



Motivational Madness E-Newsletter

A Neighborhood Called Desire

At the invitation of Danny Wuerffel, Paul 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. Located in one of America's toughest and poorest neighborhoods, Desire Street challenges each young man enrolled to strive for excellence in all areas of life.



Danny Wuerffel & Paul

Originating from the vision of Reverend Mo Leverett, Desire Street Ministries began in 1990 on the East side of downtown New Orleans. The Desire Community housed what was once the nation's second largest public housing site and was ranked the worst by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. 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 the 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, Paul 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," Paul 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, Paul 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 last year from the NFL, 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.

It was a true pleasure for Paul to work with Desire Street Ministries. He enjoyed meeting Mo, Oscar, Kristen and the rest of the team who are paving the way for the minds of many in a neighborhood called Desire.

Vital Information

Poverty Hits Home

According to the most recent (2003) Current Population Survey report:

Average U.S. income - \$43,318

Poverty level for a family of four - \$18,810

Americans living below the poverty level - 35.9 million

Children under 18 living in poverty - 12.9 million

Make A Difference

- Work at a shelter
- Help build or repair houses
- Offer your skills to train others
- Share your hobbies
- Mentor a child
- Involve others

Never hesitate to hold out your hand, never hesitate to accept the outstretched hand of another.

Pope John XXII