

## ROCKY BLEIER - "Bio"

Rocky Bleier's life story - a gripping tale of courage on both the football fields of America and the battle fields of Vietnam – has held audiences in rapt attention for years. Yet, the motivational message behind it, detailing how ordinary people can become extraordinary achievers, defines success in the new American century.

With the same optimism, sense of humor and steadfast determination that were his trademarks as a Pittsburgh Steelers running back, Rocky Bleier takes audiences from his early years through his professional career and talks about the lessons he learned along the way....lessons that we all can benefit from.

Not falling within the ideal of what a running back should look like, Bleier had to run harder and play smarter to be able 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 the season ended that first year, 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 and his professional football career seemed to have ended before it began.

For more than two years, he drove himself. Little by little he overcame obstacles and fought his back. He not only made the Pittsburgh Steelers, but also eventually became a starting running back on a team that won four Super Bowls and became the greatest football team of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The hard lessons Rocky Bleier learned early in his life, which helped him, overcome adversity and reach his goals, have paid off after football. What makes Rocky Bleier so popular as a speaker is his ability to translate core values in his speech, "Be the Best You Can Be". With real-world practicality, he points out ways to reach new levels of inner-confidence.

Whether it is career development for corporate executives, enhancing sales and marketing skills for sales teams, offering inspiration for young professionals or practical advice to student athletes, Bleier's delivery is a winner. His message consistently brings audiences to their feet and re-energizes them for personal and work challenges ahead. His advice is not about avoiding life's twists and turns but conditioning one's self to lean into them and to incorporate the resulting energy in realizing goals.

# ROCKY BLEIER - "Fact Sheet"

- Born in Appleton, Wisconsin (1946)
- Attended Xavier High School
- 1968 Graduated from Notre Dame
  - Degree in Business Management
- 1968 Drafted in the 16<sup>th</sup> round by the NFL Pittsburgh Steelers
- December 1968 Drafted by the U.S. Army
- May 1969 Sent to Vietnam
  - Served with the 4<sup>th</sup> /31<sup>st</sup> of the 196<sup>th</sup> LIB of the Americal Division
  - Stationed in Chu Lai, South Vietnam located in I Corp
- August 1969 Wounded in Heip Duc
  - Awarded Purple Heart
  - Awarded Bronze Star
- 1970 Pittsburgh Steelers Injured Reserve
- 1971 Pittsburgh Steelers Taxi Squad
- 1972 Made the active roster for the Pittsburgh Steelers
- 1974 Earned a spot in the starting backfield
- 1975 Enjoyed one of the best games of his career against the Greenbay Packers...he rushed for 163 yards for the day.
- 1976 Rocky Bleier & Franco Harris became only the second pair of running backs from the same team to gain 1000 yards in the same season.
- 1977 Scored the "go-ahead" touchdown in Super Bowl XIII
- 1980 Retired from the Pittsburgh Steelers at the end of the 1980 season.
- 1980 – present President, Rocky Bleier, Inc.
  - Four-time Super Bowl Champion (IX; X; XIII; XIV)