

1. Why are you interested in becoming a teacher?

I am interested in becoming a teacher because I want to educate the young minds of tomorrow. To be able to help and nurture a child or young adult's mind and academic growth is a privilege provided to few that I want to be part of. Plus, it is something I have always known, both of my parents are teachers and they have had a lot of friends who have tried to turn me off from the profession, but it has always been something that I have a passion for. I believe that everyone is entitled to an education, and that those who have disabilities should have a space in higher education. When they want to pursue a degree, I hope to help them in their educational advancement so as to achieve their goal. Students should have someone that they can rely on in school and that is what being a teacher is all about. Malala Yousafzai once said, "One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world." I believe that this is something a teacher should live by and living in this standard shows support to every child by befriending them on a personal level to aid in their development into adulthood.

2. Why do you think that you could become a successful teacher?

I think that I could become a successful teacher because of my ability to influence and aid in a person's education. Ever since grade school I have been helping throughout the school community. I would tutor after school almost every day of the week. I always look forward to empowering and provoking thought that would make students challenge their own ideas and push them to think dynamically and critically. On the other hand, I have always been told that I care very much for the people that I am surrounded by. So, having that as a trait will allow me to connect with my students and build a great bond which will allow for a respect to be shared across the classroom. Along with caring, I am very personable which is important to allow for good faculty, parent, and student communication. Through this communication I can develop a challenging curriculum that is tailored to each student's different learning style.

3. Why have you chosen to enter this particular field of teaching?

I chose to enter this particular field because mentioned before my parents were teachers, but my main inspiration for Special Education was from my Freshman year of high school. I had a football coach that was a Special Education teacher and he was and remains a role model for me. He brings great energy and life to the classroom, while also earning and giving respect throughout the classroom. I observed a Special Education classroom my sophomore year of college. It was a high school math concentrated class, and I was able to observe as well as help some of the students. This experience just reaffirmed and encouraged me to continue to pursue this field of teaching.

4. What experiences have you had with children and/or youth?

My experiences with children and youth extend mostly from tutoring and volunteer work throughout high school. Starting back in grade school I had been tutoring students in anything they needed help with. Throughout high school, the volunteer work we participated in involved going throughout the city of Chicago to less fortunate neighborhoods and helping at different schools and homeless shelters. Summer after Junior year of high school I was presented the

opportunity to go on a mission trip to Cairo, Illinois. This is considered to be the worst town in Illinois. There we helped at Daystar ministry which allowed us to help the youths of Cairo. Throughout the trip we had opportunities to bond and get to know families around the area and I will never forget those bonds. Throughout high school I also helped in youth camps for sports. Helping excel a child's love for a sport is a very rewarding experience. I was blessed with the opportunity to help with basketball camps throughout grade school and football camps throughout all of high school. Sports help people bond, and I believe that everyone should be included in them to allow for equality across everyone.

5. In your opinion, what is the major challenge facing today's teacher?

I believe that the major challenge facing today's teacher is a lack of resources. At this point in time there are more children who are in need of support than we have the resources to support them with. Due to the growth of the United States and the lack of growth in the education system, teachers and staff in the education systems are being overrun and overworked, while also being underpaid for the number of hours they work. This past year my dad was not able to get a week off of work from Spring Break of last school year till October. At this point, the education system has to realize that the quality of work could be declining due to overworking. Both my parents are tenured in their positions, but I worry for the next generation of teachers that is coming out of college now. Job placement in the right system is critical to allow for both growth for the teacher and for the students.

6. Professionally, what would you like to be doing ten years from now?

Ten years from now, I would like to be working with teenagers in a public-school system, preferably somewhere out west, who are enrolled in the special education program established there. I want to be able to have children look up to and respect me as a role model and as a support system in the school. I would want to see through that my former students are continuing their education or participating in society through the workforce, volunteer work, etc. if higher education is not a possibility for them due to other circumstances such as financials and more. Mainly because education is so important to continue every day. After graduation of high school there are transition opportunities available to should be taken advantage of for each student. They should know that they have supports and resources that will allow for them to continue to grow as people and students.