

Winter 2012-13

Dear Member of the Class of 1960,

First and for most I would like to say thank you for all that you have done for me. I am in love with Culver. The time that I have been able to spend here has been some of the best in my life. The biggest reward for me is that I can see my own growth; I am a better student, athlete and individual than I was before I came to Culver. I am so glad that you have made it possible for me to attend this school. You have given me the opportunity to pursue my passions while still receiving one of the finest educations that one can get. And for that I am thankful for your selfless **sacrifices** for me.

Being a freshman at Culver, I am still a new cadet. Although this is hard at times, I can tell that it is making me a better individual. My roommate and I were able to put ourselves into the right frame of mind to be successful new cadets. In the beginning I had to tell myself, "As hard and different being a new cadet is it's not going away, so I better make the best of it." That was my mindset for the first few weeks. I'm not going to lie; those first few weeks were hard. I was still trying to get used to the fact that I was three time zones away from my home in Seattle, Washington and the fact that I was here without my family. Coming to grips with that was the hardest for me because family is so important to me and living without my brother sister and parent was something that I wasn't prepared for. It sounds cliché but you don't realize what you have until it's gone.

But as the year went on things got easier and I started to find a groove. I joined the exhibition drill team and was lucky enough to be one of two freshmen on the performing block. Drill team was a great way for me to fill my time from the beginning of school until hockey season. While Drill team took up some of my free time I still found myself with too much time on my hands until my new friends Anthony George and Alec Posner convinced me to come out to fall lacrosse. I had never thought of playing lacrosse again after I had to give it up due to hockey in 6th grade. After attending a few of the relaxed fall lacrosse sessions, I realized that lacrosse was something that I was really interested in and passionate about. I went to every lacrosse practice I could and I loved every minute of it. After one of the practices Coach Posner came up to me to tell me that I was doing a good job, he also told me that he saw a great deal of potential in me. Since this was my first time playing lacrosse since 6th grade, I felt very satisfied. As lacrosse conditioning started to wrap up and the annual frank and beans game (an annual inter squad scrimmage made up of the Culver lacrosse players who participated in the fall sessions) was approaching. I was excited to find out if I was going to be drafted to one of the teams. Turns out that one of the captains saw the same potential in me that Coach Posner did. Coming into the game I wasn't expecting anything I just wanted to have some fun and have a good time. And I did I got a goal and had a blast, the best part was that my parents were there to see me play my first lacrosse game in over three years.

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As sad I was when fall lacrosse ended, I was even more excited for hockey season to start. The education and hockey were the two main reasons why I came here to Culver. And right now I am playing on the U16 team and I am having the time of my life playing the sport that I love with some of the best people I have ever met. It's not just the hockey players but everyone here at Culver has treated me well. I have made friendships here that I am sure will last me a lifetime. While hockey, lacrosse, and school are crucial, if I am looking to be successful in life, what is the point of being successful if I have no one to share my success with?

Coming here to Culver really has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. I have been put into the perfect position to grow as an individual. The growth that I have displayed here has been uncanny. I have grown into a more responsible and mature person. While I have been here at Culver, I have opened my eyes to all the opportunities that are here especially in sports. As well as that, I have been challenged in school like never before. School here pushes me every day and I am learning more here than I have anywhere I have ever been. But most importantly I have made friendships here that will undoubtedly last me a lifetime. Your high school days are supposed to be some of your best and thanks to you my high school days have been some of my best, and I have no reason to believe that they won't get better. Thank you.

Best regards,

Daniel Woolfenden

Dear Members of the Class of 1960,

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank you again for all that you have done for me. I want to give you a glimpse into the impact that you are having on my life. For without your contributions to my education, both socially and scholastically, I would not be the man that I am today. Without your support I would not have the opportunities that Culver has afforded me.

Let me first preface this letter by saying that Culver has changed me. I am a completely different person now than I was when I stepped onto the campus freshman year. And I am confident that the person that I am now is capable of facing life after Culver with a genuine heart and a clear mind.

Coming into Culver I was a relatively shy kid. I had friends but I wasn't very close with very many of them. The friends that I had a home when I left are barely involved in my life now. I think this speaks to the authenticity and the quality of those relationships. That being said, at home I have made new, more quality friendships. I credit this my growth as a person at Culver. As I am sure you know at Culver, cadets and girls are constantly surrounded by one another. This proximity of peers has fostered stronger social skill in me. As I previously mentioned, I arrived a shy boy. With the help of the environment associated with Culver, I am now more social and more confident in myself as a person. I no longer fear rejection as I had when I arrived.

Last summer I hurt my shoulder. I tore the labrum in my right shoulder for the second time. My injuries required surgery. This meant that for the second time in my high school career, I had to live two months without the use of my right arm. With the help of my friends and the rigorous Culver schedule I have been able to accelerate my recovery. While getting hurt has its very apparent and real down sides, there are upsides to it as well. These are harder to find, but with a critical eye one can uncover the positive aspects of getting injured. In my time off the ice I have broadened my horizons exploring other activities such as guitar and writing. These two new hobbies have help me to fill the gapping void that hockey left in my life when it was taken away. Now as I am returning to hockey I am filled with the zest and love for the sport that never left me, but I also carry with me the other hobbies that I picked up during my injury.

I would like to thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to learn from hardships in my life. Culver has given me the most memorable four years of my life so far. And as I write this letter to you it forces me to reflect on all that I have to be thankful for. It also motivates me to make the most out of the little time that I have left at Culver. Unfortunately the days are slipping away quicker than ever. Thank you again for all that you have done for me. I hope that you feel my experiences at Culver have made your investment worthwhile.

Thank you,

Daniel Woolfenden