that.

That's what I learned. That speaks to my answer about schematically what I see doing here.

When it comes to what you're talking about, we will absolutely have a physical Stanford offense. There were a lot of times that got and still gets categorized that that was a certain personnel or certain specific scheme. The reality is, as I was answering the earlier question, there's a lot of different ways to impose your will on an opposing defense.

That's going to be a key element of what we do because there's a misconception, and there always was, one thing that we were most proud of in our time as players, the misconception about Stanford student-athletes, they're silver spoon, intellectual, so there's a softness to it, when that actually couldn't be further from the truth.

There is a grit and a toughness that exists in Stanford people that we will lean into because that's consistent, that's something that I know in my bones. We'll use that. That will be something that we will have a physical, tough element that we will impose our will.

I can't say exactly what that's going to look like from a personnel, who is on the field position standpoint, but I know we'll be built up front. I know there's always five offensive linemen on the field. We're bringing that. We're going to make sure that position room is right.

That was a common thread through all the great Stanford teams, was the offensive line. That's a place we know we will recruit, we will make that kind of the heart and soul of the offense.

**Q. Looking at your résumé, you've coached a lot of different positions through your time. Talk about how those experiences coaching a lot of different positions has helped prepare you for this moment.**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: Yeah, yeah. Andrew mentioned, too, my time on defense. Any coach who is just getting into the profession, I recommend to all of them spend time on the other side of the ball than you played. I played quarterback pretty much my entire life, almost exclusively. In high school my dad was my offensive coordinator, I couldn't play on defense because we didn't have a backup quarterback. He's like, Sorry, man, you just got to play quarterback. I spent a lot of time playing quarterback.





But spending time on the other side of the ball was invaluable for me because you learn the game from the other angle, right, from the other side of the ball.

There are so many assumptions we make as offensive or defensive players about the other side of the ball that simply aren't true. How they're taught certain techniques, how certain coverages behave. That was really good for me to understand the breadth of knowledge that has to be present when you're preparing a game plan, when you're coaching players or teaching technique.

On from that, yes, I spent time with the running backs, coaching Tyler Gaffney, Ryan Hewitt. I coached the receivers and quarterbacks. Obviously just focused on the quarterbacks a little bit later in that time. That just gave me an appreciation for the different facets and how they all fit together.

Going back to that connection and trust, that's going to be fostered in the locker room, but it's got to be fostered in the staff room, as well. When we get in there and watch film together, coming up with a game plan, there's got to be so much open communication.

I don't have all the answers. This is not about me. I have a lot of football knowledge, but this is not about me. I truly believe all of us are smarter than one of us. We're going to get in that room and find the best answer, right? We're not all going to have the same way of coming at it. We may have some disagreements: Here is the best way to execute a deuce block. Here is what I think. We'll hash it out and get to the best answer for us. When we leave that room, because of that trust, connection, alignment, we're going to walk out of there completely aligned so for our players, they know this is how we're doing it, full speed ahead.

**Q. Tavita, do you plan to be your own offensive coordinator? Plan the call the plays?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: I do plan to call the plays. I plan to have a staff. It goes to the question we were just talking about. We will have a staff that we're building this offense together.

Again, I want to bring in a diverse staff with lots of different backgrounds, whether it's different systems, different schemes, NFL, college, right? We want a lot of fresh ideas so that we are building this thing around our Stanford student-athletes but building it together.

The short answer is yes, we're going to have a big staff that does it together.

**Q. Andrew also mentioned Vic Fangio. Do you have an idea for defensive coordinator? This is the guy I'm going to want to run my defense?**

TAVITA PRITCHARD: We have some really good names and some folks that we're really excited to talk to. But we're going to find not just a good defensive coordinator, but a good defensive staff that we're going to build something really cool.

**Q. This is the first time for both of you guys filling out a staff. You worked with a committee in finding the head coach. How does that committee change? Whose input are you looking for in hiring those positions?**

ANDREW LUCK: We've got a lot of work to do. Coach Pritchard runs the coaching vertical of this thing. I'm here to support Tavita in finding the staff that works best for his vision on football, right, and our vision on who this is.

We got a lot of work ahead of us, there is no doubt (smiling). We'll get out of our nice clothes after this and roll up our sleeves and get going. Certainly the process has started.

We got signing day tomorrow, an amazing class of young men that have put a lot of work in. Work is ahead of us, a lot of work is ahead of us. We're ready to go.

TAVITA PRITCHARD: When we think about building a staff, aside from specific names, the prerequisite is we both speak the same language. We want to teach great, sound football to our student-athletes. Beyond that, we are looking for connectors, looking for teachers and communicators.

Back to what I said it's about people, you have to find folks in those rooms who can convey that messaging, who can teach those techniques, who can teach the scheme. That's really what it comes back to.

THE MODERATOR: That conclude's today's press conference. Thank you. Welcome back to The Farm, Coach Pritchard.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports