HearStrong & the NFLPA’s Professional Athletes Foundation Recognize Champions Before the Big Game

At the NFLPA’s 2019 Smocks and Jocks charitable art auction, music producer and not-for-profit founder, Darnell Parks, and Sheriff’s Deputy, Parker Gray were honored as HearStrong Champions.

ATLANTA (PRWEB) February 06, 2019 -- On February 2, 2019, HearStrong joined the NFLPA’s Professional Athletes Foundation in Atlanta, Georgia, at Smocks and Jocks, an exclusive player event preceding Sunday’s big game. There, music producer and not-for-profit founder, Darnell Parks, and Sheriff’s Deputy, Parker Gray, were honored for their successes and advocacy for others with hearing loss.

Founded in 2013, HearStrong is a non-profit organization with a mission to spread hearing loss awareness. Through recognition, funding and resources, HearStrong empowers people with hearing loss to inspire change and break down the barriers that prevent others from seeking the care they need. For both Darnell and Parker, hearing loss awareness has always been crucial.

Born deaf in his right ear, Darnell felt like he constantly had to prove himself. This motivated him to be more competitive in sports and music—two areas in which he excelled. As a teen, he lost most of the hearing in his left ear suddenly and realized the importance of hearing loss advocacy even more so. A few years ago, Darnell founded H.E.A.R. Me Out, a non-profit based in Denver.

Standing for Hearing Education and Adult Resources, the organization helps connect those with hearing loss to resources for their professional and personal lives. In fact, the organization’s website now contains one of the most comprehensive directories for hearing loss resources in the Atlanta area.

“I’ve always believed that regardless of any challenges we may have, nothing should stop us from pursuing our dreams and achieving our goals,” says Darnell. “If there is an opportunity to help our hearing, then there is an opportunity to appreciate more of the beauty that this world has to offer.”

Like Darnell, Parker Gray was born with hearing loss. Parker’s parents did everything they could to get him the resources he needed, and at 4½ months old, Parker was fit with his first pair of hearing aids.

“In my life, I had a family who learned everything they could about hearing loss, and taught me every single day how to listen, communicate, and never give up,” says Parker.

Today, Parker is a Sheriff’s deputy who has dedicated his life to helping others. At a young age, he began to teach horseback riding lessons to children and adults, and he volunteers for his local Cub Scout Pack and mentors youth through TSOTS Ministry.

HearStrong is honored to have advocates like Darnell and Parker to propel the hearing loss awareness movement. Each year, HearStrong proudly recognizes Champions at the Smocks and Jocks charitable art auction, featuring artwork of current and former professional football players. Proceeds from the event go to the Gene Upshaw Players Assistance Trust, an organization that helps former players in need of financial assistance or those who wish to continue their education. Former NFL players have played an important role in HearStrong’s mission and many have been named as HearStrong ambassadors.
With these outstanding events, and advocates, HearStrong is better equipped to spread awareness about hearing health and hearing aids.

To nominate a HearStrong Champion or learn more about how you can get involved with the organization, call 866-432-7500.

About HearStrong:
HearStrong is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that seeks to shatter the stereotypes surrounding hearing loss and its advanced solutions by honoring the accomplishments of those who have overcome hearing loss and inspire others to do the same. Supported by the dedication of EarQ providers, the organization is a worldwide advocate for hearing loss awareness, education and empowerment.
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