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NFL Legend Jerome Bettis Becomes Papa John's Newest Franchisee with Purchase of Three Pittsburgh Restaurants

LOUISVILLE, Ky.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Papa John's, the Official Pizza Sponsor of the NFL, today announced the latest signing to its all-star lineup as legendary NFL running back Jerome "The Bus" Bettis was introduced as the brand's newest franchisee. Bettis, in partnership with Bajco Group, now owns three restaurants in Pittsburgh.

"Papa John's is the recognized leader in quality, which extends from our superior pizza to our leading-quality franchisees," said John Schnatter, Papa John's founder, chairman and CEO. "Having Jerome as a franchisee is huge for the Papa John's brand and for our customers in Pittsburgh. After getting to know him over the years I have no doubt that he will be able to replicate his success on the field at the restaurants."

Bettis purchased his Papa John's restaurants through a partnership with Bajco Group, which currently owns 12 restaurants in the Pittsburgh area. The partnership plans to open additional restaurants in the Pittsburgh area over the next couple of years.

"We are thrilled to partner with Jerome to purchase these restaurants," said Nadeem Bajwa, CEO of Bajco Group. "Jerome is a fierce competitor with high integrity, and I'm proud to be his business partner. He is an iconic figure in Pittsburgh and I have no doubt these restaurants will do very well."

Bettis' involvement with Papa John's dates to 2011, when he was featured in Papa John's Super Bowl XLVI Coin Toss commercial with Schnatter and Denver Broncos quarterback and fellow Papa John's franchisee, Peyton Manning.

"I've been a fan of Papa John's for a long time and am excited to be a part of the team," said Bettis. "I've always been a part of winning organizations and Papa John's is no exception. I'm particularly impressed with the brand's focus on quality and drive to be the best. I'm also impressed with John's passion to continue growing the brand around the world."

To celebrate this new partnership, all Pittsburgh-area Papa John's restaurants will offer 36% off all menu prices when customers order online using promo code PJBUS36. This offer is good from Thursday, June 20 through Sunday, June 23, and will also be honored at the Papa John's restaurants in the Johnstown, Pa. area, Youngstown, Ohio, and in South Bend, Ind.

Bettis, who won a Super Bowl with the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2006, ranks sixth on the NFL's all-time rushing list with 13,662 yards and is one of six players in NFL history to rush for 13,000 yards. He is one of only eight players in NFL history to rush for 1,000 yards for eight or more seasons. He ranks third in NFL history with 3,369 rushing attempts and was selected to the Pro Bowl eight times, including his rookie season, and has been a finalist on the Pro Football Hall of Fame list over the last three years. He was acknowledged by NFL for his charity work and named "2001 NFL Walter Payton Man of the Year." Bettis finished his college career at Notre Dame averaging 5.7 yards per carry and was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams 10th overall in 1993. He was named NFL Co-Rookie of the Year.

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Papa John's International, Inc. (NASDAQ: PZZA) is the world's third largest pizza company. For 12 of the past 14 years, consumers have rated Papa John's No. 1 in customer satisfaction among all national pizza chains in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). Papa John's is the Official Pizza Sponsor of the National Football League and Super Bowl XLVII. For more information about the company or to order pizza online, visit Papa John's at www.papajohns.com, or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PapaJohns, on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/PapaJohns>, or on our blog at www.papajohnsblog.com.

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