

Owsley Brown Frazier

“We didn’t make the plays.”

Those were the words of Coach Charlie Strong after our disappointing loss to Florida International last season.

I think perhaps the media expected a more sophisticated analysis – such as we were man to man and should have been in deep cover zone coverage when Hilton, the receiver for FIU, broke open in the middle of the field and then outran the safety for a 74 yard touchdown.

But Coach Strong spoke the simple truth: “No one made the plays” – the difference between winning and losing.

- I really don’t know football;
- But I have witnessed a “giant” of a playmaker in our community;

- I have seen a playmaker who has transformed our university;
- And I have been personally blessed to have been mentored/coached by an individual who has taught me the difference between winning and something less.

Owsley Frazier made the plays; Owsley Frazier, time and time again, made the plays.

And because Owsley always made the plays, the winners have been our:

- Community;
- The University of Louisville and all of education; and
- I am a better person for having known Owsley.

(PAUSE)

We are hurt, saddened by Owsley's passing – we are suffering.

We will continue to hurt – it will not go away.

For:

- We will miss seeing Owsley in his box at the upcoming UofL/UK football game and we will miss seeing and hearing the band when it comes to his box to serenade him;
- We will miss Owsley at our Board of Trustees meeting on September 13 and subsequent meetings;
- We won't have the opportunity to sit next to Owsley courtside at the Yum! Center during the next basketball season.
- And we won't have any more one-on-one box lunches to just talk.

(PAUSE)

But we will continue each day to be inspired by Owsley's legacy:

- We will think of Owsley when we host our faculty/staff at the Princess Di exhibit this fall at the “Frazier.”
- We will think of Owsley when a family member or a friend is at the “Frazier” for the best in rehabilitative care.
- We will think of Owsley when Susie Harkema, our “Frazier chair” in rehabilitative medicine, performs another miracle and helps someone stand and do things they previously could not do.
- We will think of Owsley when we watch Sandy Pearsall’s softball team perform at Owsley B. Frazier Cardinal Park.
- We will think of Owsley when Ken Lolla and Karen Ferguson-Dayes’s soccer teams take the field at the soon-to-be-constructed stadium which Owsley has helped make possible.

- And at each commencement, as students walk across the stage to receive their diplomas, we will think of Owsley's many/many contributions to UofL that have provided students – all students – the opportunity to get their college degree.

(PAUSE)

While Owsley will be remembered for his financial generosity, he will be remembered for so much more.

- He will be remembered for “making the plays” that made our community a better place.
- He will be remembered as a man who despite his pain/his challenges was:
 - Always ready to help
 - Compassionate
 - Caring
 - Committed
 - Understanding

- He will be remembered by me as a friend who I miss dearly; a unique individual who believed in me more than I could ever believe in myself.

(PAUSE)

Yes, Owsley will be remembered for his amazing legacy.

But simply to remember Owsley's legacy is not enough. For with his passing our gift back to Owsley is for each of us to step up and, in our own way, to "make the plays." For by so doing we can continue Owsley's amazing legacy forever.

(PAUSE)

In 2nd Timothy Paul writes:

The time of my departure has come...

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race.

*There is laid up for me the crown of
righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous
judge, will give to me...*

Our friend, Owsley Frazier, fought the fight; he
finished the race ... “He made the plays.”