

Derrick Brooks

Founder of Derrick Brooks Charities



The Tampa Bay Buccaneers drafted Derrick Brooks in the first round of the 1995 NFL Draft, where he remained to play his entire 14-season professional career. He is widely considered one of the best linebackers in NFL history. An 11-time Pro Bowl selection and nine-time All-Pro, Brooks was named AP NFL Defensive Player of the Year in 2002 and earned a Super Bowl ring with the Buccaneers in Super Bowl XXXVII. In February 2014, Derrick received one of the highest honors of his life, being named to the Pro Football Hall of Fame and was inducted in Canton, Ohio, in August of 2014. He was also inducted into the Capital One Academic All-America Hall of Fame. In September 2014, Derrick was enshrined into the Ring of Honor by The Tampa Bay Buccaneers; No Buccaneer player will ever wear the number 55. Derrick is currently serving as an On Field Appeals Officer for the National Football League, as well as the Executive Vice President of Corporate and Community Development for Vinik Sports Group. He was also Co-Chairman of the Super Bowl Host Committee for Super Bowl 55.

Brooks graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Communications at Florida State University. As a Student Athlete on the Football Team, he was a three-time, first-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference selection, three-time first-team All-American, and a member of the 1993 Seminoles National Championship team. In November 2010, Florida State retired Seminoles jersey number 10 in honor of Brooks, and he was also inducted into the Florida State Athletics Hall of Fame. He earned his master's in Business Communications from FSU in 1999, and received his doctorate in Humane Letters from St. Leo's University in 2006.

He is recognized more often for his hard work in the community as he was for his hard work on the football field. Brooks has been the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the 2000 Walter Payton/NFL Man of the Year award, the 2003 Bart Starr Award, the 2004 Bryon "Whizzer" White Award, and the 2008 JB Award through the NFL Players Association, all of which recognize an NFL player annually for their commitment to the communities in which they live. Derrick also has received numerous community awards in Tampa, Florida, for his work and dedication to the community, such as the 2007 Citizen of the Year from the Tampa Sports Club, the 2014 Lee Roy Selmon Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tampa Sports Commission, 2014 Community Hero Award from the Tampa Bay Lightning, 2014 Community Champion Award from the Boys and Girls Clubs, and the 2021 WrestleMania 37 Community Champion Award. In 2024, he was awarded the keys to the city of his hometown, Pensacola, Florida, and January 13th was declared Derrick Brooks Day.

Brooks was appointed to the Board of Trustees of Florida State University by Governor Jeb Bush in 2003, where he occupied a seat until 2011. He has also served on the Florida Department of Education Foundation, St. Leo's University, and Brooks-DeBartolo Charities, Inc. In 2007, he was appointed by Governor Charlie Crist as the Chairman of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness – helping to eliminate the problem of childhood obesity in the State of Florida. Derrick also serves on other Boards of Directors. In 2006, he partnered with the Eddie DeBartolo Family to become the Co-Owners of Brooks-DeBartolo Collegiate High School, the very first traditional charter high school in the Tampa Bay area.