

2014 Master of the Game Award Acceptance Speech

Martin J. Greenberg

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SPEECH

2014 MASTER OF THE GAME AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH*

MARTIN J. GREENBERG**

I am so humbled to be honored by an institution where I have spent a better part of my life working and supporting. I am also so honored to be joining my dear friend, Al McGuire, who was the first Master of the Game honoree, as part of this exclusive club.

While at the University of Wisconsin, I was a Carnegie Scholar and worked in the offices of Attorney General Bronson La Follette. The summer before my graduation, La Follette assigned me to work under the supervision of Attorney Charles Mentkowski in Milwaukee. Little did I know that a long term relationship with Marquette University Law School would thereafter ensue.

Charles Mentkowski was soon to become the Associate Dean of the Law School. The principles by which I lead my life today are some of the fundamental teachings I learned from Charles Mentkowski. Let me share them with you:

1. Differences make all the difference;
2. Continued learning is continued growth;
3. It's not what you have done, it's what you have done for others;
4. Don't worry about failure, worry about the chance you miss when you don't even try; and

*The National Sports Law Institute's Master of the Game Award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to the sports industry and who exemplifies the highest level of professionalism in his or her field. The 2014 Master of the Game Award was given to Professor Martin J. Greenberg, the founder of the National Sports Law Institute at Marquette University Law School.

**Managing member of the Law Office of Martin J. Greenberg, LLC, a member of the National Sports Law Institute Board of Advisors, and an adjunct professor of law at Marquette University Law School.

5. Support the Law School and Marquette University.

I think about Charles Mentkowski every day of my life and I am so honored to have in attendance this evening Charles Mentkowski's wife, Dr. Marcia Mentkowski.

I have been so fortunate during my career to have had extraordinary sports law industry experiences ranging from creating a major collegiate conference and a foreign basketball league, representing some of the power coaches in college sports, and numerous sports facility financial and development experiences.

But with all those opportunities, nothing even slightly compares with my relationship with Marquette University Law School. That relationship has shaped my life and my values.

I had a vision, that "Sports Law" could become an academic specialty area that would be pursued and become popular among law students in American law schools.

Charles Mentkowski, Frank DeGuire, James Ghiardi, and Father DiUlio grasped the vision and believed in it, and twenty-five years ago the National Sports Law Institute at Marquette University Law School was created. Dean DeGuire tirelessly took that dream to its ultimate fruition and helped to garner financial support from the Milwaukee Brewers, the Milwaukee Bucks, the Milwaukee Admirals, the Green Bay Packers, and Miller Brewery. And Jim Gray was an early dedicated champion, and an NSLI leader. Thanks to Paul Anderson, David Stegeman, Bill Miller, John Dodds, John Drana, Greg Heller, Peter Faust, Patty Baker, and Mark Brault—whose enthusiastic dedication and support helped to grow this program.

When I first accepted a position as a professor at Marquette University Law School, I told Dean Boden that I would love to teach, but that I would not forgo a career in the practice of law. Being a practitioner would only make me a better teacher. I have stayed the course and my philosophy about legal education has gotten me to my 42nd year. That philosophy is simple:

1. Sift and winnow for the truth;
2. Learning is living;
3. No holds barred—everything is fair game;
4. Take knowledge and put it to practical use; and
5. If you haven't experienced it then how can you teach it.

Law students from America's best colleges and universities now choose

Marquette Law School because of the preeminence of its Sports Law Program.

Sports Law requires the ultimate general practitioner, and at Marquette University Law School, students are prepared brilliantly for that challenge.

The most important part of my career has been the opportunity to light up bright minds and to utilize learning to transform mirrors into windows. It is the students that I have worked with who are truly deserving of this award. Some of those students have participated in the research and writing of articles that have become seminal works in the field. I am honored to introduce some of them to you today:

1. Ashley Fale—Clawback Clauses;
2. Steven Gruber—You Get Hired to Get Fired;
3. Bryan Ward—Non-Relocation Agreements in MLB;
4. Jay Smith—Assistant Coaches Contracts;
5. Dennis Hughes—Sports.com, It Takes a Village to Build a Sports Facility;
6. Tim Granitz Ten Years Later: Miller Park and Real Estate Development; and
7. Ryan Session—Summer Camps.

Thank you to all of the law students over the years who have served as my interns, footnoters, researchers, and editors. Tonight is a celebration of your accomplishments.

As exemplified by these students, at Marquette the pursuit of excellence is ever present. We strive for excellence because excellence is not a skill, it is an attitude, and a habit. It comes readily if you:

1. Care more than others think is wise;
2. Risk more than others think is safe;
3. Dream more than others think is practical; and
4. Expect more than others think is possible.

Excellence is doing a common thing in an uncommon way. The NSLI's Master of the Game Award is a salute to excellence and for that I am deeply honored.

Today the National Sports Law Institute and the Marquette law program are in good hands. I respect and admire the leadership, vision and continued support

of Dean Joseph Kearney. Professors Matt Mitten and Paul Anderson are rock solid and have taken this program to new heights. The future is only bright.

As a final note, I have been blessed with a loving and supportive family. My wife, Bev, has been my best partner, my greatest advocate, and my silent voice. Thank you for everything you have done for me and for our family. I also welcome my daughter, Kari Altman, and her husband - Michael, along with my grandsons, Jack and Justin. I also welcome my son, Dr. Steven Greenberg, and his wife – Jodi, and my precious twin granddaughters, Sadie and Shelly, who are at home. I have also been lucky enough to have trusty executive assistants that have made me look good, please welcome Margaret Schmalfelt and Danelle Welzig.

I look forward to hearing of the NSLI's future successes and I thank you for this incomparable honor.