

# JIM KELLY

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER



### “A JOURNEY OF PERSEVERANCE”

- Football
- Leadership
- Courage
- Teamwork
- Inspiration
- Motivation
- Philanthropy
- Overcoming Adversity
- Parent of a special needs child
  - Loss of a child
  - Cancer survivor

**JIM FOCUSES ON THE FOUR F'S**  
Family, Friends, Faith & Fans

### JIM IS AN AVID OUTDOORSMAN,

has a passion for hunting and has worked with several companies such as Mossy Oak, Under Armour & Realtree

### APPEARANCES & ENDORSEMENTS

Erie County Medical Center  
Buffalo Bills  
Merck Pharmaceuticals  
97 Rock  
Microsoft  
M&T Bank  
Bed, Bath & Beyond  
Genetech  
Autograph Shows

### PERSONAL

Jim and his wife Jill live in Buffalo, NY and are the parents of Erin, Camryn & Hunter (1997- 2005).

- Born on Valentine’s Day 1960, raised in East Brady, Pennsylvania. His father was raised by nuns in an orphanage outside of Pittsburgh, while his mother’s every move conveyed an aura of sainthood. Although she longed to give birth to a daughter, she was blessed with 6 boys.
- Growing up with 5 brothers, Jim learned to be tough. It also gave him a desire to strive and excel. He credits much of his success to his brothers.
- Jim wanted to play for Penn State under Joe Paterno, but was offered a full ride to play linebacker. He declined & attended the University of Miami as a quarterback. Senior year, Jim was a Heisman trophy candidate against Herschel Walker, Dan Marino and John Elway. Fourth game of the season against Virginia Tech, he was blindsided and separated his shoulder. He was told he may never get his range of motion back. With hard work, dedication & support from his family, he proved the doctors wrong.
- 1983 NFL Draft: Buffalo Bills was one of 3 teams Jim did not want to play for. The Bills had the 12<sup>th</sup> pick in the 1st round and Jim let out a big sigh of relief when his name was not called. However the Bills also had the 14<sup>th</sup> pick in the 1st round. This time his name was called and Jim became a Buffalo Bill.
- Despite being drafted, he opted to play for the USFL as a Houston Gambler and was named USFL Player of the Year in 1984. When the USFL suspended operations, he went back to his contract with the Bills & began playing in 1986.
- Jim Kelly was a Buffalo Bill for his entire NFL career; 1986-1996. He led the team to six AFC East Championships & four consecutive Super Bowl appearances. Even though the Bills did not come home with a Super Bowl Championship ring, they showed incredible resiliency by making it back four times in a row. No other team has been able to match this accomplishment. In 1997, he announced his decision to retire from the NFL.
- On his very own birthday, Valentine’s Day February 14<sup>th</sup> 1997 his first and only son, Hunter was born.
- Hunter was diagnosed with a fatal disease called Krabbe Leukodystrophy. He was given a life expectancy of 2 years. Jim & his wife Jill established the Hunter’s Hope Foundation to provide research with respect to Krabbe Disease & other Leukodystrophies as well as being advocates for Universal Newborn Screening.
- Kelly was inducted as part of the Pro Football Hall of Fame class of 2002 and at that time he was the 8<sup>th</sup> quarterback in NFL history to be selected on the first year of eligibility. His prayers were answered and his son Hunter was able to attend the induction ceremony. His speech is said to be one of the best ever heard.
- Hunter celebrated 8 years of life until he was laid to rest August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005.
- Jim’s wife Jill is the Author of *Without a Word: How a Boy’s Unspoken Love Changed Everything*. A riveting memoir revealing the Kelly family’s private struggle & how 8 years with their severely disabled, terminally ill son, Hunter, unfolded in a redemptive & transforming manner. It’s a NY Times Best Seller.
- On June 3, 2013, it was announced Kelly was diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma, a form of cancer in his upper jaw. He underwent surgery at a Buffalo hospital in June and reported to news outlets shortly after, that the surgery was successful. In March of 2014 after a follow-up test, Kelly’s cancer returned and he underwent radiation & chemotherapy treatments. Doctors confirmed in September of 2014 after biopsies had been taken there was no sign of Cancer. On March 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 after several tests were taken, it was announced Jim would be facing his next battle. The cancer was surgically removed and at the same time he began reconstructive surgery on his upper jaw. There are many procedures that need to take place over the next several months to complete the reconstructive surgery, but after the surgery, Jim was once again cancer free and will continue to be closely monitored.
- In July 2018 he received the Jimmy V Perseverance Award at the ESPY’s. In his speech he talked about the four F’s – Faith, Family, Friends and Fans and asked everyone to “Make a difference today, for someone who is fighting for their tomorrow”.