

The SallieMae Fund

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Real-Life Hero of Disney's *Invincible* Movie Helps Students Achieve Their Dreams of a Higher Education
The Sallie Mae Fund's "Hold Fast to Dreams" Tour Features Vince Papale,
\$50,000 in College Scholarships and College Prep Workshops

PHILADELPHIA, Aug. 29, 2006 — The Sallie Mae Fund's Vince Papale—a Philadelphia native who inspired a new Walt Disney Pictures' movie about beating the odds—will take his message to thousands of high school students this fall. The Sallie Mae Fund, a charitable organization sponsored by Sallie Mae, created the "Hold Fast to Dreams" tour to encourage students to reach their dreams through a college education.

Walt Disney Pictures' movie—"Invincible"—is inspired by the true story of Vince Papale, a former high school teacher and part-time bartender who tried out for and made the Philadelphia Eagles team in 1976 at the age of 30. A graduate of St. Joseph's University, Papale was part of the Eagles comeback, which eventually took them all the way to the Super Bowl under Coach Dick Vermeil. The Sallie Mae Fund chose Coach Vermeil's popular locker room quote—"Hold Fast to Dreams"—to capture the spirit of the tour. The line is from a Langston Hughes poem.

"We have designed this tour to connect Vince's two dreams—to be a football player and to be the first in his family to attend college," said Kathleen deLaski, president, The Sallie Mae Fund. "Young people need role models beyond celebrities. Vince has been a sports celebrity, and he's also been a teacher, businessman, husband, father and cancer survivor. He now works for The Sallie Mae Fund, helping students and parents understand the value of a college education."

After a three-year career with the Eagles, Vince's college degree helped him pursue a business career with Sallie Mae, the nation's leading provider of education funding. Through the years, he has spent many volunteer hours and won awards for his student and parent seminars on how to pay for college.

As part of the tour, Vince will present inspirational workshops to help thousands of students in traditionally underserved areas prepare for college. The tour will be launched from Papale's alma mater, Interboro High School in Philadelphia, on September 15, and will also visit high schools in Newark, Orlando, St. Louis and Los Angeles. At each of the five high schools Papale will visit, The Sallie Mae Fund will award a \$10,000 "Hold Fast to Dreams" scholarship to a deserving student.

"I am part of The Sallie Mae Fund's tour to help kids across the country achieve their dreams," said Papale. "It's great to want to be a sports star or a Hollywood celebrity, but it's important to dream for college, too. College has allowed me to provide for my family and live a good life."

As part of the campaign to underscore the importance of college attendance, a public service announcement featuring Vince Papale and Mark Wahlberg (who plays Vince on-screen), is being shown in theaters across the country. Go to www.salliemae.org to see the public service announcement and to download Vince's "5 Plays to Win Your Way to College."

The Sallie Mae Fund, a charitable organization sponsored by Sallie Mae, achieves its mission—to increase access to a postsecondary education for America’s students—by supporting programs and initiatives that help open doors to higher education, prepare families for their investment, and bridge the gap when no one else can. For more information visit www.salliemaefund.org.

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