

Logan B. Powell

During my public school educational experience, I have had many good memories and opportunities as well as having encountered some unpleasant ones. I would not trade any of them because they have offered me great learning skills and added to my growth as a student and a person.

Some people say that South Carolina's public education system is flawed, but I say that we have some of the greatest role models and educators in the country. I was blessed with a wonderful first grade teacher who led me down the right path. I still remember it like it was yesterday. Just to think, more than twelve years ago, I began this endeavor we call education. It was my first day. I was petrified of riding the bus because all the kids in my neighborhood seemed so huge to me. Turns out that they were actually "good" guys that were my neighbors, who would later become friends.

Mrs. Harrell, my first grade teacher, was my first encounter with public education. She was actually the "Teacher of the Year" during my primary years at Lady's Island Elementary School. Working long hours, dealing with behavioral issues, and being a role model are unlike traditional characteristics that you would find in most traditional jobs. So, why would anyone want to put themselves through this? The answer is: for the love of education and for the love of learning. As for myself, I would not be where I am presently without some great teachers inspiring me along the way.

Freshman year at Beaufort High was quite a transition for me. All of the freshman class students were secluded from the rest of the school population. Coming out of the eighth grade, I felt like I was a "big fish" in a small pond, then suddenly I became a tiny minnow in a vast ocean. I was doing well in all of my classes, except English I. In this class, much of the grade was based around homework. I neglected to turn in some homework assignments and at progress report time I had a forty-five percentile grade. I soon improved the grade and ultimately realized that not turning in homework was very detrimental to my G.P.A. I no longer just wanted to pass; I wanted to excel.

As time progressed, my life became intertwined with sports. Sports became my love and passion! "Who cares about homework? I have practice," I used to tell myself. This is probably what led me to where I am today. Wow, did I learn a lot! What I learned was the true meaning of the words "student athlete". I now understand why the word "student" comes first. I have played with some of the most talented athletes in the state and some of the brightest athletes in the state. Combining the two is no easy feat.

When I get to college, I plan majoring in Sports Management and/or Education. I know how talented I would be in both of these fields. I am a "people" person, so I figured that I would get into a profession where I could deal with sports and people. Sports Management and Education seem like a natural fit for me.

It also leaves me with several other options in athletics. I have always wanted to be a coach. When I first fell in love with sports, of course, I wanted to be an NFL player, but later on I realized that I didn't have those world class abilities. I began to look closer at my dreams. This is when coaching came into the picture. I could use coaching in both Sports Management and Education. I love working with and helping out youth and I am

very good at it. I am currently in the Teacher Cadet Program at Beaufort High and am working in the classroom every other day this semester at Lady's Island Elementary. This experience has been invaluable to me.

The one person that gave me a good look into my life was my head football coach, Mark Clifford, or "Coach Cliff" as we fondly refer to him. In my final year as an Eagle, and being able to live the most unbelievable year ever, he taught me and showed me that you have to work hard for everything in life, on and off the field. Coach Cliff uses many different ways to get the best out of his players. With me personally, he would talk to me on a professional level. When we conversed it was as adults. He never would speak down to me and this is where I gained absolute respect for him. He also stressed how we are student athletes and there is a reason that student comes first. Coach Cliff helped me get where I am today and where I will be in the future.

Speaking of the future, I plan on spending it as a student at the University of South Carolina, Columbia. As a junior, I started to seriously think about where I wanted to go to college. I had always been a true Gamecock fan so it was an easy choice for me. Then, this fall when I started going to the campus, I fell in love with it. I decided then that this would be the best place for my future education and a great atmosphere in which to pursue my dreams.

In conclusion, I am definitely still planning to pursue my degree in these prospective fields. I want to pursue it even more now, than ever. Ultimately, I have some great role models to follow and I think that they have led me down the right path, as I pursue a degree in Sports Management or Education, or both.