

Dear Dad,

Before I head off for the next few months, I wanted to take a moment to express how much I genuinely appreciate you—what you do, and all the effort you put into supporting our family.

From the countless hours you invested in baseball with me, to the early mornings spent doing yard work, and the many times you patiently dealt with Mom and me arguing, you've always been there. I know I'm not the easiest son. I don't always listen, I get into trouble, and then I complain about things that were in my control. But I realize now that everything you've been trying to teach me has immense value and will shape the foundation of my character in the years ahead. Whether I was beating myself up over something trivial or discovering a new passion, you were always there to support and encourage me to be the best version of myself.

This past year has been one of the best, largely thanks to your advice. I've met amazing people, stepped out of my comfort zone, and found success in areas that mean the most to me. I wish I could say all of this to your face, but I'm still working on that emotional maturity. I could go on about everything you've done for me and our family, but I need to fit this on one card. I hope to become as determined, rational, and compassionate as you, both during and after my time at college.

Thank you for everything, Dad. I love you.

Your ever-realistic son,
Matthew