



DESIRE STREET  
ACADEMY

**MEDIA ALERT**

## **PAVING THE WAY IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CALLED DESIRE DANNY WUERFFEL INVITES PAUL VITALE TO INSPIRE STUDENTS**

**NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—May 24, 2004—**At the invitation of Heisman Trophy winner **Danny Wuerffel**, **Paul Vitale** recently had the privilege to present his interactive program, *A Hero Within - Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Leaders*, to 124 students at Desire Street Academy. On May 19, 2005, **Vitale** joined **Wuerffel** in New Orleans, Louisiana to share his message of encouragement and inspiration to students in what was once the nation's second largest public housing site and ranked the worst by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Originating from the vision of Reverend Mo Leverett, Desire Street Ministries began in 1990 on the East side of downtown New Orleans. Throughout the 1990's, Mo's ministry reached out to the youth through local sports, and eventually developed his foundation for Desire Street Academy. Today with an enrollment of 140 students in grades 7-10, he and his team of educators and advisors focus their time and attention on their mission – to revitalize the Desire neighborhood through spiritual and community development.

Recognizing that Desire Street's highest priority is to motivate and prepare each young man for their future, **Vitale** inspired and challenged the students to make sound choices in their daily lives. "It was truly amazing to have the opportunity to tour Desire Street and see all the wonderful programs taking place to better prepare the students enrolled. Seeing the eagerness to learn on the faces of each young man during my presentation was fantastic," **Vitale** said when he came off the stage.

Citing examples of modern day heroes such as 1996 Heisman Trophy winner **Danny Wuerffel**, as well as everyday heroes such as our families, **Vitale** shared the importance of a positive attitude, the power of influence and the significance of character. "Paul did a remarkable job relating to our students," **Wuerffel** said. "We've had many speakers come here and present, but only a few have truly connected."

**Wuerffel**, who retired from the NFL last year, is the Director of Development for Desire Street Ministries. The skills he used to lead the Florida Gators to a National Championship while setting 17 NCAA records and winning the Heisman & Draddy Awards, are now being used to raise awareness for the needs of the Desire community.

*A Hero Within – Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Leaders* is a program that **Vitale** created and began initiating in Arkansas Schools last fall. **Vitale's** next stop with *A Hero Within* will be June 2, 2005 in inner city high schools in Washington DC, in conjunction with the Washington Redskins.

**Paul Vitale** is a native of Russellville, Arkansas. Since founding Vital Communications in 1996 **Vitale** has authored two books and has delivered his message of affirmation to thousands of people throughout America. His stress on the importance of a positive attitude, a strong work ethic and other vital concepts, coupled with his energetic and enjoyable presentation style have made him one of America's most sought-out training and motivational speakers. Prior to his full-time speaking career, **Vitale** worked as the Director of Sales and Marketing for the Hot Springs Convention Center located in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He began his career working for the largest advertising and marketing firm in the State of Arkansas, Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods. **Vitale** was part of the team responsible for all of the tourism promotion for the State and continues to promote Arkansas whenever possible through his speaking.

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