

Paul Fix
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Dear Scarsdale Village Board of Trustees,

I am writing to you today in support of renaming Crossway Field in honor of Richard "Rippy" Philipps.

My name is Paul Fix, I currently reside in Scarsdale with my wife and three children, and I can unequivocally say that I would not be here today without Rippy Philipps. I met Rippy 25 years ago on the very field that I and countless members of this community are imploring you to name after him.

Rippy's dedication to the youth and people of the Village of Scarsdale is unmatched. Rippy expects nothing in return - he only hopes that he may have a lasting impression on the young athletes he coaches and that they, one day, give back to the program and the community that afforded them so much.

I grew up in Fox Meadow. Five months prior to stepping on to Crossway Field to play 8th grade Scarsdale Youth Football, my father suddenly passed away. I was 12 years old. I was lost. Little did I know that waiting for me on that field was a volunteer coach who was about to guide me through the next 25 years of my life. It was as if my father had passed the baton on to Rippy Philipps. This may sound like hyperbole, but I can assure you it is not.

For that remaining year of middle school and during my four years at Scarsdale High School, Rippy pushed me. He pushed me hard. I was a miserable student, but he forced me to achieve more. When I was not being a good son or sibling, Rippy reminded me of the importance of family. When I was not a good friend, he was there to show me how to be better. When I was voted captain of the Scarsdale High School varsity football team, he taught me how to lead.

I graduated from Scarsdale High School in 2000 and attended Franklin & Marshall College to play football. Why F & M? Because that is Rippy's alma mater. He made calls to the head football coach and the athletic department, to admissions, to alumni and anyone else he could, on my behalf. While playing football for F & M, Rippy, knowing that my mother, who had my little siblings at home to care for and couldn't make the trip, would drive upwards of seven hours to and from my games so that I would have someone in the stands cheering me on. This, I might add, was after he was done coaching his own Saturday morning 7th & 8th grade football games.

In 2003, I immigrated to Israel and was drafted into the military. Over the course of the next four years, with the exception of my mother, nobody called to check-in on me more. Rippy knew that if he called on Saturdays, the one day my military unit typically had some down time, he may catch me. We joked and called it Saturdays with Rippy after one of his favorite books, Tuesdays with Morrie. I rarely was able to answer. But he kept calling. On the days I was able to pick up, hearing his voice brought back "home" from whatever operation my unit was involved in. And on the days that I was not able to answer, I knew

there was a voicemail waiting for me with that unmistakable voice, giving me words of encouragement and letting me know I was missed.

When I completed my service and returned to New York, I needed a job and to start my adult life. If you are wondering who helped me land that first job, well, you guessed it - Rippy. My first job in finance helped me carve the path to my current career and has afforded me the opportunity to move with my wife (whom I met at F & M) and my children back to Scarsdale, the place in which I grew up and owe so much. My journey back would not have been possible without Rippy and the football program to which he has so selflessly dedicated his life.

To bring things full circle, in September of last year, I walked my two sons onto Crossway Field for their first day of Scarsdale youth flag football practice. Stepping on to that field brought back so many incredible memories. Hearing the sound of Coach Rippy Philipps' voice assured me that my boys and all the other young women and men of Scarsdale running around on that field would learn the valuable and lasting life lessons that my team and I did so many years ago. The happiness that I feel having my sons play for Rippy some 25 years later, and to be a part of the amazing program that he has built, is indescribable.

I apologize for the length of this letter, more so for you having to suffer through a bit of my life story. The truth is, I could fill many more pages with all that Rippy has done for me. While this story may be unique to me, I can guarantee that it is not unique to Rippy. I am but just one person who was lucky enough to have been a part of the Scarsdale Youth Football program and to have been mentored and guided by Rippy. There are countless families and student athletes in Scarsdale that have a similar connection to Rippy and have been equally impacted by him.

To honor Rippy by naming Crossway Field the Richard "Rippy" Philipps Field would mean that his dedication, selflessness and unwavering commitment to this community is recognized and truly appreciated. I can think of no one more deserving of this honor.

Respectfully,

Paul Fix