

Playing division 1 basketball is no easy task. **“Less than one percent** of high school athletes go on to play Division 1 basketball.” The average height of a division 1 basketball player is 6 foot 5 “with the most common listed height at 6 foot 7”. There are just 358 Division 1 schools across the country. Each school can offer only 13 full ride scholarships. This means there are only 4654 athletes on a full ride scholarship in division 1 basketball across the country every year. Most programs will have 8-10 players in the rotation, leaving 3-5 players every year on scholarship who do not play.

Mentorship and leadership is crucial for the youth. Mentoring helps the youth navigate through challenging life events, **“Including dealing with stressful changes at home or transitioning to adulthood.** Youths with mentors are also more likely to go to college, have “better attitudes toward school, increased social and emotional development, and have an improved overall self esteem.”

Leadership has a timeless element to it, as it can come from anybody at anytime. Sometimes in life, leadership comes from an unexpected source. Someone that you don't expect can enter your life and change your lens on the world and your overall perspective on things. They teach you that you can let people in, trust people, and that not everyone is against you. They also teach you to control your emotions and not let your emotions control you and cloud your decision making. Sometimes in life, it takes someone from out of your element to put things really in perspective for you, as they are looking from the outside in. In the present time, you may not fully understand the importance and value of something or someone until you no longer have it.

Leadership can be seen as good or bad depending on who you ask. Bad leadership doesn't always have negative intentions, as one can be misguided and think a certain way due to their own life experiences. There is a certain level of bias involved in leadership, as one's own life experiences will ultimately shape the way they think, their perspective on things, and how they lead the next generation. At the end of the day, people will lead you how they were led. The process of leadership has a cyclical element to it. It's important to understand that "People come and go from our lives, but only a handful of them truly make a difference in our future."

Basketball is more than just a game for some of us. The game of basketball teaches brotherhood, leadership, loyalty, and accountability, which are all important aspects to building stronger workplaces as well as communities as a greater whole. In addition, scholarships are especially important in the basketball world, as it can change one's life. It can give one the opportunity to thrive in a positive environment, get educated, see outside their previous element, and set them up for a brighter overall future.

