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## **Derrick Brooks**



Derrick is often referred to as one of the most respected players in the National Football League as he embodied discipline and demanded commitment from his teammates. Brooks holds the distinction of being the only Buccaneers player to be named to eleven Pro Bowls.

He was the unquestioned leader of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and one of the NFL's best linebackers; incredibly, he started over 200 consecutive games. His ability to run down some of the league's top playmakers led Brooks to become the most prolific tackler in Buccaneers history with over 1900 career tackles.

The 2002 season ranks as the best of Brooks' career, during which he led Tampa Bay to its first Super Bowl championship, was named AP Defensive Player of the Year and racked up numerous All-Pro and MVP team honors from various sports publications and organizations. Brooks is just the fifth player in NFL history, whose

career accomplishments include the trifecta of ten consecutive Pro Bowl appearances, AP Defensive Player of the Year honors, and a Super Bowl championship.

Through his foundation, Derrick Brooks Charities, Inc., Derrick has made it his life's mission to positively impact the lives of youth in the Tampa Bay area. The Brooks Bunch program served as the cornerstone of Derrick Brooks's community involvement leading the way for the formation of Derrick Brooks Charities, Inc. As a rookie, Brooks began to visit the Boys & Girls Clubs as a way to encourage and motivate the children to excel in the classroom.

The program incorporates a classroom element, a panel presentation, and behavior and grade assessments, all while leading up to trips around the country and around the globe. Brooks has accompanied his Bunch on seven educational journeys altogether, including a college tour to New York, Chicago, and Tallahassee, and trips to Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and the western United States. In 2000 and 2005, Brooks Bunch members who earned their way traveled with Brooks to South Africa where they visited Johannesburg, Cape Town, Robben Island, and Sabi Sabi safari camp. In addition to the Brooks Bunch program, Derrick Brooks Charities, Inc., includes annual programs such as a college preparatory program "First and Goal" which prepares first generation college attendees for their next step in life – post secondary education, something that never looked like a reality to them.

In August of 2007, Derrick realized one of his lifelong goals with the opening of the Brooks-DeBartolo Collegiate High School; a Hillsborough County sponsored Charter High School. There are currently close to 200 students enrolled with a three year goal of reaching a total enrollment of 500. Derrick was able to oversee the implementation of the only traditional charter high school in the Bay area. Brooks-DeBartolo's mission is to provide a rigorous and relevant academic environment where both students and teachers achieve excellence through high expectations, collaboration and support.

Derrick has been the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the 2000 Walter Payton/NFL Man of the Year award, the 2003 Bart Starr Award, and the 2004 Bryon "Whizzer" White Award, and the 2008 JB Award through the NFL Player's association, all of which recognize an NFL player annually for their commitment to the communities in which they live.

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