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Ex-Gopher to clang the stock market bell this afternoon

By **PAUL WALSH**, Star Tribune

Last update: February 27, 2009 - 12:17 PM

A former Gophers and Vikings football player is taking center stage on Wall Street today, but don't blame him for the diving prices on the stock market lately.

Jack Brewer, who played for the University of Minnesota before starting his NFL career in 2002 with the Vikings, will ring the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange this afternoon, the university announced.

On Thursday in New York, Brewer received a Congressional Certificate from U.S. Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., on behalf of the Jack Brewer Foundation's work in Malawi.

The presentation was made at a fundraiser hosted by Dallas Cowboys Running Back

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Marion Barber, another former Gopher, and Brewer's foundation. The fundraiser benefits children and families in Malawi.

The foundation, noting there are 1.2 million orphans in Malawi, directs money to families so they can grow and harvest food within their communities.

The program includes a goat drive that gives mothers with HIV clean goat milk to feed their children, credit to fund fertilizer, seed and farm equipment, and also acts helps finance the development of markets to disburse their locally harvested produce.

Brewer, 30, played two seasons with the Vikings. He then played for the New York Giants, the Philadelphia Eagles and the Arizona Cardinals before retiring in 2006. He now works as a wealth manager for Merrill Lynch.

"I've always said that it is up to all of us as individuals to go beyond even our own ambitions to truly improve mankind," Brewer said, "and I'm proud of my foundation and our efforts to do just that."

Brewer will be accompanied at the bell-ringing by numerous supporters of the foundation, including Rangel, Barber and former Gophers and Olympic volleyball player Lindsey Berg.

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