

Dave Marriott's 'Moment'

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Marriott

The “moment” doesn’t get any larger for a media relations pro than the one that came to pass for Dave Marriott at Sea-Tac Airport on October 4.

That was the date of Amanda Knox’s triumphal return from Italy to her home in Seattle after four years of incarceration and reversal of her conviction in the murder of British roommate Meredith Kircher.

Surrounded by a sea of international media, who were beaming the press conference to listeners and viewers around the globe—and standing in front of Amanda and her family—Marriott took command at the podium and conducted a brief and orderly media event that easily could have been unruly, in the hands of a less-seasoned professional.

At the end of the brief session, he admonished the media to “give the family a break in the weeks ahead.”

Marriott’s “moment” in the global spotlight was a long time in coming and stood in stark contrast to the behind-the-scenes work that characterized his handling of the Amanda Knox assignment.

How he got the gig four years ago was one of those serendipitous things. He was friends with a woman who handled PR at Macy’s, which is also where Amanda’s father Kurt worked at that time as the controller. She mentioned the situation to Dave and put him in touch with Kurt and the rest—as they say—is history.

Marriott dealt with the case literally on a daily basis as he masterminded multiple strategies with the media and attorneys to counter the negative image of Amanda spawned by the Italian and British media.

Dave never talked directly with Amanda, who was allowed just one short phone call a week and only to family by her Italian jailers. And he never visited Perugia, where she was held.

In fact, the first time they actually spoke to each other was in the hallway at Sea-Tac Airport as they were heading to a room to prepare for the press conference.

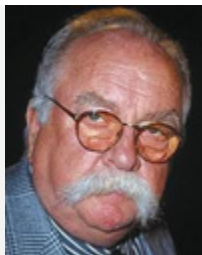
“She said, ‘You must be David,’” Marriott recalled. “And I replied, ‘Yes I am. Welcome home.’”

Marriott, who has been involved in a wide range of crisis-management situations—including handling the aftermath of an Alaska Airlines crash, among others—said seeing Amanda step off the airplane—“free at last—was thrilling... and the most gratifying moment of my career.”

Dave’s long-time business partner in the media relations firm Gogerty Marriott, Bob Gogerty, said, “Dave was ‘steady Eddie’ over all that time. I’m so proud of him and so happy for Amanda and her family.”

At a mid-October monthly meeting of the Marketing Communications Executive International (MCEI) chapter at the Seattle Yacht Club, Marriott was received like a conquering hero by his professional peers.

One after another came up to congratulate him or to propose a toast. One of the conversations turned to the spate of offers for books and speeches and movies that Amanda receives daily—all funneled through Dave.



Brimley

He said nothing’s been decided so far, despite the continuing clamor from the media, book publishers and movie makers alike. But Dave did agree that, if the Amanda Knox story is made into a movie, his preference to play him would be Wilford Brimley. Good choice? What do you think?...

Click [HERE](#) to watch the KING-TV clip of Dave at the press conference