

## Allison's Speech for Dad's Retirement

Before I say anything to thank Dad, I'd like to start by recognizing my Mom, whom I see as the unsung hero of the day. My mom's support of my Dad made it possible for him to achieve such a meaningful career at Middlebury. She was ceaselessly positive and encouraging, even throughout Dad's week-long training trips away from home and the responsibility of cooking 400 pancakes. Mom, you deserve a lot of credit and appreciation – please join me in a round of applause.

In our years growing up on Ridge Road, my brothers and I were raised by a man who loved his life. He loved our Mom, he loved spending time with us, and there was never a day when he didn't love his job or the student-athletes he worked with. Dad was truly passionate about his teams, passionate about Middlebury College, and it was obvious to us that he experienced genuine joy from working with such outstanding men & women.

All children absorb a great deal from the world they grow up in, and it wasn't until recently that I realized the full impact of growing up with a father who found so much fulfillment in his work. Dad's attitude toward his teams made a deep impression upon the three of us. We learned that a career doesn't have to mean working mindlessly for a paycheck. We learned that a job can be something you look forward to every day, something you take pride in, something you truly love. We learned that it's possible to do something for 36 years and have the same excitement for your 36<sup>th</sup> fall as you did for your 1<sup>st</sup>. We learned that a job can mean helping someone to grow, reach beyond their known limits, and go farther and faster than they ever thought possible. We learned that a job can mean pulling people together and guiding a group to think positively in the face of adversity. Most importantly, we learned that being a leader doesn't revolve around winning, it means holding people accountable for what they believe in and valuing community citizenship. Fathers do a lot of teaching, but perhaps one of Dad's greatest lessons to us was unintentional. He showed us that a career can be a passion, and that working with students is the most meaningful and rewarding way to spend your life's work.

Dad also modeled for us what it really means to place your family as your top priority. Dad never lost his perspective on life and the things that matter most. Whether it was camping trips, never missing a lacrosse game, or coming to dress rehearsals because he couldn't make the play, Dad's first efforts were always toward his family. Though he worked hard at home to recruit prospective student-athletes, he always put the phone down when it was time for dinner, or time to read us before bed. Nothing, not even the fastest among you, could interfere with *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *The Grinch*, or *Watership Down*. Though I should add that while we could count on him to start reading, we could never count on him to stay awake, and this became our favorite strategy to stay up as late as possible. We'd sit as quietly as we could, desperately hoping that Mom wouldn't catch onto Dad's snoring. Dad, thanks for always being a Dad first.

It's not surprising that Ryan, Travis and I have all chosen to pursue lifelong careers in academia. All three of us work with student-athletes in one way or another, and each of us are either currently coaches, or have coached high school teams in the past. This is not coincidental. Either consciously or unconsciously, I am quite sure that all three of us are striving to achieve the same love and connection to our work as we observed in our father.

Dad, on behalf of our whole family, congratulations on an outstanding career at Middlebury College. Thank you for modeling for us what it means to be a leader, a motivator, and a person with the right priorities. Thank you for leading a life so worthy of our efforts to follow in your footsteps. We love you and we are so proud of you.

### **Travis & Ryan's Speech for Dad's retirement (read by Allison)**

Well, both boys were intentionally left off the invite for this celebration in case we may have planned a trip to be back here. So, instead, Dad will have to accept a few words from his sons.

To celebrate our father's retirement we thought it would be meaningful to highlight some of our memories how Middlebury and its community has played into our lives.

Middlebury students have been coming over to our house on Ridge Road since we were born. From baby-sitting to pond hockey, and dinners at the house, we have been able to know many wonderful people over the years, thanks to our father's role. I have two broken collar-bones to show for the epic games of pond hockey. And, something I am sure the Midd folks don't know, our father sank his old red Ford-F-150 into the pond trying to clear it for a game...we'll let him share that story.

In addition to the bountiful garden vegetables our father is always eager to share traditional Vermont Cuisine-Venison. In fact, please raise your hand if you have tasted any of these! If not, you're due for dinner at the Aldrich's and puts pressure on the Old General for this fall's hunting season. In all seriousness, it was always a special night when my father would invite captains or others over for dinner; while demonstrating both his and my mother's hospitality, it also allowed his children the opportunity to meet incredibly motivated, passionate, and talented students, which no doubt, inspired us to attend like-minded institutions. Often, either team would have an international student who my father would offer a place during the holidays. During one Thanksgiving, Ebba, a Scandavian, had an epic eating contest against other guest, and finished five full plates! I believe he also put down 15 pancakes...

Our father's schedule often precluded him from being around on weekends, which resulted in more memories from Middlebury students. In this story, it was Halloween. My father

contacted a few of his athletes and asked if they would take me around trick or treating. After a few houses, these students taught me the rule of time management. They asked me if I felt okay going on campus. After visiting one dorm; I had a full bag. It wasn't over. These students wanted it to be epic, so they bought another bag, walked into a grocery store and bought more candy to dump in my bag.

When I was younger, I dreamed of being a pilot. By 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade I had not flown yet and asked my father if I could accompany him on his next big trip. He informed me the NCAA's would be in California, which meant a longer plane flight, and got me very excited. I worked all summer moving lawns and baby-sitting and saved enough money to buy my own flight. I could barely contain my excitement join my father on my first flight especially across country to California. While it was a great experience, I recall it being a very short flight and not really being all that different from Vermont. Years later, my father told me he couldn't find it in him to tell me the site for the race had been changed to Ohio.

One area of our father's work that left a lasting impression was his cross-training hikes in the Adirondacks. Even in elementary school I would accompany him on hikes he thought I could make. He would encourage me when it got steep, point out the different trees, birds, and plants, and wait for me when I was tired. His appreciation for nature, mountains, climbing, and sharing it with others became ingrained in me. You can imagine, how proud I felt, when he joined me and my brother to climb his first and my last 14,000 foot peak in Colorado. It was my chance to cheer my father on and support his climb. I'll never forget on the descent, he told me, as he always likes to rank things, that this was one of the best days of his life. In honor of that, we made a book of some of the photo's to celebrate that day, which we'll pass around.

While none of his children were X-country runners or nordic skiers, we have observed our father's passion for his work and family. When we have seen how much influence and guidance our father has provided to so many, it's not surprising all three children are in education, hoping to emulate his values and impact we can give to young people. Congratulations Dad.