



MINNESOTA VIKINGS NEWS RELEASE

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MATT BIRK NAMED “VIKINGS MAN OF THE YEAR” FOR THE SEVENTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

BIRK TO BE RECOGNIZED AS HE HOSTS PIZZA PARTY FOR GRIDIRON GEOGRAPHY WINNERS

MINNEAPOLIS – On Tuesday, December 16th from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Pro Bowl center **Matt Birk** will host a pizza party for the winning school of the Vikings/Star Tribune Gridiron Geography program. The party will take place at Winter Park, located at 9520 Viking Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344.

The school was chosen through a drawing of classrooms participating in the statewide program. This year’s winner is Ms. Lucretia Jeffers’ 8th grade classroom from Metcalf Junior High School in Burnsville, MN. During the season students throughout the state have been participating in the program that tracks the NFL cities the Vikings play in.

At the pizza party, Matt will be named Vikings Community Man of the Year by the Vikings Executive Director of Community Relations/Youth Football, **Brad Madson**. Since joining the Vikings in 1998, Birk has been a cornerstone in the Vikings community efforts. In addition, in 2002 Birk established his own HIKE Foundation and has raised more than \$450,000 to date. The funds have been used to for interactive programming and education assistance. Matt is the team spokesperson for United Way, has made countless school and children’s hospital visits and generously supports his teammates community initiatives as well.

The students will also be treated to a segment of the dynamic program “A Hero Within” presented on behalf of the Vikings by program founder **Paul Vitale**, professional speaker and author from Little Rock, Arkansas. Highlighting Matt’s accomplishments, Vitale will reinforce the values of Vikings Community Relations, challenging the students to release their inner hero every day.



EDITOR’S NOTE: Paul Vitale, founder of Vital Communications, Inc. travels the globe encouraging students from all walks of life on behalf of professional sports organizations as well at the request of institutions of education. He is a graduate of the Greater Little Rock COC Leadership Program and has been voted one of Arkansas’ “40 under 40” by Arkansas Business. He began his career with Cranford Johnson Robinson and Woods and served as the Director of Sales & Marketing for the Hot Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau.