



MOMENTUM

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

LAW SCHOOL ALUMNI GIVE GENERO

THE JAMES L. FERRARO ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP



Savvy in both his business endeavors and the practice of law, attorney James L. Ferraro knows a solid investment when he sees it. From fine cuisine to arena football, he uses his education and background to make good business choices. His success has allowed him to invest generously in his community and profession in a variety of ways, including his recent gift of \$600,000 to establish an endowed scholarship fund at the University of Miami School of Law. The Ferraro Scholarship will join the Reed, Leef and Mentschikoff scholarships as an important tool to assist the Law School in recruiting outstanding students.

A faithful 'Cane and walk-on to the UM Football team, Greenwich, Connecticut native Jim Ferraro moved to Miami to attend college, obtaining his Bachelor of Business Administration, '78, Master of Science in Accounting, '79, and Juris Doctor, '83 at the University of Miami. It was during his time as a law student that he first met UM quarterback, Bernie Kosar. As a registered sports agent, Jim represented several notable players from UM's early championship years such as Albert Bentley

and Eddie Brown. But Bernie Kosar was the one that got away.

"I interviewed to represent Bernie as his agent, but he went with someone else," said Jim. "It was somewhat of a shock, but it was also a blessing in disguise that marked a major turning point in my life. I started to focus more on my trial practice."

Following his law school graduation, Jim, who is also a Certified Public Accountant, worked for a civil litigation defense firm. A short time later, he decided he would rather advocate on behalf of plaintiffs, and launched his own practice.

"I was two years out of law school when I first opened my own firm," he said. "I remember the exact date - May 13, 1985."

By 1990, his interest in sports representation had waned, and he had built a successful practice in mass tort and wrongful death litigation. His two firms, Kelley & Ferraro in Ohio and The Ferraro Law Firm in Coral Gables, are handling nearly 50,000 asbestos cases, and are known nationwide for their environmental toxic tort practice. In 1996, Jim made American legal history when he tried the first case successfully prosecuted against a chemical company for causing a birth defect. The trial was broadcast in its entirety on Court TV and garnered worldwide media attention. In 1997, Jim was named a national finalist for Trial Lawyer of the Year.

As his legal practice expanded, his business, political and philanthropic endeavors also grew. In a nod to his Italian heritage, Jim became part owner in Randazzo's Little Italy family-style Italian restaurant in Coral Gables; and he is the owner (Kosar, the president) of the Cleveland franchise of the Arena Football League. An avowed Democrat, Jim also counts President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton, as well as senator and former presidential hopeful John Edwards, among his friends, and is an active member of the Democratic Party.

"I was always interested in politics, but as my legal practice took off, I became more involved," he explained. "It was important to me personally and professionally, particularly as tort reform became a bigger issue."

Jim is also noted for his significant charitable contributions. He donates to more than 50 charities every year, including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the Children's Home Society, the Jackson Memorial Foundation, of which he sits on their Board of Directors, and the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. For his philanthropy, he was inducted in 1999 to the Order of Saint John Knights of Malta, a worldwide organization dedicated to helping the sick and the poor. In 2001, he was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, given to U.S. citizens whose work and volunteer efforts help foster strong ties between various ethnic groups.

"The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is very important to me," said Jim. "I am descended from Italian immigrants, and I am very proud of my heritage. Ellis Island is the ultimate symbol of freedom to many immigrants who have come to America and worked hard to build better lives for themselves."

"Receiving the Ellis Island Medal also reminded me of why I do what I do," he added. "So many of my clients are blue collar workers, working hard to build better lives. My law firm helps fund and pursue their lawsuits on a contingency basis, so they can take on major corporations that they otherwise could not, to help them recover from their injuries. Without our help, most of them would not be able to afford a lawyer. Knowing that I can help make a difference in their lives gives me enormous pride and satisfaction."

Now, his philanthropic work has come full circle back to the University of Miami School of Law, with his \$600,000 gift to the Law School to establish a new endowed scholarship.

"Scholarships, in particular endowed scholarships, are vital to our commitment in bringing the most talented students to the School of Law," said Donna E. Shalala, President of the University of Miami. "I am grateful to Jim Ferraro for establishing this scholarship at the University of Miami."

The scholarship, which will be geared towards students who plan to pursue careers in civil litigation, will help the Law School attract the best and the brightest students.

"Trial law is my focus, and I want to help form the next generation of trial lawyers," Jim explained. "I attribute my professional success today to the education I received at the University of Miami. I would not be here without my law degree in particular. I loved the time I spent there. I learned so much, with professors who really knew how to engage the students."

"The University of Miami School of Law is a great institution where I received an outstanding education. I want to give something back. I want to help build it up, to take it to the next level of greatness."