

Arin Nipp
November 8, 2018

“Inspire and Motivate”

In the words of American author John C. Maxwell, “A leader is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way.” True leaders inspire others. Leadership is about influencing actions and responding to reactions. It is a skill that some have naturally, while others have to work to acquire. A true leader is someone who wants to influence, to change people’s lives for the better.

Above all, my basketball coach Daniel Catignani inspired me take action on the court and in life. He taught me to be the one to rise above others and to use that authority in a responsible matter. Through his actions, he was able to motivate the most skilled and unskilled athletes to excel on the court and off. He set high expectations and demanded the best, but at the same time, he supported his players. During his life, he used his leadership to show how to live a good, moral life. For example, Coach Cat said respecting God and parents came first, getting good grades and excelling in academics was second, and sports came last. That influenced my life and helped me prioritize my responsibilities. Through laughs and tears, I witnessed a life-changing and incredible leader who inspired me to lead others.

Through an encouraging role-model like Coach Cat, I have realized leadership traits in myself. My confidence and willingness to take initiative to help others are how I lead. Being a leader means more than being in charge. To me, a leader is someone who is honest, compassionate, hard-working, a quick-thinker, and creative. On the basketball court, my position as point guard requires me to run plays and execute them,

and my team depends on me to make this happen. I see opportunities to be the person who takes control and positively shapes others by helping them understand. I am not afraid of taking control, and I am not afraid to show others the way.

Service and taking part in the community is an integral part of leadership. It is my responsibility to give back to my community and to those around me in need. I am a regular volunteer at Room in the Inn, cooking and serving guests. Through this experience, I know that I can make a difference in the lives of others. Recently, a man who is homeless said that he felt like the volunteers at RITI made him feel “normal” as they treated him with kindness and respect. In the classroom, I take chances to read or lead an activity. In the community, I serve others.

Leaders inspire others to give their best while working towards a common goal. When others depend on a person and follow his lead, being a responsible leader becomes even more important. Sometimes being the leader comes with being criticized by others who find fault in the way leaders execute. Leaders are not perfect, but leaders must strive to do their best and guide others in making the right decisions.