

Life After ALA

When you graduate a lot of things happen, you practically give up the life you live, to live a new life that you think will bring you happiness, but happiness has some bumps in the road. Bonds with people begin to fall apart, you don't see the ones you love nearly as often, and if you're a college athlete your schedules tight, and fall camp drains a man physically as well as mentally. I am one of those student athletes, I enrolled at Ohio Wesleyan University in early spring knowing that I was embarking on something new and something completely foreign to me but I had a set of values that had been instilled in me through school and through the Academy of Leadership Abilities program that made me feel comfortable with this dramatic change. I fell in love with the coaching staff and the family atmosphere but after being derailed during camp with a concussion and morale being the lowest its ever been, I began to contemplate quitting the team. I was a freshman and didn't really know a whole lot of people on the team and with the camp, it was all about getting information crammed into our head ready for the season and after meetings or practice we were all quick to grab something eat and sleep to keep our bodies fueled so nobody really talked. I didn't know if the student athlete life was for me, but I began to think about all the things that ALA had taught me and how things aren't going to be picture perfect and things are going to get hard but in order to reach your goals and to be successful you have to fight, claw, scratch through the hard times to reach that top rung on the ladder. I was always a man who lead by example but never knew how to talk to people and relay it that way, but I just began to talk to people and the more I talked to people the more I began to make more friends. Friends that I hang around with on a daily basis. The team became more than just a family to me it became a driving force, it didn't matter what role I was in, I was going to do everything I could to help my brothers and make them better as well as my self. Without ALA, I wouldn't have the values that I have today and I may not have had my first winning season in football in my entire life, I may not have been one of the only freshman in Miller history to start in a NCAA Varsity Football game as a freshman. I may not have stuck it out but in the end I'm glad that I did and I'm forever thankful for what they've taught me. Mr. Couch and Mrs. Lackey have developed a great program in developing young individuals and I feel that if you let this program go, that you're holding back the children of this school from realizing who they are and what they can be but at the end of the day it's your decision, I hope you have the values and views that I have, to see what this program is and what it can do. Thank you for your time.

Stephen McGrath