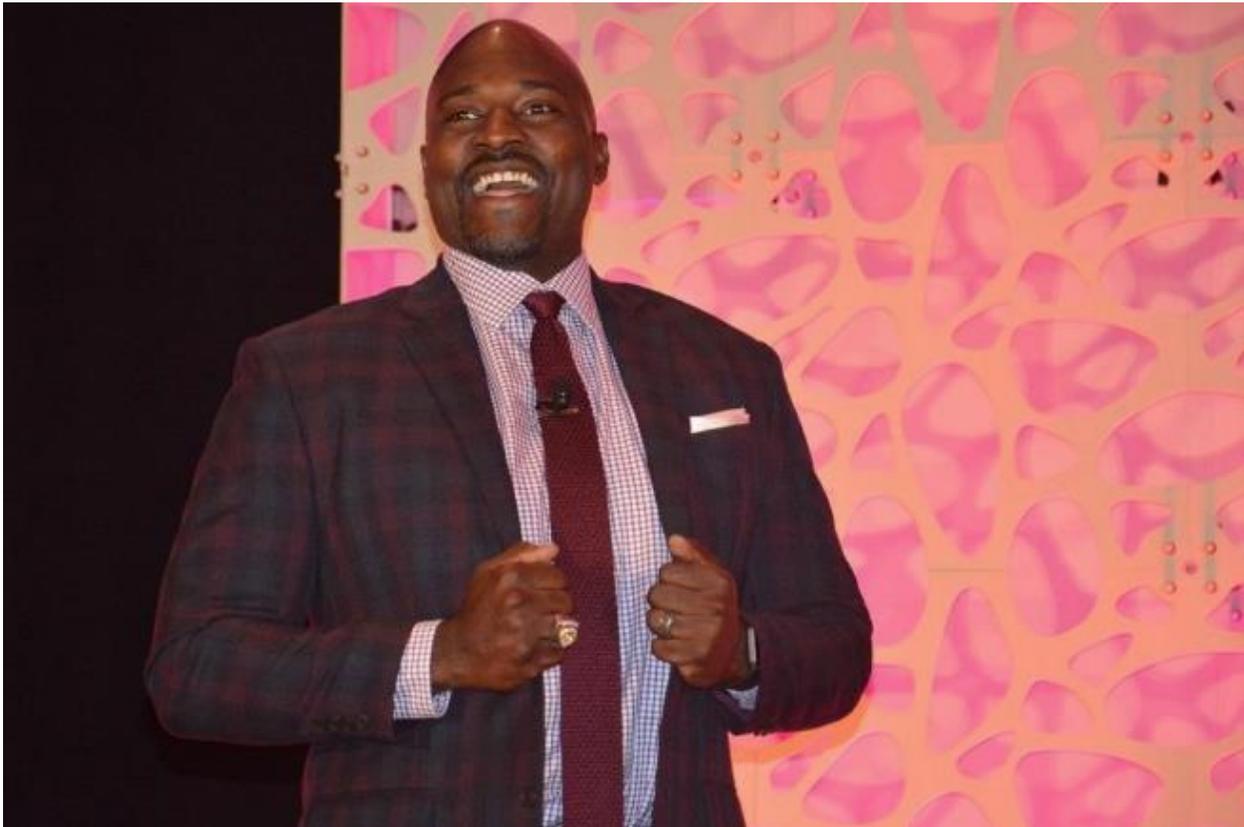


Marcellus Wiley Delivers Powerful Message in Keynote Address at NAI Global Fall Convention

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Marcellus Wiley delivered a powerful message of hope and inspiration by telling his life story of a boy growing up in Compton, California, excelling at football at a young age and learning some of life's greatest lessons through sports. He also ran track at Saint Monica Catholic High School in Santa Monica. Wiley went on to play football at Columbia University in New York and was the 22nd pick in the second round of the 1997 NFL draft, beginning his 10-year pro career with the Buffalo Bills. He was selected to the AFC Pro Bowl team in 2001 as a member of the San Diego Chargers.

“Growing up and with all the gang stuff going on around me, my community suffered from low ambition. As a young boy, I had to learn how to avoid adopting that point of view. Fortunately, at home I had a very loving and welcoming family,” Wiley told the NAI Global audience.

Already a promising (with great speed) athlete at the age of 8, his parents would not let him play sports unless he earned good marks in school. Thus, he learned life lesson #1: Balance. Balance, the high school and college running back said, helped shape his identity, which led to life lesson #2” “It’s not just who you are – it’s as much as who you are *not*,” he said.

By his own account (and he is a very believable fellow), he would be “first ballot in the Pop Warner Football Hall of Fame,” as that was when he peaked as a tailback and learned the value of competition – he quoted Mark Twain, saying “competition is between you and yourself.” In high school he was afflicted with Osgood-Schlatter Disease (OSD), a common cause of knee pain in growing adolescents, which slightly diminished his performance on the grid iron. Yet that challenge taught him life lesson #3: Focus.

“Attention is invention and focus is knowing how to prioritize your life,” he said.

His bout with OSD led to diminished interest from college recruiters (he wanted to be a Longhorn at the University of Texas, or Syracuse University) though the Pac 10 did call. Columbia University also called and after touring the campus, he surprised his family by selecting the Ivy League school for college (he earned a degree in Sociology there). That move ultimately helped him with his NFL career because “it branded me as intelligent,” said Wiley.

NAI convention attendees learned something about Marcellus Wiley that isn’t in a Wikipedia definition of him: he entered Columbia University at 6’ and 180 pounds – classic running back size, and graduated at 6’4” and 280 lbs., finishing college as a defensive end. That growth spurt and dedicated work in the weight room led to a decade in the NFL.

He finished his talk to NAI Global by saying: “Commit daily to improving on your yesterday version of you.”

When Wiley retired from the NFL he started doing interviews for ESPN which led to his current broadcasting career. He recently published a book, "Never Shut Up: The Life, Opinions, and Unexpected Adventures of an NFL Outlier." Marcellus’ book is available now at your preferred book retailers.