

# Knight

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"I can speak for the entire University community, students, faculty, staff and alumni, in expressing our deep gratitude, especially in this time of our nation's life," he added.

Frohnmayr pointed out that Knight is the "the single most generous donor" to the University, whose philanthropic list includes donating money for the Knight Library, contributing to the Knight

Law Center and pledging matching funds to create 16 endowed chairs at the University.

Explaining his reconciliation in The Oregonian, Knight noted that recent current events, specifically the attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., attributed to his decision to begin donating money to the University.

"Like so many others, I have been searching for a time and a way to go on with business, while not turning my back on the terrible events in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania," Knight said.

He also pointed to the future of

the Autzen Stadium renovation.

"I have decided to personally financially contribute in a way that will allow the Athletic Department to complete its renovation of Autzen Stadium without delay or any alteration of construction plans," Knight said.

Athletic Director Bill Moos said that Knight's pull-out in April 2000 delayed the renovation project by a year and forced the department to "trim back what we felt was the total cost" of the project, which is expected to be completed in 2003. The renovation will add 12,000 seats to Autzen stadium as well as creating 32 new premium suites.

Moos also said that Knight's announcement may lead to a boon in athletic donations, perhaps even securing more funding for the renovation project, which was originally estimated at \$80 million but could eventually top \$85 million.

"This announcement will help some people who may have been on the fence," he said.

Frohnmayr was quick to point out that Knight's decision will not only affect athletic fundraising, but donations to the University in general.

"The renewal of the Knight commitment will have ripple effects throughout the entire academic departments of the University," he said.

During the debates over the WRC in April 2000, Frohnmayr was caught between two warring factions: the students and faculty members who wanted to join the WRC, and not wanting to anger the University's largest donor.

While traveling to China for a conference this summer, Frohnmayr said that he and other academics visited a factory contracted by Nike to get a first-hand look at working conditions.

"The Nike sub-contracted factory I saw was clean, it was efficient," he said. "The workers were well cared for."

## Knight's return has history

Nike CEO Phil Knight's decision Wednesday to re-pledge financial support for the University's Autzen Stadium renovation mends a relationship spoiled April 14, 2000.

On that day, University President Dave Frohnmayr announced the school was joining the Worker Rights Consortium, a labor watchdog group, so the group could investigate working conditions in factories that manufacture University apparel.

Nike and Knight favored University membership in a similar monitoring group, the Fair Labor Association, because the group allowed industry representatives on its governing board and was better equipped to police factories.

Knight said April 23 that he was "shocked" at the University's decision to join the WRC. He added that "there will be no future donations from me to the University of Oregon."

But Frohnmayr's decision was pressured by more than just suits who push shoes adorned with swooshes.

A throng of student protesters pitched tents on the front lawn of his office at Johnson Hall on April 4 to vociferously complain that University clothing was manufactured in overseas sweatshops where workers were unsafe, underpaid and overworked.

They would not leave, they said, until Frohnmayr joined the WRC. He did

so April 14, only after careful consideration and at the behest of the University Senate.

Nine days later, Knight re-pocketed \$30 million promised to the University, dashing the Athletic Department's hopes of renovating its stadium.

Planners said the project, then scheduled to be completed by 2002, would be funded by increased stadium revenue, bonds and private gifts. But without Knight's private gift, the plan stalled.

On Sept. 19, 2000, Frohnmayr revealed that the University would join the FLA to ensure compliance with the University's Trademark Licensing Code of Conduct, which places standards on working conditions in factories where University apparel is made.

Student protesters, who just six months before had left the green grass at Johnson Hall victorious, were shocked.

"All of a sudden, ding, we were with the FLA," then student body president Jay Breslow told the Emerald. "But there is a key piece left out, and that's students."

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Knight re-pledged funding to the University. "I have decided to personally financially contribute in a way that will allow the Athletic Department to complete its renovation of Autzen Stadium."

— Eric Martin

Some University officials feel that Knight's return may also help facilitate a return by other groups or individuals who fled during the fractious debates surrounding the WRC.

"I think (Knight) and the University realized some people felt ostracized after Phil severed ties," said Paul Stieber, deputy director

for alumni communications. "His coming back paves the way for others to do so — if they left because they felt the same way."

— Higher education reporter Leon Tovey contributed to this story.

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