



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
TIDEWATER COUNCIL

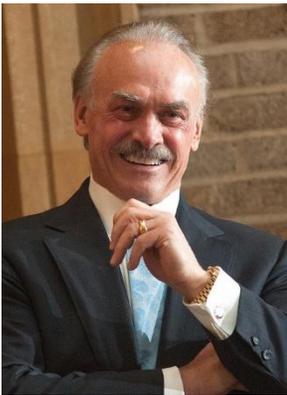
Annual Leadership Breakfast

Tuesday, May 4, 2021, at 7:15AM

Westin Virginia Beach Town Center

Featuring Super Bowl champion and former Pittsburgh Steeler

ROCKY BLEIER



Rocky Bleier's life story is a gripping tale of courage on both the football fields of America and the battlefields of Vietnam.

He was a star running back on Notre Dame's national championship team of 1966. Not falling within the ideal of what an NFL running back should look like, Bleier had to run harder and play smarter to stand out. Despite his drive and ability to make the big play, the Pittsburgh Steelers only considered him a late-round pick.

But before his first season ended, he was drafted again... this time by the United States Army. At the height of the Vietnam War, Bleier was thrust into combat early and was seriously wounded when his platoon ran into an ambush. Receiving wounds from both rifle fire and grenade fragments in his legs, he was barely able to walk. His professional football career seemed to have ended before it began.

After earning a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart for his courageous service, Bleier rejoined the Steelers in camp in 1970. Upon his return, he couldn't walk without being in pain and weighed only 180 pounds. He drove himself for more than two years to return to football, during which he was put on injured reserve and later waived twice. But Bleier never gave up, saying that he worked hard so that "some time in the future you didn't have to ask yourself 'what if?'"

Little by little, he overcame obstacles and fought his way back. He eventually earned a spot as the starting running back on a Steelers team that won four Super Bowls and became the greatest football team of the 20th century.

During the 1976 season, he and Franco Harris rushed for over 1,000 yards, just the second NFL tandem to accomplish this feat, after Mercury Morris and Larry Csonka of the 1972 Miami Dolphins. After the 1980 season, Bleier retired with 3,865 rushing yards, 136 receptions for 1,294 yards, and 25 touchdowns. At the time of his retirement, he was the Steelers' fourth all-time leading rusher.



The hard lessons Rocky Bleier learned in his life that helped him overcome adversity and reach his goals have paid off after football. Some are told in the book on his life, "Fighting Back," and an ABC-TV movie by the same name.

Tidewater Council's Annual Fundraising Breakfast honors and supports the efforts of thousands of volunteers who provide a quality year-round Scouting program to youth in Hampton Roads, Virginia, and northeastern North Carolina.
All proceeds remain local and benefit the Tidewater Council, Boy Scouts of America.

Contact Susan Miley Petrehn for sponsorship opportunities at (757) 284-0796/Susan.miley-petrehn@scouting.org.

Contact Shannon Foster to RSVP at shannon.foster@scouting.org.



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