

[nwi.com, Northwest Indiana and South Suburban Chicago area](#)

[Login](#) | [Register](#)

[Search](#)

[Advanced Search](#) [Privacy](#) [About Our Ads](#)

Both NFL stars in Lansing to promote their charities

Pair of NFL stars in Lansing to promote their charities

- [Story](#)
- [Discussion](#)

BY AL HAMNIK - al.hamnik@nwi.com, (219) 933-4154 | Posted: Wednesday, April 7, 2010 12:05 am | [1 Comment](#)

Font Size:

[Default font size](#)

[Larger font size](#)



[Buy this photo](#) JOHN LUKE | THE TIMES New Orleans Saints running back Pierre Thomas, left, greets Tom Tuohy, president of the charity "Dreams For Kids" at Popolano's Restaurant in

Lansing on Tuesday night for Thomas' Victory Dinner, a benefit for the organization. The T.F. South grad and Super Bowl XLIV champion shook hands with 125 friends and fans from the area.

Pro Bowl linebacker Lance Briggs can't go anywhere in the Chicago area or Northwest Indiana without being approached by excitable Bears fans.

Running back Pierre Thomas, the leading rusher last season for the world champion New Orleans Saints, is fast approaching that star power.

If there's strength in numbers, imagine the positive impact both made Tuesday night at Thomas' benefit dinner for "Dreams For Kids" at Popolano's Restaurant in Lansing. Briggs made a guest appearance to help the Thornton Fractional South grad and to plug his charity -- Briggs4Kidz -- and its April 12 event.

Making Thomas' involvement more remarkable is the fact he is not married and has no children.

"That's a great example of a great role model," said Tom Tuohy, president and founder of Dreams For Kids. "What it does is set an example for every single person to be responsible for the children of our time. And it also sets an example for those who have children that there are other children out there who don't have parents or role models.

"We help the next generation now so they're prepared to live in the future. We have to concentrate on the kids living with disabilities or in poverty today so 10 years from now they haven't been neglected or isolated. We want them to be the solution, not part of the problem."

Thomas said he fell in love with the cause immediately upon learning about the organization.

"That's something I want to be a part of, helping little kids with their dreams any way I can," Thomas said. "When I was younger, I didn't have a lot of people to help me out so I want to give back. That's my whole focus -- getting these kids active, out of the streets, and having fun.

"I want to make sure the kids have role models and something to look forward to whether or not they play sports. You never know. You reach out and you might touch one of these kids and they might want to do the same thing when they get older."

Briggs4Kidz has similar goals. The Bears' star is not married but has three young children.

"My childhood, my upbringing, my mom and the values she instilled in me and my sisters ... for me it's about never forgetting where you come from," Briggs said. "To drive an hour and a half from my home to see Pierre giving back is a reason for doing this and I'll support anyone who does.

"I target those who are less fortunate and I reward kids for attendance, citizenship, improved grades, things like that. Teachers who've been with them every day select the right kids."

Briggs recently returned from his home town of Sacramento, Calif., where he visited the elementary school he attended and read to several of the children there.

"Made me feel almost as good as winning the Super Bowl," he said. "Almost."

PRO FOOTBALL

Star gazing in Chicago

PIERRE THOMAS, New Orleans Saints

Thursday -- will throw out first pitch at White Sox night game with Cleveland with an after-party at the Fifty/50, which is managed by T.F. South alum Eddie Mahoney and has T.F. South grad and current New York Yankees center fielder Curtis Granderson as an investor.

Friday -- will host a Saints' victory party at Excalibur night club in Chicago with guests Steve Slaton of the Houston Texans, Jarrett Payton of the Chicago Slaughter and the Bears' Chester Taylor, Garrett Wolfe and Jerry Azumah.

LANCE BRIGGS, Chicago Bears

Monday -- "A Reason To Dream" kicks off the Briggs4Kidz Foundation from 6 p.m. to midnight at Lumen Nightclub, 839 West Fulton Market St., Chicago. Open bar and food from 6-9 p.m. Door prizes, raffle items and silent auction.

Posted in [Professional](#) on *Wednesday, April 7, 2010 12:05 am* | Tags: [Pro Sports](#), [Bears](#), [Football](#), [Lansing](#), [Nfl](#), [Super Bowl](#), [Tf South High School](#), [Tf South Rebels](#),