

# BELIEVE

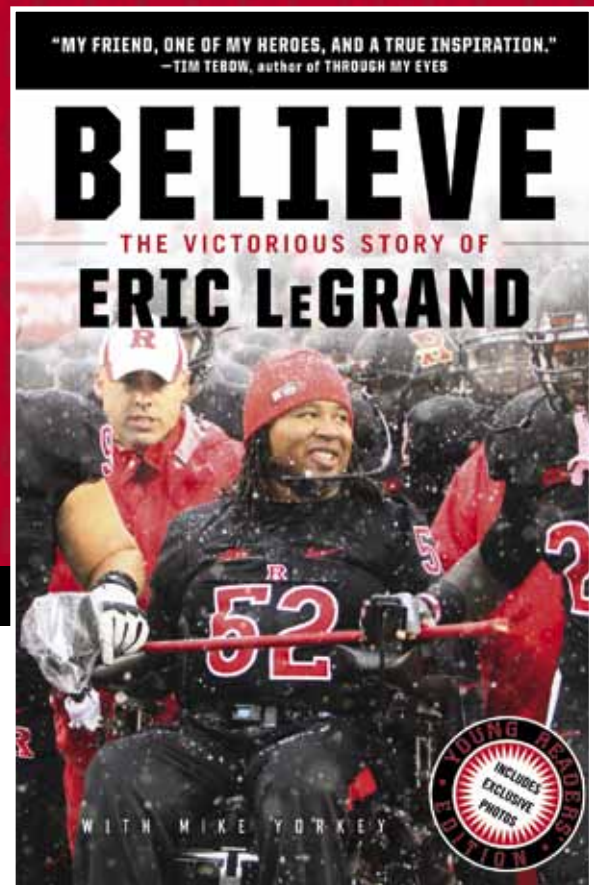
— THE VICTORIOUS STORY OF —

## ERIC LeGRAND

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### ABOUT THE BOOK

On October 16, 2010, Rutgers football star Eric LeGrand was known as a key performer on the field and a much-loved teammate who could make anyone smile. But in the heated fourth quarter of a tie game against the Army football team, everything changed in a moment. A crushing tackle left him motionless on the field, and while the entire stadium went silent with fear and anticipation, Eric knew his life would never again be the same.



#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Eric explains how his accident has fulfilled some of his dreams in unexpected ways and has also created new opportunities. What are some examples of successes Eric has had that he may not have had before his accident? How have certain dreams been fulfilled?
2. Rehabilitation is a difficult process for someone with Eric's injuries. In what way does his positive attitude influence his rehabilitation? How does his determination and hard work from being an athlete translate to his rehabilitation?
3. What do you think life is like for other people who have spinal cord injuries? How has Eric's fame helped bring him support, and how does he use that to bring support to others?
4. Describe the relationship between Eric and his mother. What was their relationship like when he was a child and a teenager? How would you describe their relationship today?
5. Coaches have been a very influential part of Eric's life, both in sports and in his personal life. What is the importance of having a mentor? Are there people in your life you admire and look up to?
6. Eric describes the team spirit, or camaraderie, as having the same characteristics as a family. In what ways does the team serve as a support system for Eric and other players? How does being a member of a team compare to being a member of a family?
7. Why did Coach Schiano sign Eric to the Buccaneers? How does this alter the definition of an NFL player?
8. Eric was a talented athlete in many sports as a child. Why do you think he chose to focus on football? Discuss the many positions Eric played in football and how they shaped him as an athlete.
9. Eric was spotted very early on as a player college teams were looking to sign. What was the recruitment process like for Eric? How does that vary from other high school students' athletic experience? What kind of pressure do you think Eric felt to succeed?
10. While Eric was a talented athlete, he struggled in some of his classes. His mother was very proactive about helping him, but tutors were expensive, and as a result, they had to be creative with limited options. What are some ways to use tutoring resources in your school? What recommendations would you make to other students in a similar situation?

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# 52

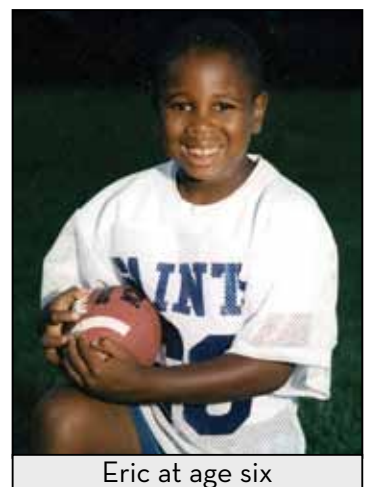
### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

11. Eric was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in the second grade, but he and his mother disliked the side effects of medical treatment such as Ritalin and Adderall. How did Eric and his mother handle his ADHD?
12. What are the ways Eric worked on his athleticism? Not only did he practice with the team, but he also worked hard on his own time. How did this help with his determination and achieving his goals?
13. Eric states, “I don’t blame God, or Malcolm Brown, the player at Army, or anyone else for what happened. . . . I now see life from a different perspective.” What does he mean by this?
14. “Believe” is a very important word to Eric. What does it mean to him? After reading the book, does it have a new meaning to you?
15. Faith was not always an important part of Eric’s life. Discuss how faith has played a large part in the way Eric has chosen to understand his accident.
16. What were your expectations for this memoir? Did you know a great deal about Eric LeGrand’s story before you started to read *Believe*? Did your understanding of Eric LeGrand’s journey and faith change over the course of reading his story?

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**ERIC LeGRAND** is a student at Rutgers University and a former defensive tackle for the Scarlet Knights. After suffering a devastating spinal cord injury during a game in October 2010, physicians predicted that Eric would never again be able to even breathe on his own. Five weeks later, he was off the ventilator. Now, over a year later, Eric has made steady gains in muscle control in his upper body through his hard work in physical therapy and seemingly endless reserves of faith and determination. His rehabilitation has been covered by media outlets like ESPN, *Sports Illustrated*, CBS, and NBC.

**MIKE YORKEY** is a veteran CBA writer with over a dozen books under his belt, including *PLAYING WITH PURPOSE* and the *EVERY MAN’S BATTLE* series.



Eric at age six

Photo courtesy of the author

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