Dear Xenia Student-Athlete:

It’s an honor and a privilege to be able to share with you the lessons and successes that I have had throughout my journey as a student-athlete and thereafter. While we all have our own definitions, I will share with you my definition of success. Simply put, success is an achievement of a goal and/or task. While that may seem simple, it’s not always easy. Nonetheless, my three simple, but difficult keys to success will help you reach your own success. Be coachable, hard-working, and confident!

Many athletes believe they are coachable, but ask yourself this: Am I an easy person to teach and train to be better at a task? Be sure to be honest with yourself. Some athletes believe they are hard-working. They believe they are working harder than they actually are. So, ask yourself this now: How strong is my work ethic? Am I disciplined? Or do I just work hard at the fun stuff or in areas I’m already good at? And lastly, be confident. In a social media era, it’s so easy to pretend to be confident. It’s easy to SnapChat an award or post a highlight for the Gram. But be true when asking yourself this: Am I sure of who I am and all that I am capable of doing?

My three keys to success will help you to become the best athlete possible. But let’s not forget about the student part of being a student-athlete. Please understand that you will never have the opportunity to become the best athlete possible without having good grades. Why? Because you will never meet the requirements to step on the playing field. Remember, you want to be coachable, hard-working, and confident in athletics; but you must strive for those same things in academics as well. Strive to become a good student-athlete, and not just a good athlete.

You may be wondering why you should take advice from me. So please, allow me to share a little background information about me. In 2004, I graduated in the top two percent of my class here, at Xenia High School. After high school, I attended the University of Cincinnati on a full athletic scholarship. However, I finished my college playing career at the University of Dayton; personally, it was a better fit. In 2008, I graduated from the University of Dayton with a Bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice. After obtaining my Bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice, I continued my education at the University of Dayton where I earned a Master's degree in Public Administration in 2011. I went to Quantico in 2018 to undergo the hardest training I had ever been through. But it was worth it, because now I serve as an Investigator with the DEA.

I have been fortunate to reach my goals in many areas of my life, all because of my keys to success. To obtain a full athletic scholarship, I had to be coachable and commit to becoming the best basketball player I could possibly become. To maintain that full athletic scholarship in college, I had to be hard-working on and off the court. In my post-playing days as a successful investigator, I have to be confident that the work that I put into a case will, in return, help me solve the case and make the United States of America better!

I hope you are able to trust that my three keys to success will allow you, just how it has allowed me, to have success on and off the playing field. Don’t limit your success to becoming a better student-athlete in high school. Instead, allow these keys to help you become a better person, too. Trust me, it will boldly translate to your future life endeavors.

Listen, you have what it takes to be successful on and off the playing field! Keep going. Keep working. And keep striving to be the best student-athlete and person ever! I'm always rooting for you!

Ashley Brown #32