

*Track and field athlete Meredith Rainey Valmon profiled the Class of 1971's Kurt Schmoke for the Ivy@50 event in January 2007. An excerpt below talks about the founding of the Calvin Hill Day Care Center in New Haven:*

For those who saw how he impacted Yale's campus as an undergraduate, it could not have been a surprise to see how much success and acclaim former football and lacrosse player **Kurt Schmoke** has attracted in his life of service.

In his current position as Dean of Howard Law School in Washington, D.C. Kurt Schmoke appears to have found a position that is perfectly suited to him. He has always seemed to position himself to effect positive changes and as Dean, he has the opportunity to teach scores of young people to do the same. ...

For most undergraduates the primary goal is to get an education that will allow them to go off in the world to perhaps later make a contribution to their universities and their communities. There are few who find a way to make a significant contribution during their undergraduate years while balancing academics and athletics as well.

But when Schmoke goes to visit his alma mater, he has the distinction of being able to visit a decades-old legacy that he built while he was a student -- the Calvin Hill Daycare Center.

Schmoke and his friend, Mary Pearl [Davenport '72], undertook the establishment of a daycare center after one of Schmoke's roommates, who worked in the cafeteria, learned from his co-workers there that many university workers were struggling to find affordable, quality childcare. Schmoke and Pearl decided to try to raise the money to establish a daycare center to address this need. The university agreed to match dollar for dollar whatever contributions Schmoke and Pearl raised.

Knowing the status with which Calvin Hill, the aforementioned football star, was regarded by current students, alumni and the surrounding community, they enlisted his help to allow them to use his name to assist in fundraising. Hill willingly agreed, and the two undergrads were able to raise enough, including the donation of a building, to open the Calvin Hill Daycare Center in 1970. Schmoke describes it as his proudest moment from his time at Yale.

When asked how he managed to accomplish this ambitious goal his answer is simple. "We didn't know that we couldn't do it. If we stopped to think about how hard it would be, we might never have undertaken it but it just never occurred to us that we couldn't do it." And how did he fit in a project like this with everything else he was doing? "The climate was supportive of students being active in many things. It was just a matter of choosing to stay busy doing productive things as opposed to unproductive things." ...

*For Meredith Raney Valmon's complete story, visit [ivy50.com](http://ivy50.com).*

*--Harry Levitt, Y71 class secretary  
(updated May 9, 2007)*