



Winter Conference General Session a hit with conference goers

Pro Football Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw
delights full house in Phoenix

The 2022 Winter Conference General Session held at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, AZ on Friday January 7th brought together a full house of corrections professionals, top academics and leading members of the business community to honor the corrections profession, learn the latest in correctional techniques and socialize with fellow corrections professionals from around the country and around the world.

The colors were presented by the Honor Guard for the Arizona Department of Rehabilitation and Reentry commanded by Christina Brewer.

Rev. Norma Gilliam President of the American Correctional Chaplains Association delivered a blessing

“I ask that we have the wisdom and the courage to continue to serve you through this organization.”

ACA President Tony Parker introduced the Executive Committee, honored guests and ACA Past Presidents.

David Shinn, Director of the Arizona Department of Rehabilitation and Reentry welcomed the



assembled corrections professionals to Phoenix and outlined some of the challenges the industry has faced:

“Over the past three years, we’ve personally lived through the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19. Few professions have experienced as

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intensely as our own. The next several days provide an opportunity to share challenges, solutions and the innovations and best practices which have provided the capacity to see us successfully protect those in our custody and care while sustaining resilience among our staff and maintaining public safety.”

Sheriff Paul Penzone of Maricopa County also spoke to the assembly asking for a moment of silence for those who have been lost due to the pandemic over the past two years.

“We made a choice to work in a profession that is the most dangerous, the most trying and most challenging beyond that of any other with the exception of the military and first responders. We uphold two very powerful words: Freedom and Order.”

The General Session’s keynote speaker was Terry Bradshaw.

He was the first pick in the NFL draft in 1970 and turned the Pittsburgh Steelers into a dynasty, winning four Super Bowl titles in six years and being named Super Bowl MVP twice.

After he retired prior to the 1984 season, Terry moved to the broadcast booth where he spent several years at CBS before moving to the FOX network in 1994. Currently he has a dual role as co-host and analyst on Fox NFL Sunday and has been a primary force in making the show America’s most-watched, NFL pregame program.

Bradshaw began by letting the assembly know he loves to give speeches but had not given one in some time. He admitted his knowledge of the

corrections industry was slight “I’ve never been incarcerated ... Yeah Me!”

“When you live out in the country, you can get away with many things,” he joked.

“I did film a commercial inside a prison and I didn’t like it very much” he recalled.

“I never did understand why we needed jails or prisons if people would just think about the consequences of their sins. That this is potentially where you are going to spend the rest of your life and you show them that. Seems to me something ought to click and say that’s not quite what I want. But evidently not.”

“If you take young people and you take them through a jail it does have an impact on their life. I spent a day where I stood next to a corpse, and I decided that dying was not something I wanted to do,” he remembered.

Bradshaw moved on to highlight some wisdom he found in a graduation speech given by Adm. William McRaven.

“There will not be one thing I say today that will come close to the very first thing out of his mouth,” he stated.

He talked about the Admiral’s record as a Navy SEAL, head of special operations and how that related to beating adversity.

“I know, adversity is your business,” Bradshaw said. “It’s you taking people and having to ... can I say locking them up?” he queried the dais. “I don’t know what’s proper here.”

“They can’t have freedom! That’s the words ... No Freedom.”

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Bradshaw praised McRaven’s emphasis on preparation and commitment in order to reach goals.

“Basically success, equals happiness equals reward equals impact and effect on human lives,” he said.

Offering a summation of what he gained from the McRaven speech, Bradshaw concluded:

“When you live and learn to love and care and have a passion about what you want out of life as McRaven did as SEAL’s do you come away with the impression that if everyone would listen to this speech, we wouldn’t need prisons,”

He then related the story of the Arizona Cardinals football team for the 2021 season. How the team did much better on the road than at home and how he didn’t understand how that was possible.

“I have got to talk about this team that can’t win at home ... I’m fed up with them!”

“I thought to myself after listening to McRaven’s speech, that’s what they need. They need inspiration, they need someone to get in their face and tell it like it is,”

“Everybody needs an attention grabber and you provide it,” Bradshaw said pointing to the crowd.

“Everybody needs something that grabs them whether it be emotionally, spiritually, physically. You need to reach them.”

“Something that makes them focus, makes them realize what they’ve been doing for 15 weeks as an Arizona Cardinal isn’t working. What I’ve been doing as a human being in and out of incarceration isn’t working. I need a wake-up call. I need someone to deliver me from myself.”

“McRaven had it figured out. We’ve got to take pride in who we are. We’ve got to respect ourselves, we’ve got to have self-esteem. I don’t mind when a person says they are proud of themselves,”

Becoming a Hall of Fame football player

Bradshaw then related the story of how he became a football player, starting with his earliest memories.

“I am a lowly little football player. I grew up wanting nothing more than to play football. Santa



Claus brought me a football. I thought it was the most beautiful thing I’d ever seen in my life. I lay in my room and pitched that ball, didn’t know how to hold it, just pitch it up and catch it. My Daddy would holler Stop hitting the ceiling with that football, you hear me! But I’d wait until I heard him snoring and I’d pitch it up again.”

Even as early as seven years old, Bradshaw said he knew he wanted to play in the NFL.

“I had such a passion for it when the seams split I took the laces out of my tennis shoes, got a clothes hanger and pushed the laces through and tied that ball back together. That’s loving what you are doing. And when the football faded because I was throwing it into snowbanks, I took Cordovan polish and I polished it. In my bedroom, you could see stains on the ceiling.”

Bradshaw related his journey as an athlete from his days in junior high where he tried out

for football but did not make the team. His family moved and once again he failed to make the football team at his new junior high.

Finally, he succeeded making the football team as a 128-pound nose tackle.

For the next two years, he played as a backup quarterback for the junior varsity.

“Senior year, I politicked and told the starting quarterback he would be a better receiver than quarterback. He was my best friend. I said Tommy you should be the receiver and I’ll be the quarterback and we’ll both get to play. He said that was a great idea. He became 1st team all-state as a wide receiver his senior year. I threw 23 touchdown passes which at that time was a state record”

He signed to play football at Louisiana State University however his path to big time college success faced a challenge.

“I don’t know why you had to take a test but you do. I mean I graduated high school that ought to be enough”

“So I sit down and think this is the stupidest thing I’ve ever seen in my life. You have to circle these dots and I’m thinking it’s a beautiful day and all I’m thinking about is going fishing. So I just forget the questions and circled the dots. Turned it in and thought that’s good, I’m headed to LSU.”

Terry related “I dang near passed it.”

Subsequent efforts to pass the test fell short.

“I did worse when I got a tutor!”

Instead, Terry went to Louisiana Tech where he starred on the football team and was the #1 choice in the 1970 NFL Draft.

Terry’s journey through success and failure

It was not an easy or straight journey from a seven-year-old dreamer to the Pro Football Hall of Fame and Bradshaw had to learn a lot of lessons along the way, many of them the hard way.

“When I understood at 7 years old, I was going to play in the NFL, that was my journey,” he recalled.

“On my journey, I had to learn how to throw a football. Very important if you are going to play quarterback. I put my finger on the point of the

ball because that’s what javelin throwers do. My claim to fame was throwing the javelin. I was the world record holder for throwing the javelin as a 17-year-old,” he said.

“Now on this journey, I also had to understand there are so many techniques I have to learn, play action passes, bootlegs, dropping back, reading coverages.”

The key is not the failure because we know we will fail. The key is how we handle the failure.

There were more than just football skills necessary to complete this journey.

“I’ll tell you what else we have to learn ... we have to learn to put up with a lot of mistakes. God knows I made a lot of mistakes,” he stated.

“Lynn Swann got into the Hall of Fame because I wasn’t very accurate,” he joked.

Success wasn’t the most difficult part for Bradshaw.

“Part of the journey is the experience we get as we explore and when we face challenges.”

“I had to find out: Can I handle it? Can I deal with the booing?” he questioned.

“Have you ever been booed when you go to your office in the prison?” he asked the crowd.

“That’s part of the journey. Failing. Five interceptions in the first half against Cincinnati. I’d boo me too.”

“The key is not the failure because we know we will fail. The key is how we handle the failure. Do they impact our life? Do they change us? Do they scare us?”

“I had a coach yell at me on the sidelines You throw another interception Bradshaw, I’ll run your butt out of town”

“What did I do when I went back in? I threw another interception. But I handled it OK.”

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The lesson Bradshaw learned through his adversity was about his own ability to survive failing.

“I found out I could handle adversity. I found out that failing — everybody fails. I’m not going to stay down. It’s in the quiet crucible of your personal private suffering that your noblest dreams are born,” he stated.

“God’s greatest gifts are given in compensation for what’s you’ve been through. Therein lies the reward. If I go woe is me, if I blame my mama or my daddy, if I blame my boss and I never look into the mirror and do mirror economics. Because when you are looing at yourself you can be brutally honest. You think I wanted to be divorced three times,” he concluded.

Bradshaw was candid about his failures and about how he needed help to overcome his shortcomings.

“I got help. I didn’t want to be a failure in life. I didn’t want to get divorced. I didn’t want to throw interceptions. I didn’t want to be booed. I didn’t want to be replaced in the middle of the third quarter by the backup. I didn’t want to have to deal with the media calling my stupid. But I did.”

He let the crowd know how the failures and challenges he’s faced were just part of his personal journey.

“It was part of my journey. I learned so much about Terry Bradshaw I love the fact I’m not really a quitter. I’m a fighter. I learned I’m not the most talented guy, but I know how to win. “

Circling back to Admiral McRaven’s speech, Bradshaw was reminded about accomplishments.

“The point behind “Make Your Bed” is maybe the rest of your day is a total waste but when you come home from a bad day you can crawl into a bed that is already made, and you can be proud of that one accomplishment.”

Accomplishments are important according to Bradshaw, but they also create expectations as he learned as a Super Bowl winning quarterback in football-mad Pittsburgh.

“Aren’t accomplishments important? Win one Super Bowl you get a parade. But what do they say in that parade? “Hey Bradshaw, you hillbilly you better win the Super Bowl again next year or we’ll run your butt out of here. Didn’t win and I’m over the hill, can’t play anymore. Trade him get rid of him.”

Leaning on the lessons learned from his failures, Bradshaw rallied his team and went on to great success.

“Next two years, MVP of the League and two Super Bowl MVP’s and these same people were saying I was the greatest quarterback they ever saw,” he declared.

Bradshaw explained how he viewed the kind of extreme praise he started to receive after his Super Bowl victories.

“We get nothing in life without having to say thank you to someone else. I look at my offense and see 10 other people, I didn’t deserve to be in the Hall of Fame, don’t care about it means nothing to me. I liked winning four Super Bowl’s that means a lot.”

“So, when you say thank you to somebody, nothing wrong with saying nice job, you are





inspiring, how's your family, congratulating people, building people up and lifting them up, or just shaking a hand and saying nice job. You are so important, Thank you," he said.

We get nothing in life without having to say thank you to someone else.



Winding up his talk, Bradshaw gave a personal example of how I took more than just athletic ability and mental strength to reach his goals.

“Nothing better than family. My early years in Pittsburgh were horrible, I needed my family. They lifted me up they made me feel good about myself. They helped me get back in the race,” he declared.

“When I got good, I was smart enough to know hey it wasn't me, its everybody its all of us together it's always about the team.”

Bringing the lesson home, Bradshaw said:

“Look this is our family gathered here today about a thousand people. We walked in as individuals now look what we got. What a beautiful family we've got here.”

The Pro Football Hall of Famer and Emmy-award winning TV personality wound up his

speech by with his wishes for the gathered corrections professionals:

“We're dealing with a pandemic, political unrest we're in a tough state of affairs. Thank you for being kind and patient with me today. If I had the power, I just want to give you joy. Not happiness, joy. These bad things that come in life can't affect joy. Happiness it can. You have a bad morning; meeting doesn't go well but something goes well happiness goes up but joy it just flatlines. Nothing interferes with what's in your soul, what's in your spirit. What makes you who you are. To you I pray that you have joy. That's the gift I would give to each of you,” he concluded.

— KIRK RAYMOND