

Family shows gratitude to Mercy with donation

Jesse Lawrence was a high school freshman when his sled went over a retaining wall that was several feet high.

The impact crushed his foot, breaking numerous bones, said his mother, Sharon, and some bones were “dusted,” meaning they just weren’t there any more.

It was a particularly devastating injury for Jesse, a high school football and lacrosse player at The Maret School in Washington, D.C.

The family, who lives in northern Virginia, saw several orthopedic doctors in the Washington area, but the prognosis was grim: Jesse would never run again and would always walk with a limp.

“My whole life had been revolving around sports before that – I was stunned,” said Jesse, now a senior.

The family was referred to Dr. Mark S. Myerson at The Institute for Foot and Ankle Reconstruction at Mercy Medical Center, Baltimore.

While they were sitting in the waiting room, Sharon recalls, Terrell Owens, then with the Philadelphia Eagles, came out “dripping with diamonds.” Jesse commented to his dad, “We’re staying with this doctor.”

Dr. Myerson performed a complicated, aggressive surgery that involved a bone graft, plates and screws. After the foot healed, he performed another surgery to remove the plates and screws.

Jesse had missed his freshman lacrosse season but returned his sophomore year.

“It wasn’t a fabulous year, but he was glad to be out there,” said his mother, adding that he wanted to play so badly he said he would become a goalie if he couldn’t run.

But run he does – as a senior attacker he’s being recruited by several Division III

schools for lacrosse, and he's a place kicker and a cornerback on the football team. And he's just as fast as he ever was.

"I don't even remember I broke my foot; when I'm running I can't tell," Jesse said.

"He has no pain - he has no restrictions," Sharon said. "We just feel incredibly blessed and fortunate to have found Dr. Myerson because the outcome might have been very different."

To show their gratitude, as they talk with college coaches and wait for admission letters, the family donated \$25,000 from a family foundation to The Institute for Foot and Ankle Reconstruction at Mercy. Sharon said they requested that the money be used to help Dr. Myerson train other doctors in similar procedures.

Jesse hopes to study health science in college, and perhaps pursue physical therapy, in part because of his injury.

"I really feel blessed to have Dr. Myerson in my life," Jesse said. "I didn't know what I was going to do if I couldn't play sports, and I'm glad I don't have to ask myself that question."