



PRESS RELEASE

*NFL and Minnesota Vikings Select TAPS Family to Announce
First-Round Draft Pick for the Minnesota Vikings*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—April 19, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)**, the leading voice for our nation’s surviving military families, is honored that the surviving family of United States Army Sergeant Zachary Ewing will announce the Minnesota Vikings first-round draft pick at the 89th Annual NFL Draft on Thursday, April 25, at 8 p.m. ET, which will be broadcast from Detroit.

TAPS surviving family members of Army Sergeant Zachary Ewing, mother Becky, brothers Brennan and Trenton, and nephew Asher, will join Commissioner Goodell on the NFL Draft stage to announce the Vikings’ selection. Zachary’s Army service included deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Tragically, during his last deployment, Zachary was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive cancer that took his life after a yearlong battle. Zachary was a lifelong fan of his hometown Vikings, and Becky fondly remembers spending some of his last few weeks together watching the team play with his family. “Watching the Vikings on Sundays while Zachary recovered from chemo allowed him to focus on something other than his illness,” she shares. “We made precious memories together that season and we are grateful to the NFL, the Minnesota Vikings, and TAPS for continuing this family tradition.” In addition to his mother, brothers and nephew, SGT Zachary Ewing is survived by his father Mark Berry, grandparents Susan and Victor Kretsch, Susan and Mike Berry, and Dennis Ewing, and sisters-in-law Ashley Pittman and Elizabeth Pittman.

TAPS is dedicated to its mission of building strong communities through innovative, evidence-based programs supporting surviving families like the Ewings. The family has attended many TAPS programs over the years, including the TAPS National Military Survivor Seminar and teams4taps events. Becky currently serves as a TAPS Peer Mentor, accompanying other surviving moms who have lost their sons to illness along their grief journey. Our NFL Salute to Service partnership significantly enhances our ability to support surviving families in their time of need.

“These opportunities allow surviving families from TAPS to honor their fallen heroes, and they enhance our ability to provide comfort to those who miss them every day,” said Bonnie Carroll, President and Founder of TAPS. “The Ewing family lost their loved one to illness. Inviting them to announce this pick shines a light on the support TAPS provides for all those grieving the death of a military loved one regardless of the cause of death. We honor SGT Ewings’ service and celebrate his life with his family and his favorite NFL team.”

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ABOUT SALUTE TO SERVICE

Salute to Service is the NFL's year-long initiative to honor, empower, and connect our nation's service members, veterans, and their families. Since 2011, this effort has raised more than \$58 million for military and veteran support organizations such as the Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF), Pat Tillman Foundation (PTF), Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), United Service Organizations (USO) and Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP). For more information on Salute to Service, visit NFL.com/Salute.

ABOUT TAPS

TAPS is the leading national organization providing compassionate care and survivor support services for the families of America's fallen military heroes. Since 1994, TAPS has offered support to all those grieving the death of a military loved one through peer-based emotional support, connections with grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults, Good Grief Camps for children, casework assistance, connections to community-based care, online and in-person support groups, and the 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline, all at no cost to surviving families. For more information, please visit TAPS.org or call 202-588-TAPS (8277).

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