Sometimes you meet a person and you know right away you will be great friends. That’s just how it was with Bill. From the moment we met, there was no question he would be a great friend to me.

I know that all of us in one way or another were touched by Bill Carey. And, like many of you here, I could stand up here for hours and tell you all the wonderful things I remember about Bill. But one thing I think everyone who ever met him recalls is his impish, spontaneous sense of humor.

After he and Frank made their transformative gift to the School of Law, we called the entire community together to celebrate. Nothing like this had ever happened before in the history of the school, and we were delighted—in fact, I was shocked though extraordinarily pleased to have secured the gift last spring.

To celebrate the initial announcement, we filled the atrium of the law school with balloons and we welcomed not just our faculty, staff, and students, but the Careys, the president of the university, the chancellor of the University System of Maryland, the Mayor of Baltimore, the Governor of Maryland, and many other alumni and friends of the law school.

I got up and gave a speech about how much the gift meant to us, how it would transform not just the school, but the university, the city, the state, the nation—and then all of sudden Bill leapt out of his seat, threw his hands in the air, and exclaimed, “And the world!”

That one action, so indicative of the vibrant, indomitable spirit of Bill Carey, brought down the house.

Everyone knows of Bill’s generosity. His motto was “doing good while doing well,” and as a businessman and philanthropist, he lived by those words. His generosity was accompanied by his vision—his giving to make others’ visions a reality.

Bill had an unparalleled understanding of the effects of education, and he was deeply committed to helping modern universities adapt to our rapidly changing world. He understood how important it is that students acquire a global perspective on the subject matter they choose to study. He was committed to interdisciplinary learning, and his giving fostered connections—like the work we do in business and law. Perhaps most importantly, Bill believed in education that had an ethic of public service at its core. These shared values cemented our friendship.

Our school is now the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, named for Bill and Frank’s grandfather. “Papa,” as Bill called him, had been very important to Bill, and Bill said to me that he imagined Papa looking down to make sure that UM Carey Law became the best law school in the state, the nation—and the world.

I made a promise to Bill that I would make sure his grandfather’s legacy lived on and that his dreams for the school were realized. I like to think of Bill along with his Papa watching over us, and seeing that their legacies live on, just as Bill does in our hearts.

In January 2012, the UM Carey Law community mourned the passing of Wm. Polk Carey, one of the country’s leading philanthropists in education. At an April memorial service at the Church of the Redeemer in Baltimore, Dean Haddon was asked to speak on behalf of the law school. This is an excerpt of her comments.

In Appreciation: Wm. Polk Carey

By Phoebe Haddon

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