



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **BUCCANEERS TO HONOR SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES AT SUNDAY'S SALUTE TO SERVICE GAME, PRESENTED BY USAA**

***\$25,000 Donation to Central Florida USO, Special Guests and Tributes, and Halftime Military Enlistment Ceremony Among Many Salute to Service Activities Throughout Sunday's Game***

This Sunday, Nov. 11, as the nation celebrates Veterans Day, fans will join together in an annual tradition to honor those who have sacrificed and served our country when the Tampa Bay Buccaneers host the Washington Redskins for the team's **Salute to Service Game**. In conjunction with USAA, the Official Salute to Service Partner of the Buccaneers and the NFL, the team will present military appreciation tributes throughout Sunday. Upon arrival to Raymond James Stadium, fans visiting Bucs Beach in the south plaza can check out armored military vehicles and enjoy a special performance from the Soldiers' Chorus of the United States Army Field Band. Below is a full list of Salute to Service elements that will lead up to and take place during Sunday's game:

**\$25,000 Donation to Central Florida USO:** During pregame ceremonies, Owner / President, Tampa Bay Buccaneers Foundation & Glazer Family Foundation **Darcie Glazer Kassewitz** will present Central Florida USO with a **\$25,000 donation** to support its ongoing programming and services. Since 2013, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Foundation has donated **\$150,000** to Central Florida USO, one of more than 160 USO centers worldwide that deliver high-quality programs and services to men and women in uniform. The Buccaneers sponsor the Central Florida USO Welcome Center at Tampa International Airport to help provide a home away from home for thousands of military members and their families who travel through the Tampa area. In addition, the Buccaneers collaborate with Central Florida USO on the team's military "Hero of the Game" and "Salute to Service Suite" honorees, Military Appreciation Day at training camp, the General H Norman Schwarzkopf Military Family of the Year Awards, and the distribution of complimentary tickets to thousands of Tampa Bay military members and their families every season.



Central Florida

**Central Florida USO Military Appreciation Tailgate:** On Sunday morning, the Buccaneers and Central Florida USO will once again host the **Central Florida USO Military Appreciation Tailgate**. The free pre-game tailgate experience in Parking Lot 6, south of Raymond James Stadium, will host more than 500 pre-registered military members and their families as they gear up for kickoff. Note: All pre-registered guests who have received Central Florida USO Tailgate tickets must still present the tailgate ticket as well as their military ID (U.S. Department of Defense Card, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Card, or DD-214) to attend.

**Hero of the Game: United States Army Sergeant Nelson Hamilton:** Prior to kickoff, the Buccaneers will continue a gameday tradition by honoring the team's military "Hero of the Game." At every Buccaneers home game, a military service member is stationed on the Pirate Ship in Buccaneer Cove to ready the team for kickoff. On Sunday, the Buccaneers will honor United States Army Sergeant Nelson Hamilton. During World War II, Hamilton served in the 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division where he constructed bridgeheads on rivers in preparation of enemy counter attacks across Normandy. Hamilton also assisted the 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division in relief of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division along the Clerve and Wiltz River. For his bravery and commitment to service in combat, Sergeant Hamilton was awarded the Bronze Star.

**Pre-game Ceremonies, presented by USAA: Player Introductions, Color Guard, National Anthem and Flyover:** When the Buccaneers are introduced, **five Airmen from the 927<sup>th</sup> Wing at MacDill Air Force Base**, will lead the players out of the tunnel... The Buccaneers will be welcomed to the field by a flag team comprised of **50 military guests of USAA**... **United States Special Operations Command Joint Service Color Guard** will present the **colors** and the **national anthem** will be performed by **The Soldiers' Chorus of the United States Army Field Band**... A pre-game flyover will be carried out by **two T-1A Jayhawks from Columbus, Mississippi**.

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**Honorary Guest of the Game (Coin Toss): General Raymond A. Thomas III, Four-Star General and Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command.** Gen. Thomas will serve as the Buccaneers' honorary Guest of the Game and will join the Buccaneers team captains at midfield for the coin toss. USAA has supplied a special **Military Appreciation Coin** that will be used for the toss.

**Salute to Service Moment, presented by USAA:** During a break in play, the public address announcer will ask all military members in attendance to stand and be honored for the game's Salute to Service Moment, presented by USAA.

**Buccaneers Salute to Service Suite, supported by Jabil:** At every Buccaneers home game, the team honors a distinguished group of military members in the Salute to Service Suite, supported by Jabil. Fans are encouraged to join players and coaches during a break in play in the second quarter to thank local servicemen and servicewomen for their sacrifices, as they are recognized aboard the Pirate Ship in Raymond James Stadium. On Sunday, the Buccaneers will recognize this year's **General H Norman Schwarzkopf Military Family of the Year Award recipients:**

- Staff Sergeant Jon Voelkel (Army) and family
- Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Storer (Marines) and family
- Petty Officer First Class Patricia Stanton (Navy) and family
- Staff Sergeant Russell Fenimore (Air Force) and family
- Petty Officer Michael Walker (Coast Guard) and family
- Technical Guard Felix Ramirez (Reserves) and family

**Community Player Ticket Program:** Over 200 military members and their families will enjoy the game from exclusive seats at Raymond James Stadium, compliments of Buccaneers players, as part of the player ticket program.

**Military Enlistment Ceremony and Award Presentation:** During the game's halftime intermission, the Buccaneers will host a **Military Enlistment Ceremony for 200 inductees** of all service branches, conducted by **General Joseph L. Votel**, Four-Star General and Commander of U.S Central Command. The Tampa Bay community will also be recognized as a **2018 Great American Defense Community** by the Association of Defense Communities. Representatives from the Association of Defense Communities, MacDill Air Force Base, Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Tampa Bay Defense Alliance and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers will be present at midfield to accept the award.

**Buccaneers Visit to MacDill Air Force Base:** On Tuesday, October 30, Buccaneers players Andrew Adams, Cam Brate, Alan Cross, Ryan Fitzpatrick, Ryan Griffin, O.J. Howard, Ryan Jensen, Salute to Service Award nominee Evan Smith, and Leonard Wester, in conjunction with USAA, spent their day off [visiting MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa](#). The visit included a tour of a KC-135 Refueling Aircraft, an exclusive tour inside United States Central Command, and an autograph signing and meet and greet for servicemembers stationed in Tampa. To see more from the players' trip to MacDill Air Force Base, visit [Buccaneers.com](#).



*Buccaneers players including QB Ryan Fitzpatrick recently visited MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa.*

**2018 Buccaneers Salute to Service Award Nominee – Evan Smith:** On November 2, the NFL and USAA announced the 32 nominees for the eighth annual *Salute to Service Award* presented by USAA. Tampa Bay Buccaneers offensive lineman **Evan Smith** has been nominated for the prestigious honor, which annually recognizes NFL players, coaches and personnel who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to honoring and supporting the military community, as selected by NFL clubs.

Growing up in a military household, Smith developed a respect and reverence for the armed forces at an early age. His father, Albert, was a member of the United States Army 82nd Airborne division, which specializes in parachute operations, from 1971-1973. Smith's grandfather, Robert Dietrich served in the Navy during World War II from 1942-1945. His brother, Alex Dietrich-Smith, became the third generation to serve in the military and was deployed in the Iraq War, for which he was awarded a Purple Heart. In all, Smith and his wife have 12 relatives who have or are

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currently serving in the United States Military. That familial connection has translated into a strong passion and desire to aid veterans and service members, especially in Tampa Bay's large military community.

This season, Smith has visited members of the U.S. Coast Guard in St. Petersburg and continued a tradition of visiting MacDill Air Force Base to meet with military members during players' days off. Every opportunity the Buccaneers have to go on base or interact with servicemen and servicewomen, Smith is the first to volunteer.



Smith (right), speaking to a service member on October 30 when the team visited MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa.

This past offseason, Smith also served as the honorary speaker at the General H Norman Schwarzkopf Military Family of the Year Awards, which honor the families of active duty military members from each branch of service. Addressing a packed crowd in the auditorium at AdventHealth Training Center, Smith expressed his gratitude for the sacrifices these families make, recognizing their integrity, courage, commitment and service before self. As someone who has lived through challenges that military families often face, Smith knows firsthand how hard daily life can be.

Finalists for the *Salute to Service Award* presented by USAA will be announced in January and the recipient will be recognized at NFL Honors, a two-hour primetime awards special to air nationally on Feb. 2, 2019 the night before Super Bowl LIII.

**NFL Salute to Service:** The Salute to Service Award is part of the NFL and USAA's year-round commitment to Honor, Empower and Connect with our nation's service members, veterans and their families. *Salute to Service* is highlighted in NFL games during Weeks 9 – 11 and other special events around the league, as fans and the NFL's 32 clubs demonstrate their gratitude for the sacrifices of our heroes.



As the NFL did last year, to encourage fans to honor our military heroes and their families, the league will donate \$5, up to \$5 million, to its nonprofit partners for every use of #SaluteToService through November 19. On Veterans Day, the amount donated by the NFL will rise to \$25 for each use of the designated hashtag. Since 2011, Salute to Service has raised more than \$26 million for military and veteran nonprofit organizations. The NFL is proud to support its core military nonprofit partners – the Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF), the Pat Tillman Foundation, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), the USO, and Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) – to fund programs and provide resources that improve the lives of service members, veterans and their families. The league also partners with USAA, an Official NFL Salute to Service Partner, to work together to honor and recognize service members and veterans with unique experiences around NFL calendar events.

Beginning last Sunday and continuing throughout the month, NFL *Salute to Service* games will feature on-field items such as *Salute to Service* ribbon footballs and camouflage equipment for players including quarterback towels, captain's patches, Gatorade towels, New Era caps and knits, and Nike apparel products. Players will also wear helmet decals honoring military branches including the Army, the Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, as well as the National Guard.

Game-worn *Salute to Service* merchandise and footballs will be auctioned at [NFL.com/Auction](http://NFL.com/Auction). Special camouflage merchandise will be available at [NFLShop.com](http://NFLShop.com) and in select stadium retail stores. The NFL does not profit from the sale of Salute to Service products. All charitable contributions are donated to the NFL's military nonprofit organizations.

For more information on the Buccaneers' Salute to Service initiatives, visit [www.buccaneers.com/community/salute-to-service](http://www.buccaneers.com/community/salute-to-service).

For tickets, go to [Ticketmaster.com/Buccaneers](http://Ticketmaster.com/Buccaneers) or call 866.582.2827.

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