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Living a Life of Significance

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Celebration #2

I was first introduced to swimming by my father who has been a coach for his whole life. The sport stuck with me and now I am still swimming in college. I have always been interested about what it's like to be a swim coach. I have already heard my father’s answers many times and he loves what he does and it has never gotten old for him. For this interview I was looking for someone who has just started their coaching career. I chose Birmingham-Southern College assistant swim coach Jordan Saslo. I was interested in interviewing Jordan as soon as I was assigned this paper. For starters Jordan graduated from Florida Southern College in 2022 which makes him a perfect candidate to be interviewed about college experience setting a person up for a life of significance.

Last weekend, Jordan and I met at his office for an in-person interview. When talking with Jordan I noticed he was easy and relatable to have a conversation with. Since he is my swim coach it is not hard to forget that he is the same age as some of our senior swimmers. Despite the age similarity he was very confident in his meaning for life of significance.

I started off the interview by asking him what he wants as his professional position in the future. He responded with “ I don’t know if I want to try to go all the way to head coach for Birmingham Southern but I definitely want to continue a career in collegiate swim coaching.” I followed up with a question about prior jobs. He then talked about how he lifeguarded and coached at a YMCA during high school and college.

I switched the topic of the interview to talk about his current position as assistant coach. I asked if he feels that he has enough duties and work for what his salary is and he responded with “Yes, I feel like I work a fair amount for what I am paid.” Being a part of the swim team myself I have a small bit of knowledge about some of the tasks Jordan has had to do for the team. For example, last week our team had sixteen recruits looking at our swim and school program and Jordan had to host all fifty-four of the current swim team and sixteen of the recruits over for dinner. Since our team has to stay on campus during fall break for a swim meet, Jordan was providing us with dinner fixings and breakfast material the entire break since our cafeteria is closed. He has already helped the team with so much this year.

I asked Jordan what drives him to do what he does; he answered with “Swimming has been with me for more than half of my life and I feel so distant from myself when I’m not around swimming, and I just really enjoy the sportsmanship that goes into the sport itself.” He then talked about how through his swimming career he has had bad mentors in the past and he wants all his swimmers to leave swimming better than it was left for himself.

While talking with Jordan I wanted to know more about how he navigates his personal life with work. “Right now it is difficult to find a work life balance because I feel like I need to be here all the time for the team but technically I could take off a little bit more during the day than I am. I’m still trying to get used to the work life balance but as of right now I feel like I'm working from 6am-6pm but it's just part of the job.” Jordan lives on campus so his house is really close to where he works most of the day so it's very easy for him to do extra things for the team rather than taking personal time.

Listening to Jordan talk about what made him want to coach, I became interested if he had any role models in his life that helped him choose this career. “Definitely my coaches and my parents for sure, but there were a couple of professors at my college that helped push me in the direction I wanted to go.” He explains how having good professors and mentors can really help push a person to do a career that they want to do even if they’re unsure.

Wrapping up the interview I asked if his college experiences helped shape him for his career. “I feel that I’m prepared by choosing psychology as my major because it taught me how we as people develop and how different people learn things and I feel like it helped open this career up for me.” Learning how to help and teach different types of people is a big part of coaching, and it has already helped Jordan in his short time of being a collegiate coach.

I finished the interview by asking Jordan how he would describe a life of significance. He answered with “A life of significance means something different for each person but for me living a life of significance is leaving a positive impact on every single person you meet and everywhere you go and trying to leave every bad situation in a better place behind you than it was in front of you.” The way that Jordan interprets a life of significance is how I wish every single person would. Leaving positive impacts on people is a powerful tool and could help solve problems before they are started.

While interviewing Jordan I took away many things but most importantly I took away his experience and how he used his college to help him and in the next couple years when I’m looking for my career I will use my college experience to do the same.

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*Excellent write up. Seems like the interview went well, and I like how you give the reader a purpose and a strong conclusion.*