

PLAYING AT THE NEXT LEVEL

Student athletes have dreams of making it pro but get distracted with little things and lose that dream they had as a little kid.

Many student athletes dream of making it pro but many of them don't understand what it takes to play at a high level. Many believe it's just about the sport they play, but to get to the high college level you must focus on school and the character traits you build like being a leader, respectful, being trainable, and making smart decisions on your own. These are very important things you must understand to make it to the college level or even pro.

English teacher and soccer coach Jonathan Rubino attended Clark University on a men's soccer scholarship and men's volleyball scholarship.

"If you're a good athlete and a good student, your opportunities to get close to a full ride or more money is higher than if you're just a good athlete," Rubino said.

What Rubino said is very true. According to exactsports.com, "Academic scholarships are much more secure than athletic scholarships. You can lose your athletic scholarship due to injury or poor performance, but if you maintain your grades, you will keep your academic scholarship even if you are no longer playing."

Counselor Micheal Dean says it's very important to put student first than athlete in student athlete.

"A lot of student athletes get it mixed up. They think it is athlete student, but at the end of the day. You can always get hurt. Anything can happen to you," Dean said. "It's important that you become a student first because that's what's going to pay your bills, take care of your family, and do what you got to do in life."

PE teacher and football coach Theo Evans attended Iowa Central Community College and the University of Northern Iowa.

"Make sure your GPA is right if you want to go to college. Make sure to find time in the weight room with a good coach that knows what he's doing and doing it right and always improve," Evans said. "As a freshmen get your grades right, go to your classes, be on time and never miss class."

"Nearly eight million students currently participate in high school athletics in the United States. More than 480,000 compete as NCAA athletes, and just a select few within each sport move on to compete at the professional or Olympic level." according to the NCAA

According to cnn.com "College is expensive. And it just keeps getting more expensive." The cost of college is a big issue for people and many people fear of having a large debt they won't be able pay off, but this is where being a student athlete can be an advantage. If you are good and consistent at school and your sport, you get many more opportunities to get a scholarship.

Both Rubino and Evans got funds for college through scholarships. Rubino attended Clark University with a men's soccer and men's volleyball scholarship. Evans attended Iowa Central Community College with a men's football scholarship then he went on to the University of Northern Iowa. When asked, what advice do you have to get funds for college? Rubino, Evans, and Dean all agreed with scholarship being the best way to get the funds.

"Apply for every scholarship that you can and market yourself and sell highlight yourself if you're an athlete. Respond when coaches reach out for you, and always be polite. You never know if you will need the coaches help later, you never want to burn any bridges," Rubino said.

"GPA - that's the biggest thing. Have the highest GPA you possible can," Evans said.

"You just put the time and search for them. They're out there - you just got to be willing to put

the time and search everyone just get at least one scholarship it may not be much any little thing can help.”

According to owlcation.com, another problem college student face is time management. The Web site stated “College courses require much more effort than high school classes did.”

For student athletes it can be hard to balance school, sports, and social life. Some even sacrifice their social life in order to exceed in school and sports.

“It was hard to balance the travel with both sports and school,” Rubino said.

Both Rubino and Evan said it helped having goals and knowing that at the end of the journey they would have the life they wanted.

“When you know what you are doing is going to sort of encompass the rest of your life, you don’t really want to screw that up because you might not get a second chance, so you do your best to stay on top of everything,” Rubino said.

“I just had big goals and big dreams I wanted to accomplish. I think if you’re doing something that’s pretty hard and you don’t have goals, it’s going to be rough for you, so it’s important to have goals,” added Evans

You might have heard these things before and you will probably still hear them repeatedly and they might sound simple, but they are very important things to focus on. Both Rubino and Evans have played at the college level and faced some of the problems you are going to face. They both want to help their student athletes.

“My main goal is for student athletes to have opportunities to better themselves and make a better way of life for themselves,” Rubino said.

Evans said his main goal for his student athletes is to reach their goals.

“Win game, to graduate high school, and to do whatever they want to do after high school,” Evans said.

1. BE A
STUDENT
FIRST

3. HAVE
GOALS

2. LOOK FOR
SCHOLASHIPS



Coach Rubino and his players celebrating after advancing to state last year. Photo courtesy of DM Schools Flickr.



Coach Evan gives a speech to his player in the lockerroom. Photo courtesy of DM Schools Flickr.

