

The Legacy of an Educator

Approximately Seventeen and half years ago, I chose to enter the realm of the education as an Educator. The career path that I have chosen, is vastly different than what I aspired as a child. I always thought that I would pursue a career in business or even perhaps politics. After matriculating into college and declaring a major in Business Administration, I shortly began to realize that this course of profession was not destined for me. I still had a love for politics; I always kept myself abreast of current events in the world, as well as locally.

During my summer months off from college, I would work several basketball camps for the New York Knicks for such players as Patrick Ewing, John Starks, Charles Oakely, just to name a few. During that time I worked with children, helping develop their skills to be better players on the court, in which I truly found to be rewarding. I began to think about of all the kids that I helped during camp, how many kids would actually make it professionally, and what could possibly prevent them from achieving that goal.

In 1995 while attending a New York Knicks basketball game with some friends, a kid came up to me accompanied by his mother and said I remember you, for a minute I looked at him like a deer would stare into head lights. I then began to question him where do you know me from? a He stated from basketball camp. After a brief dialogue with the child and his mother, he asked if he could sit and watch the remainder of the game with me, I told his mother yes. During the game we chatted about the players and what positions they played and why they did certain things on the court. After the game, one of my friends said, have you ever thought about working with children as a career “I said not really” he said you should consider it.

I began teaching in 1999, and OH how time has changed, with the institution of technology in the classroom. I can remember the days of doing research from a card catalog in the library. Nowadays every researchable thing is at the touch of a button.

Education is essential in making it in today’s society, if not sought after, **YOU** will be left behind. It is very important for our community to get involved in the life of our children’s education, but it is even a bigger plight to get parents involved in the life of their children education. We need parents to be accountable by attending Parent/Teacher conferences as well as PTO meetings. Yes, we have officials/administrators that make decisions for our children, but we the people need to step up and be a part of the decision making process. “You can’t eat if you’re not at the table”.

So, the question asked; what would my legacy be? My legacy would entail, be good at what you do and being good at something means that at some point you had to fail. Don’t take failure as a negative; take it as an opportunity to perfect what you already know.

Why do I care about my legacy? It’s not to shine my own apple or to make you think that I’m all that great. I think more than anything is to give you hope. No matter how bad or good we think things are there is always room for improvement. No matter how bad we think things are, let us remember that kids are resilient and they will make it through but the community has to collectively advocate for them. Our brighter days are yet to come!

Reggie Stokes