



# #PaulieStrong

FOUNDATION

**December 30, 2020**

Mayor Marc Samwick  
Scarsdale, NY, 10583

**Dear Mayor Samwick,**

We have not had the pleasure to yet meet. We are Paul & Joanna Jimenez of 19 Fenimore Road in Scarsdale. We have been Scarsdale residents for the past 8 years. We run a charity called The PaulieStrong Foundation, whose mission is to raise much needed funding for childhood cancer research at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. This is not something we ever envisioned being involved doing when we married 18 years ago. However, tragedy struck our family 5 years ago when our beautiful 10 year-old son Paul was diagnosed out of nowhere with a rare and aggressive form of childhood cancer called Rhabdomyosarcoma. Paul would lose his battle with cancer only 2 and a half months after his diagnosis.

Paul Loved his family and friends. He was incredibly passionate about football. That wasn't always the case. Paul was a shy and

somewhat timid child but that changed the day he became a Scarsdale Raider. The main reason for our letter to you is that we hear there is a discussion regarding the renaming of Crossway Field and we wanted to explain the impact that Scarsdale Football had on Paul. To be specific, the impact that Coach Rippy Philipps had on Paul. Under Coach Rippy Phillips football team, we noticed a significant change in our son. He became more self-confidant. He took school more seriously and he became even more respectful then he already was. We as parents noticed the change but were not really sure where it came from until I began paying close attention to football practice. It wasn't just X's and O's that were being learned. It was a sense of belonging, a sense of family and a respect for more than just the game, but for each other and for themselves. Paul found himself when he joined the Raiders and we truly believe that it was because of Rippy Philipps. When Paul was diagnosed mid-season of 2015 it was a shock to us all and we all thought that Paul would pull through and one day make it back out on that field. Paul spent the better part of those 2 ½ months at Memorial Sloan Kettering in NYC and Rippy would come visit him and bring cards from his teammates. This man had only known are son for about a year and he treated all of us like we were family. One day in particular that I will remember for the rest of my life was October 24, 2015, only a few short weeks after Paul's diagnosis. He was weak and in pain from a surgery to biopsy his cancer and install

the port for his chemotherapy. The Scarsdale H.S. team had a playoff game against Mahopac and Rippy had arranged for Paul to be the team's honorary captain, to walk the team to the field and do the coin toss. It was incredible to finally see a smile on his face for the first time in weeks as he knew that his football family had his back..... And he had theirs. The Raiders won the coin toss and won the game. Paul had felt sick at halftime and I took him home to rest but later that evening the entire team showed up at our house to present Paul with the game ball signed by the entire team. That ball still sits on the bookcase in Paul's bedroom. That day provided us with one of the last few times that we would see that beautiful smile on Paul's face and we are so grateful to Rippy for arranging that surprise. Unfortunately, Paul never made it back out on to that field and our hearts are forever broken with his passing. In the season following the loss of Paul, Rippy asked me if I would be interested in helping out with coaching the team. I had no prior experience, but he thought it would be therapeutic for me as well as Paul's teammates. A year earlier at the annual football dinner, Paul won a raffle prize and got to pick an item from the table of prizes. He had options such as footballs, games, jerseys etc.. His choice was a book entitled Coaching Youth Football. He smiled as he brought it back to the table and handed it to me and said "Here Dad, so you can help coach me one day" It was that memory that played over and over in my head when I agreed to join Coach Rippy on the sidelines.

It was agonizing to leave practices and games alone and not have Paul by my side but it was also very eye opening for me to watch so close up how Rippy interacted with these kids. His selflessness is unmatched, and he gives every bit of himself to help not only teach his teams but to help them become young men. It was a learning experience for me as well that I feel has helped me to become a better father and a better person. Our family is eternally grateful to Rippy Philipps and I cannot think of a better way to honor his years of service and his selflessness, dedication and commitment to the youth of our Scarsdale community that to change the name of Crossway Field to "Rippy Philipps Field" we know our son would have been 100% behind this idea as well.

Sincerely,

**Paul & Joanna Jimenez**  
**19 Fenimore Road**  
**Scarsdale NY 10583**