Inspiration & Motivation Project

Mid-Michigan Leadership Academy

Student Life Organization

Background: The story we chose to share was a natural choice, as this is one we have been following locally. Located in Lansing, Michigan, we are home to Michigan State University, and their popular basketball team, The Spartans. Many of our staff (including the SLC) are alumni, and share this passion with the students. This story has been followed in our community for over a year, and throughout the recent March basketball tournaments, has received national coverage.

“Adreian & Lacey”

This is a story of a random act of kindness. It is a regular occurrence for Michigan State Basketball Coach Tom Izzo to bring his team to the local hospital to visit children who are dealing with medical issues to simply brighten their day, a random act that happens regularly. A couple years ago, the team visited the room of Lacey Holsworth, who was 6 at the time, and diagnosed with neuroblastoma, an aggressive form of childhood cancer. As the team was leaving the room, Lacey asked player Adreian Payne to stay behind, because she “liked his smile.” It was then that the pair sparked a friendship that no one expected.

In addition to the story with Lacey, Adreian Payne is a success story on his own. His mother passed away to an asthma attack as a child, which left him to be raised by his grandmother, who also later passed. Adreian struggled through school, and had a learning disability. He made it to college with assistance from tutors, and an attitude that he could accomplish it. The same attitude carried him through college, as he was awarded student athlete academic awards. He was the first in his family to graduate college.

This story has many lessons. The background of Adreian Payne in itself shows where hard work, dedication, and attitude can get you, even with all of the challenges and hardships life can throw at you. When you add in the powerful friendship he built with Lacey Holsworth, it shows how a simple random act of kindness can at least brighten someone’s day, and be the spark that can turn into so much more. Adreian and Lacey both learned from one another to “fight through everything with a smile on their face.” The story also shows how powerful it is to show compassion for others, as everyone has struggles in their life, no matter how big or small.

The students at MMLA have not only identified with the story, but sparked many ideas of how they can make a small difference in someone’s life by a simple act of kindness.

**Special Note:** This video aired on the Big Ten Network on March 9, 2014. Last week, on April 9, 2014, Lacey Holsworth passed away – she now “dances with angels.” If you would like a touching follow-up video, please go to: http://espn.go.com/mens-college-basketball/story/\_/id/10770949/adreian-payne-michigan-state-spartans-honored-friendship-princess-lacey