4-1-2020

Now: Reflection on Furman as it is now

Jesse Tompkins '20

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine

Recommended Citation
Tompkins, Jesse '20 (2020) "Now: Reflection on Furman as it is now," Furman Magazine: Vol. 63 : Iss. 1 , Article 12.
Available at: https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol63/iss1/12

This Regular Feature is made available online by Journals, part of the Furman University Scholar Exchange (FUSE). It has been accepted for inclusion in Furman Magazine by an authorized FUSE administrator. For terms of use, please refer to the FUSE Institutional Repository Guidelines. For more information, please contact scholarexchange@furman.edu.
DeMatha High School. I spent several years learning values, leadership, strategy, culture and points of instruction from Coach Wootten. His core values – God, family, academics and basketball – competitiveness and care for people are second to none and were instrumental in my growth as a leader. Former Muhlenberg College Dean of Students Rudy Ehrenberg is also a person I admire a great deal. He has a military background and was an educator who could truly connect with his students through his commitment to supporting their interests and their lives. He was everywhere on campus when I was a college student, and you could see that he truly cared. We still stay in touch, and he is one of the primary reasons I chose a career as an administrator in higher education.

Father Rob Hagan, Villanova senior associate athletics director and team chaplain, is another leader who I admire. Father Rob is the strength and inspiration for the entire athletics department at Villanova. His ability to share and communicate his faith has impacted thousands of student-athletes, coaches, alumni and friends throughout the years. He has an incredible perspective on life and has a unique way of connecting the power of Augustinian teachings through the platform of university and athletics life. He has impacted my faith in so many ways that I cannot fully express.

**When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

**JD:** When I was younger, I wanted to be a sports writer, an architect or a professional athlete. I’m fortunate to have earned a liberal arts and sciences education and pursued a career that allowed me to fulfill so many of these different interests. Although they may differ in title, serving as a teacher, coach and administrator has afforded me the opportunity to influence others through my thoughts, actions and words. Most importantly, I wanted to be a dedicated father and husband. Of all the roles that I serve in life, this is most important to me.

**Editor’s note: Just before press time, we asked Donnelly about the spring season being canceled because of COVID-19.**

**JD:** The decision to suspend and ultimately cancel spring sports at Furman was difficult and emotional, particularly for our senior student-athletes. However, I’ve been inspired by our university’s commitment to prioritizing our community’s health and safety. As challenging as this time period has been, Furman will grow stronger and more together from these circumstances. ♦