

## Bill Blackwell

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**From:** Kenny Williamson <KennyWilliamson@BankPlus.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 10:07 AM  
**To:** Bill Blackwell  
**Subject:** Re: Strong Endorsement for Straton Karatassos' Induction into the 2025 Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame

**Importance:** High

Bill,

My name is Kenny Williamson, a former MSU four-year letterman and starter for the MSU football team under Coach Jackie Sherill from 1996 to 2000. I am writing to express my wholehearted endorsement of Straton Karatassos for induction into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame's 2025 class. During my time at MSU, I had the privilege of meeting many incredible individuals who have shaped me into the person I am today. However, none were more genuine and authentic in their desire to see me grow as both an athlete and a person than Strat. He was a constant source of guidance and encouragement, especially during the most challenging times during my career. Every conversation with Strat started with a kiss on the cheek, a gesture from his Greek culture, and ended with words of love and support. He always made it clear that I could talk to him about anything, and he truly meant it. Even today, Strat still checks in on me and many of my former teammates, showing a deep, genuine love for us and our families. Beyond his remarkable character, Strat dedicated 43 years to Mississippi State University athletics, making significant contributions in both athletic training and athletic development. He started his career as one of only two athletic trainers, playing a critical role in ensuring the health and well-being of MSU athletes for nearly two decades. Later, he transitioned to the Bulldog Club, where he focused on fundraising and maintaining alumni connections, ensuring the financial stability of MSU athletics. Strat's long tenure and deep relationships with students, athletes, and alumni have left an indelible mark on the MSU community. His unwavering commitment to the well-being of student-athletes, his efforts to secure financial resources for the athletics department, and his ability to build and sustain strong, supportive relationships make him an iconic figure in MSU's athletic history. For these reasons, I strongly believe that Straton Karatassos is a deserving candidate for the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. His contributions to MSU athletics, combined with his lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals, make him an exemplary choice for the 2025 induction.

Thank you for considering my recommendation.

Best regards,

Kenny Williamson



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