

2018 Oley Corporate Partnership Program

A little over a year ago my life was perfect. I was 31 years old, had a wife and two children, one more on the way, and held my dream job as one of the youngest assistant coaches in Power 5 football at the University of Minnesota.

Then, **in August of 2016, things changed forever** when I was rushed to the hospital for emergency surgery following an allergic reaction to a medication. **I underwent four surgeries in six days** which removed all of my small intestine and part of my colon—and **was not given much chance of survival.** My wife was told to gather family and friends. To complicate matters, during this time my wife found out she was carrying not one baby, but twins. Thankfully, my stubborn attitude, some amazing doctors, and my wife's love helped me to pull through. **Now, diagnosed with short bowel syndrome and dependent on home parenteral nutrition (HPN), I had to figure out life again.**

For the first six months after the initial surgeries my digestive tract was left unattached, making an ostomy bag necessary. I also had a port placed in my chest.

The early days were difficult, compounded by my returning to coaching



Coach Sherels on the field

immediately after being discharged from the hospital. I'm happy to say that I was able to coach the entire season without missing any games. **Learning to administer HPN** as well as manage a myriad of new health issues **while working 70+ hours a week** was very challenging.

With the help of Mayo Clinic doctors **my wife found the Oley Foundation** and fell in love with the support network. Countless **tips and tricks were discovered** to make our situation more manageable. And reading people's success **stories gave us hope** that we desperately needed at the beginning. **She found solace knowing we were part of a larger community** and not on this medical journey alone.

This past January (2017) my digestive tract was reconnected, allowing me to eat again and lose the ostomy bags. **My wife and I attended our first Oley regional conference and were amazed** at the wealth of information provided by the speakers as well as other attendees.

I've decided to take a year off from coaching to focus on family and health, but **for the first time in a long while, I'm beginning to feel optimistic about the future**—and the Oley Foundation is a huge reason why.

Please know that **a donation to Oley not only saves lives, but** also (perhaps more importantly) **allows** those of us whose lives have been saved to continue living **a normal life, sustaining and maintaining the parts of ourselves that are most important and make life worth living.**

—Mike Sherels



Mike, his wife Emily, and their children Valerie, Quinton, Lyla, and Cecilia

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