

VESTED VOICES

VESTED Voices: Mike Pereira

Video Synopsis — “VESTED Voices: Mike Pereira”

NFL rules analyst Mike Pereira describes how his nonprofit Battlefields to Ballfields turns military discipline into a second career on the sports gridiron.

From Combat Boots to Whistles

After visiting severely wounded service members at Ramstein Air Base, Pereira noticed a common theme: soldiers craved the camaraderie and purpose they felt in uniform. Officiating delivers that same team environment—weekly meetings, shared accountability, and a sideline fraternity that “has your back after a bad call.”

How the Program Works

Scholarships cover registration fees, uniforms, and rule-book materials so veterans can start working youth, high-school, or collegiate games at no personal cost.

Since 2017 the foundation has assisted more than 450 active veterans and aims to reach 1,000 officials within the next 18 months.

New outreach now targets transition units on military bases so service members can accumulate on-field experience before separation, stepping into their hometown associations with two seasons already under their belts.

Long-Term Vision

Pereira's dream is simple: buy a game ticket one day and see a former scholarship recipient calling fouls at the college—or even NFL—level. That moment, he says, will prove the initiative's full-circle impact: restoring purpose for veterans and easing the nationwide shortage of qualified sports officials.

For aspiring founders, Pereira's journey underscores two truths:

Identify a genuine community need (veteran reintegration, referee pipeline).

Leverage your own expertise and network to build a sustainable solution.

CAPTRUST salutes Battlefields to Ballfields and invites viewers to read the companion VESTED article, "A Real Game Changer," for tips on launching a mission-driven nonprofit.

To download a copy of the transcript, [click here](#).

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