

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 36th fall as you did for your 1st. 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