



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

TO: WBC AND MICAH PARTICIPANTS
FROM: MONSIGNOR RICHARD M. LIDDY
SUBJECT: *BETRAYAL AND SUCCESS IN COLLEGE SPORTS*
DATE: APRIL, 2016

- Welcome and Self-Introductions
- Woodstock Business Conference Mission Statement
 - The Mission of the Woodstock Business Conference is to establish and lead a national and international network of business executives to explore their respective religious traditions in order to assist the individual executives:
 - To integrate faith, family and professional life,
 - To develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and **values** and
 - To exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large
 - The Conference, grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, welcomes believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious tradition. It is committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.
- **Scripture Reading:** Mark 14: 10-16

The Betrayal of Judas.

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the priests to hand him over to them. When they heard him they were pleased and promised him money. Then he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

Preparations for the Passover .

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" He sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city and a man will

meet you, carrying a jar of water. Follow him. Wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”’ Then he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready. Make the preparations there.” The disciples went off, entered the city, and found it just as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

- **Quiet Reflection 5 minutes followed by sharing insights**

1st READING

The Tragedy of a Hall of Fame Coach and His Star Recruit

NY TIMES: March 4,

2016



Southern Methodist Coach Larry Brown with Keith Frazier during the N.I.T. championship game at Madison Square Garden in 2014.

DALLAS — Word that Keith Frazier, who played on one of the best college teams you will not see this postseason, had dropped out barely registered beyond the confines of Dallas. Frazier, a 6-foot-5 shooting guard who was Southern Methodist's third-leading scorer, simply stopped showing up for practice in early January, with the Mustangs still undefeated.

A few days later, he left the university.

As emotionally fragile as he was talented, Frazier stood at the center of an academic scandal that led the [N.C.A.A.](#) to ban S.M.U. from the postseason this year and suspend its coach, Larry Brown, who is in the basketball Hall of Fame, for nine games. A few days after Frazier dropped out, I asked Coach Brown about the student. Brown shook his head; more than a hint of a native Brooklyn rasp lingers in his voice. "I think I invested more time in that kid than my family," Brown said. "It's a tragedy now in college sports — kids leave." The tragedy is that the adults in big-time high school and college basketball, despite attempts at reform and despite the presence of many fine student-athletes, exert far more energy trying to churn out victories than trying to provide an education. Young men like Frazier, who just three years ago was Brown's top recruit, are collateral damage.

Frazier's educational track record was pockmarked with failure. His high school grades mysteriously and quickly improved whenever his eligibility to play was at stake. He most likely had too many absences and failing grades to graduate from high school. And top officials at S.M.U. ignored their own professors, who recommended that Frazier not be admitted to S.M.U., an academically tough university. Frazier took an online summer course before enrolling in freshman classes. An S.M.U. team assistant secretly completed Frazier's work, an [N.C.A.A. report](#) found. Frazier's walk up and tumble down the stairs of big-time high school and college basketball kicks open a door to the corruption and neglect that characterize the educational lives of too many elite athletes. This pervasive corruption extends from Division I colleges down into the high school and amateur ranks.

There are bogus addresses for players, doctored grade sheets and illegal recruiting. In [one terrible case](#), Dallas high school coaches concocted fake addresses and stashed top basketball players in a poorly supervised home. Two teenagers, who were friends, got into a fistfight, and one died.

Frazier, thankfully, remains healthy. But no adult, not even, it appears, his own mother, seems to have demonstrated more than a passing interest in his education. As long as he stroked jumpers and took jagged, high-leaping dashes to the hoop, all was fine.

"High school athletics are a tight little club where nobody wants to question anything," said Anita Connally, a wiry former middle school teacher who, as the Dallas schools' athletic compliance officer, investigated the grade-fixing and recruiting scandals surrounding Keith

Frazier. Dallas school officials later fired Connally, who was a fierce reformer. “You’d dig deep here,” she said, “and everyone just gets angry.”

This column is based on two confidential reports by the Dallas schools — which contained Frazier’s attendance records and extensive transcripts of investigative interviews with more than a dozen officials — and the N.C.A.A. sanctions report on S.M.U. I also interviewed two dozen players, teachers, investigators and coaches.

In 2013, Frazier was a McDonald’s high school all-American and perhaps the best player in Texas. Brown, an undisputed coaching genius, was newly hired at S.M.U. and looking to

draw attention to a basketball team that had long been mediocre. Brown and his assistants pursued Frazier like bird dogs after a pheasant. When Frazier signed, Brown howled with glee.

“Keith changed our program,” Brown said at the time. “We’ve never been successful in recruiting inner-city kids. “Now, everywhere I go, kids are interested in us because of Keith.” Brown had coached college ball twice before, and twice the N.C.A.A. sanctions ax had fallen on his teams, at U.C.L.A. and Kansas. Those penalties were ridiculous, he told me. Check it out.

I did, and he was wrong. At Kansas, there was a taped telephone call in which Brown admitted to illegal payments and assistants who acted as bagmen. At U.C.L.A., he coached his team to the title game, only to have the N.C.A.A. toss out the tournament run because Brown had played two players who were academically ineligible. S.M.U. knew of Brown’s college track record when it hired him. The search for a nationally ranked basketball team requires sacrifices. And the Frazier signing appeared to pay off.

A few months later, Frazier’s friend Emmanuel Mudiay, who was the best high school point guard in America, declared that he, too, was bound for S.M.U. Unfortunately, Mudiay attended Prime Prep high school in Dallas, an academic wreck of a charter school founded by the former N.F.L. star and commentator Deion Sanders. When questions arose about Mudiay’s grades, he skipped S.M.U. and went to play in China. He now starts at point guard for the Denver Nuggets.

Frazier grew up playing basketball in Irving, a suburb west of Dallas. Like many talented athletes, he played for school teams in the winter and for Amateur Athletic Union teams each spring and summer. Adidas, Under Armour and Nike sponsor these amateur teams, which are perpetually warring duchies. To lure new players and poach stars from rivals, A.A.U. coaches hand out athletic gear and other swag to players and parents alike.

Erven Davis, known as Big E, a hulking man with a honey-soft voice, agreed to chat with me in the lobby of a south Dallas hotel. He has coached A.A.U. for years and is close to Frazier.

He stressed that his team, Dallas Showtyme, was the vassal of no sneaker company, although he allowed that he had an “affiliation” with Under Armour. “It gets bad, man,” he said. “People offering kids and parents all kinds of stuff — stuff that people get into trouble for.”

Davis had a close relationship with Royce Johnson, his cousin and the coach at Kimball High School. Kimball was on academic life support. It was also a basketball Valhalla, a perpetual contender for the state championship. Over the years, many of Davis’s best players — some of whom clearly did not live in Dallas — enrolled at Kimball. In return, according to a 2013 Dallas schools investigation, Kimball coaches allowed A.A.U. teams to use their gym without a lease and without paying rent.

A few months into Frazier’s junior year at Irving High School, his mother announced she was moving her family to an apartment near Kimball. The basketball coach at Irving protested angrily. He argued that the Kimball coach had recruited Frazier, which is forbidden under Texas athletic regulations.

Dallas pulled together a committee composed of representatives from public elementary and middle schools that feed into Kimball High School. Frazier’s mother told this committee she could no longer afford her Irving apartment. The committee quickly approved the midyear move. “There were a lot of backroom deals in Dallas,” said Gil Garza, the new director of athletics for the Dallas schools, who is charged with cleaning up this system. “The thinking was: ‘I’m going to vote for your kid, and you’ll vote for mine.’”

Brett Shipp, an investigative reporter at WFAA-TV in Dallas, [discovered](#) that Frazier’s mother had lied to the committee. Her federally subsidized rent in Irving was fixed at \$505 a month and had not gone up, as she claimed. Her former landlord complained that she owed him back rent. Irving High School, while far from perfect, had markedly better academics than Kimball High School. Frazier’s mother responded to her critics on her Twitter account: “This is a cut throat business, I’m just saying.”

Frazier and his mother did not reply to telephone calls, an email or a note left at their apartment. A Dallas schools investigation concluded that Kimball’s coach had “improperly recruited” Frazier. Frazier proved a godsend to Kimball’s team. He averaged 21 points, 8 rebounds and 7 assists per game and pushed the Knights to a second consecutive state championship in 2012. Frazier’s academics were another matter. When he arrived at Kimball in November of his junior year, his grades bounced along a river bottom. Investigators later discovered that his grades took a mysterious upward turn in the last weeks of that semester, just enough to allow him to retain his basketball eligibility.

As a senior, the report said, he continued to skip many classes and fail many tests. At S.M.U., meanwhile, Coach Brown had zeroed in on Frazier as his top recruiting target. Brown, like most of his highly paid peers, stayed away from the recruiting, which can

become an ethical bog. That was the job of his hungry young assistant coaches. And Ulric Maligi, who had deep roots in Dallas, was the first among equals.

“He is going to be a great head coach,” Brown said of Maligi. First, however, Maligi had to land Frazier. By late May of his senior year, the student was at risk of not graduating. Maligi repeatedly called Kimball to ask about Frazier’s grades, according to the Dallas schools investigative report.

Maligi exchanged hot words with Johnson, Kimball’s basketball coach, according to the report. Do you realize, Maligi told the coach, that S.M.U.’s compliance office has threatened to reject Frazier? He needs a higher grade-point average. Can Frazier raise his grades in science, English, math and history? Coach Johnson had reason to fear S.M.U.’s anger. A high school coach who cannot place his stars with a top college team risks seeing his supply of young talent dry up.

A day or two later, an assistant coach and a school aide at Kimball lobbied Frazier’s teachers to raise his grades. Richard Dennis, a physics teacher, was so troubled that he sought the advice of an academic adviser. “He asked my thoughts about him changing the grade,” the supervisor later told investigators for the Dallas schools. “I told him that he should not change the grade because Frazier was a high-profile student and changing the grade could result in him losing his job.”

The physics teacher held firm. The other teachers said that they had done the same — yet, somehow, Frazier passed all their classes. An assistant coach picked up Frazier’s grade sheet and delivered it by hand to the central office at Kimball, stopping to cross out and change his physics grade. A secretary at the school then sent it to S.M.U. This, the Dallas schools investigators noted, “created a fraudulent report.” Maligi insisted to investigators that he had never asked anyone to forge a grade for Frazier. An S.M.U. spokesman said in an email that the university’s coaching staff asked about grades only because “we care about the potential of our student-athletes to be academically successful.” That is lovely. Perhaps Maligi, who was hired for his understanding of the Dallas schools, did not realize that by late May, the spring semester was all but at an end and that it is difficult to transform failing grades into passing grades.

Later that summer, on Aug. 15, 2013, Dallas schools investigators asked S.M.U. officials to help investigate the Frazier grade scandal. University officials responded with aggressive lethargy. Kyle Conder, S.M.U.’s senior associate athletics director for compliance, waited 50 days before sending a substantive email. His email was an exercise in terse and not terribly helpful language. Conder twice answered the investigators’ questions with a single word: “No.”

None of Frazier’s problems should have surprised S.M.U. officials. The university has a faculty committee that examines athletic applications. Its charge is to balance leniency

with pragmatism: Can an athlete survive at this academically rigorous school? That committee turned down Frazier. The S.M.U. provost, in a move that startled committee members, overruled them. The provost explained he had made an “extraordinary exception” based “on the broader university perspective and needs.” In September, I asked an S.M.U. spokeswoman about the nature of those broader needs. She wrote of “holistic” criteria.

“Holistic” was a fine word, and it signified that no one in the administration was prepared to sound embarrassed. Dennis A. Foster, a literature professor who is a former S.M.U. faculty president, said professors had expressed anger at the university’s handling of this case. “If athletes go to most classes, if they go to tutoring, we will carry most of them and make sure they pass and get a diploma,” Foster said. “But some athletes have so little internalized good study habits that even that is hard.” Sadly, and predictably, none of this turned out well.

The Dallas schools finished their many investigations, and the superintendent fired more than a dozen coaches and staff members, including Johnson, Kimball’s coach. In a deeply puzzling move, he swept out Anita Connally, the reformer who had helped investigate these cases.

Two of the official reports excoriated Kimball High School Principal Earl Jones for his lack

of leadership, his poor management controls and his failure to recognize that his coaches were running amok. He survived with his job intact. I asked the Dallas schools spokesman Andre Riley about this. “All I can tell you is that he remains the principal,” he said.

In January 2015, Maligi announced that he was taking an “indefinite leave of absence.” Three days later, the university announced that the N.C.A.A. was investigating its basketball program. Maligi quit. He now serves as national scouting director for John Lucas Enterprises, which evaluates and develops top middle school, high school, college and professional basketball players. He did not respond to a request for an interview.

Frazier returned to the S.M.U. team. When the N.C.A.A. barred the Mustangs from postseason play in September, Brown called a team meeting. Frazier stood up and, in a loud, quavering voice, insisted that Brown tell everyone the truth: It was all Frazier’s fault. He ran out of the room in tears. By early winter, Frazier had lost his starting position and was coming off the bench. This was not his hoop dream. After leaving S.M.U., Frazier transferred to North Texas, where his A.A.U. coaches have connections. Nothing Seems to Change. The N.C.A.A. has insisted, improbably and absurdly, that the quality of a prospective student’s high school education is not its headache.

All it cares about is whether a student hits the minimum grade-point average. It has taken few steps to address recruiting and academic violations, and it has forced head coaches to assume responsibility for the missteps of assistants, who, after all, are trying to please their boss. That was why the N.C.A.A. hit Brown with a nine-game suspension. That struck me as generous sentencing for a three-time violator. Brown was not of the same mind. When I asked about it, he shrugged. The N.C.A.A., those bureaucrats, have a thing about him. “It actually turns my stomach; there’s got to be some motive,” he said. “They say ‘unethical behavior.’ If you lie to the N.C.A.A., you’re fired. I’m not fired.”

Brown is not fired. However, he obstructed and at first lied to investigators, the N.C.A.A. report said. Let’s posit that Brown is no worse than his sainted peers. John Wooden’s U.C.L.A. had boosters who offered illicit favors for players. The University of North Carolina staged phony courses. Kentucky’s John Calipari coached at two previous universities, and each was punished by the N.C.A.A. Big-time college basketball is a business, and head coaches soldier on without a backward glance. Have the sanctions and the attention paid to your team, I asked Brown, damaged recruiting? He brightened.

“Not one bit,” he said. “I think it’s only helping.” His most physically talented player sat out the year as a redshirt. A top 6-foot-9 Australian recruit recently signed with S.M.U. The talent pump is primed. It’s a pity Frazier cannot enjoy the fruits. Brown shrugged sadly. “We were all trying to help him,” Brown said. “It’s kind of a tragedy.” There’s that word again. No doubt there’s tragedy to be found in this story. Although in the case of Frazier and troubled students like him, it centers not on wins and losses but on missed educations and on cynical adults and school officials who use these young men as athletic baubles.

2nd READING.

Hidden Gold in College Applications

**NY TIMES :March 4th, 2016,
Frank Bruni**

If the gatekeepers at Davidson College had judged the teenager by her ACT score, she probably wouldn't have gotten in. It was 25 out of a possible 36, and more than three-quarters of the students at Davidson, a liberal-arts school in North Carolina with about 1,800 undergraduates and an acceptance rate of just over 20 percent, do better than that.

Her grades at a small charter school in the Boston area didn't carry the day. I was allowed to look at her application, with her name redacted, and what I saw was an impressive but unexceptional mix of A's and B-pluses, along with an impressive but unexceptional array of extracurricular activities much like any ambitious high school senior's.

I had to read deeper, as the admissions officers at Davidson had done, to understand why they felt so strongly about her, and to feel that way myself. I had to notice details embedded in her letters of recommendation and mentioned fleetingly in bits of personal information that she'd provided.

She'd been reared by a single mother. She had a 6-year-old brother. And for the last few years, she'd spent three nights a week making his dinner and getting him to bed while her mom was at work, earning an income so modest that the teenager met the federal requirements for receiving free lunch at school.

"Look at what she's juggling," Chris Gruber, Davidson's dean of admissions, said as we chatted about her last week. In the context of those stresses, her Advanced Placement classes shimmered brighter; so did her volunteer work.

And though her high school wasn't chockablock with counselors, she'd had the good sense to read up on Davidson and, in her application, lay out a mix of cogent, sophisticated reasons that it was right for her.

"She researched the place perfectly," Gruber marveled, and, in all likelihood, "was doing it on her own." Everything about her suggested maturity, independence, determination. Forget that ACT. She was a wager that Davidson was willing to make, and she was granted early admission to the class of 2020, which will begin studies next fall.

There has been a crescendo lately in talk about how to conduct college admissions in a manner that brings greater socioeconomic diversity to campuses, making them richer places to learn and better engines of social mobility.

I had extensive conversations with administrators at three very different schools that have made such diversity a priority and were willing to discuss specific applicants whose mettle became evident only upon a closer consideration of circumstances. The administrators explained how such an examination is done.

One of those schools was the Air Force Academy, which has a 17 percent acceptance rate and an especially interesting vantage point. Because it's free and funded by the government, it feels an extra obligation to be open to all. It's also legally compelled to look for, and at applicants in all 50 states.

And because it is preparing its students to be military officers, character matters as much as— if not more than — test scores.

The academy's administrators briefed me on several applicants from recent years who were admitted despite inferior scores, and who nonetheless performed superbly at the academy. One had an ACT of well under 20, and yet she'd earned A's in A.P. classes at her high school in inner-city Philadelphia.

Delving into her background, the administrators concluded that the low ACT was in part a function of a childhood in which she'd bounced around in foster care and even lived with teachers. "It wasn't a capacity issue for her," Col. Carolyn Benyshek, the director of admissions, told me. "It wasn't a skill issue. It was about exposure."

That she'd nonetheless challenged herself academically and maintained a high grade point average struck academy administrators as remarkable. They admitted her, and she went on to win a coveted award for her performance during basic training.

Phillip Prosseda, who works with Colonel Benyshek in admissions, stressed that what they're trying to be sensitive to "isn't simply a sad story or a sob story. It's about: What are the candidates' life experiences, and how did they react?"

For instance, a young woman with modest test scores and grades that weren't dazzling had done something that showed remarkable gumption, ingenuity and civic concern: She had coordinated the chain of events that led to the government cleaning up an environmental hazard near her school in an Illinois suburb.

The academy admitted her.

An admissions operation with enough resources to ferret out accomplishments like the Illinois woman's and to follow up with high schools and learn more about candidates is key.

The Air Force goes even further: It has a residential prep school where academically marginal students whom it wants to admit can do a year of remediation. Private schools with especially robust endowments could pursue more efforts along these lines than they do.

Admitting students with merit that isn't instantly clear in their transcripts is a purposeful effort, a commitment. Davidson and the third school I looked at, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, do extensive outreach to make sure that North Carolina kids from geographic areas and

backgrounds that aren't ready-made conduits to top colleges know about them and about aid that can make them affordable.

Davidson sends emissaries to speak with the leaders of community-based organizations and with guidance counselors in less affluent schools. U.N.C.-Chapel Hill is a vigorous partner in the College Advising Corps, which places recent graduates in schools to nurture kids who might not otherwise set their sights on higher education.

Chapel Hill's admissions director, Stephen Farmer, told me about the follow-up that his office had done regarding a young man who recently applied for early admission.

HIS test scores placed him toward the bottom of the applicant pool. He had D's from his freshman and sophomore years. But then there was a stunning improvement that suggested a commitment all the more noteworthy in light of significant adversity in his family.

Farmer and other admissions officers wavered, conscious that "if you put students in an academic environment that's too tough for them, you're setting them up to fail." On the other hand, they sensed real grit in him. So they delayed a decision in order to see if his grades from the fall of senior year held up. They did — and he has just been admitted

.Farmer mentioned a similar case from a year ago: a young man from rural North Carolina with an ACT of 22. He was the son of immigrants who didn't speak fluent English and had relied on him, since the sixth grade, to translate for them and even deal with the bank. He devoted up to 30 hours a week to the family business.

"He needs a bridge to his future," wrote one of his teachers in a letter of recommendation.

Discussion Topics

- ***Be Attentive*** : Notice the allure of winning. Notice the value of achievement. Notice the importance of success. In these articles and in our own lives. What happens? What is the good and what are the temptations? What stories from our lives did these cases evoke?
- ***Be Intelligent***: How do we frame winning? What is the relative value in our relationship to other values? What does winning mean, in our careers and in our businesses? What does it mean in our families? In our communities? How do we define success and failure and in what context?
- ***Be Reasonable***: Winning and its pursuit carries emotion. How do emotions affect our choices and our behaviors? How does winning align with integrity? What do the roles of sacrifice, failure, and compromise play in our decisions?
- ***Be Responsible***: In these cases, who are the agents of responsibility? What are the values? implications that are derived from the pursuit of winning? How has the role of money impacted amateur athletics? How will this conversation today impact you and your work? Any thoughts, strategies, applications or actions as we strive to connect our faith and our work?

Closing Prayer: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end.

Amen

