



Fujita embraces any and all challenges

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Whether it was lending a helping hand in New Orleans or adding aggressiveness to the Browns defense, linebacker Scott Fujita is always ready for work.

“You want to leave a place better than you found it.”

This adage has been passed down by parents and coaches to younger generations. But while some may hear the words, new Browns linebacker **Scott Fujita** has always lived them.

After spending the last four years with the **New Orleans Saints**, Fujita signed with the Browns, but not before delivering a few parting gifts to the city he, his wife Jaclyn and their family called home.

As one of the captains of the Saints’ defense, Fujita helped lead the team to a Super Bowl win over the Colts in February, bringing the city their first major sports championship. In addition to the title, Fujita donated half of his Super Bowl game check to charity.

“When I first got there as a free agent back in 2006, a lot of people wanted to know why we were taking that visit,” Fujita recalled. “Here’s a team coming off a 3-13 season, the city’s just completely devastated and literally, when my wife and I stepped off the plane, it looked like we were flying into a place where a bomb had gone off; it was that much of a mess.

“For some reason, we just felt pulled there,” he added. “We felt it was an opportunity to do something that would be much bigger than football. We embraced the situation there in New Orleans and they embraced us. It was a really good match for those four years.”

Fujita donated part of his Super Bowl check to earthquake relief efforts in Haiti, but also extended a helping hand to New Orleans. He flew into The Crescent City last week and presented the checks Friday morning to America’s WETLAND Foundation and the Gulf Restoration Network.

“(My wife and I) always wanted to do something to give back to the city that had given us so much,” he said. “I talk all the time about how my daughters were born there. The city has a lot of work to do still. Everybody talks about how they want to help New Orleans, but no one really knows how. It’s one thing to donate to relief efforts and it’s one thing to help Habitat for Humanity and things like that, but what lies at the heart of the problem is The Wetlands.

“There were so many things I’ve learned in the last four years about how to protect the city of New Orleans and ultimately, that’s the best way to do it,” continued Fujita. “I don’t think a lot of people around the country realize that New Orleans is so important as a port of commerce for the whole country; Mississippi is kind of the life blood for a lot of parts of the country. Everybody knows about the culture and music down there and I think it needs to be protected and the best way to do that is to take care of The Wetlands.”

For those who know him, Fujita’s support of the New Orleans community came as no surprise. His presence in the city, however, will be greatly missed.

“It’s really important to him,” said Mike Triplett of the New Orleans Times-Picayune. “They really feel like this is a home for them and they really were serious about giving back. They moved right into the heart of uptown New Orleans and really became a part of the community. They weren’t just saying the words or doing the photo appearances; it was really important for them to give back and they really embraced this community.”

Fujita is now in Cleveland, where he is working out with his new teammates in the Browns offseason Strength and Conditioning program. He is looking forward to making an impact both on and off the field.

“I came here to win football games,” he concluded. “Coming off of a championship season like that in New Orleans, you almost crave getting back to that. We had to work long and hard to get to that point and I’m eager to come in here and help as much as I can in whatever role they want me to help out in and contribute. I’ve been in some tough, losing seasons and to start with a really difficult record like that and to come back and finish strong with four wins, that’s really hard to do in this league. It’s kind of a testament to the guys and it kind of shows the character on this team.”

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