



2011 WRITING COMPETITION

A Wise Man, Just Wanting to Make a Difference

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August 2008, my journey began as a freshman at Wilson Central High School. As I walked through the halls I began to collect butterflies and could not find a way to let them go. I remember it like it was yesterday, stepping foot into room F205, I seen a man who looked very peculiar. He had a young face and a school jogging suit on. In the back of my mind I figured he was just another coach who was teaching only for the sports; he proved me wrong. Mr. Brian Howard was to be in my life for four long school years, being my home room teacher, and he was soon to change my outlook of life and where I stood as a person.

Being in the teacher profession, a person has to love what they do, and anyone can see this aspect in Coach Howard. He only wants to see students succeed and live a better life than what is put in front of them. The first week of freshman year he made the home room class sign a pact. I only signed it thinking that it was something everyone else did, but no other home room had taken that step. The slip of paper made me promise, that no matter the circumstance, I would graduate. He made us set standards at the beginning of the school year. It was understood that if his help was needed to accomplish this promise he would always be there, and of course he has yet to leave my side. I felt as if I was made as a priority, and for a man with a wife and child at home to make another kid his priority deserves to be acknowledged. One would think that I would write about teacher who saved a life, or took care of child out of school, but the small things matter as well. By Coach Howard making me a priority, he could have defiantly saved my life. One important thing he did do for me, was made me realize who I am as a person. It is hard to believe, but he made me step out of the mediocre style of life. Encouragement is what he gave me. He believed that every student in that home room could achieve the impossible, and he encouraged us to do so. If there was even a slight doubt in our minds, and it was noticeable, he made sure the doubt disappeared. If that mean he made a joke out of something, or even pulled you off to the side to have a "pep talk" it was done. Anyone can see the passion in Coach Howard's heart, he just wants to make a difference in a life, and how many people can you say are truly passionate about others?

It is not easy to get through a teenage mind, and even though Coach Howard understands that, he will not give up. A teacher's job is to inform a student on information that they do not know. In the process there is also something that needs to be done that most teachers miss. Students have to be acknowledged, encouraged, and even understood. Coach Howard seems to hit all three of those standards, and he shoots for more. This is my last year of high school, and it is a bittersweet accomplishment. He made this long journey different for me. I did not have any faith in myself in the beginning, and now I believe in shooting for the stars until



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I hit one. This man has touched more than just me and my home room, but students all over. You know, one will always have that teacher that will never be forgotten. It may be the mean teacher who went overboard, or the teacher who let you get away with anything. But, I will remember him for many reasons that can be explained. The most important one, he cared. This profession is not just a job to him, and because of that he touched me. I am a young woman with many aspirations that I plan to accomplish, and Coach Howard will be the reason why I NEVER give up. He made a difference in my life, and will continue to do so in future students.