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WHAT KIND OF LEGACY DO YOU WANT TO INHERIT?

BY BRYSON ADDISON

When I hear the word “legacy,” I don’t just think about money, buildings, or accomplishments. I think about impact. To me, legacy is what remains long after a person has left the room. It is the values they pass down, the lives they touch, and the example they set for others. Legacy is the story people tell about you when you’re not there to tell it yourself.

As a young person preparing to enter adulthood, I often think about the kind of legacy my generation is inheriting. I have been blessed to grow up surrounded by people who taught me the importance of leadership, service, faith, and perseverance. From my family to my teachers, mentors, and community leaders, I have learned that success is not measured by what you gain for yourself but by what you do for others.

One of the greatest things I hope my generation inherits from previous generations is resilience. The generations before us endured challenges that many young people today can hardly imagine. They fought for civil rights, educational opportunities, and a chance for future generations to dream bigger. Because of their sacrifices, my generation has opportunities that once seemed impossible. I believe we should never take those opportunities for granted.

At the same time, my generation has inherited challenges. We live in a world that often feels divided. Social media has connected us in many ways, but it has also created pressure, comparison, and negativity. Many young people struggle with mental health, uncertainty about the future, and a feeling of being unheard. We have inherited a world with great opportunities, but also great responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, I remain hopeful. I believe young people have the ability to honor the legacy of those who came before us while creating something new. We honor their legacy by remembering their sacrifices, learning from their experiences, and continuing the work they started. At the same time, we must be willing to bring fresh ideas, new solutions, and a new perspective to the challenges we face.

My own experiences have taught me the importance of leadership and service. Throughout my years in student government and youth leadership organizations, I have learned that leadership is not about titles or recognition. It is about listening, serving, and creating opportunities for others to succeed. The leaders who have influenced me most were not the loudest people in the room. They were the people who cared enough to help someone else rise.

The kind of world I hope to inherit is one where young people are encouraged to dream without limits. I hope for a world where education is valued, communities are strengthened, and people are judged by their character rather than their circumstances. I hope for a future where differences are respected, opportunities are accessible, and service to others is celebrated.

Most importantly, I think about the legacy I want to leave behind. I want future generations to inherit a world that is better because I was here. I want to be remembered as someone who served with integrity, led with compassion, and used every opportunity to make a positive difference. Whether through leadership, community service, healthcare, or simply encouraging someone who needed support, I want my impact to extend beyond my own success.



Legacy is not something that begins at the end of our lives. It begins with the choices we make every day. The way we treat people, the values we uphold, and the example we set all contribute to the legacy we leave behind. As I look toward the future, I am grateful for the legacy that has been entrusted to my generation, and I am committed to doing my part to ensure that those who come after us inherit something even greater.

Because the greatest legacy is not what we leave for people. It is what we leave in them.