

By DAVID HOWELL

It's been 30 years since I've been Tennessee Association of Student Councils Vice President of 1980-1981, where I embraced the vision with fellow TASC members of how important it is to give back to our communities.

I did not know how it would unveil, however I did know that the mission existed without compromise. The mission was to develop, improve and participate as a leader for the betterment of our schools and community.

I was privileged to have the opportunity to speak to delegates from Tennessee by TASC host Wilson Central High School for this year's 2011 convention. I thank Shannon Carney along with student council leaders of Wilson Central High School for preparing a full schedule of fun and development activities for our future leaders of Tennessee. In recognition, I'd like to thank sponsors of this event who have shared funds and gifts for this event to be successful.

Student council created an opportunity for me to leave a footprint of what is important and impressionable amongst my constituents. I learned early in life going to church, this situation I found myself in was designed by God's destiny.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that suggests that at your peak, "Self Actualization," that morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts is the highest of regard in the pyramid, only to build upon the importance of Esteem; which reflects self esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others and respect by others as an important elevator to our positive sense of being. There are other essentials such as love, belonging, safety and physiological needs that also must be fulfilled in our desired state of being successful. Leadership in student council fulfilled this hierarchy of needs for me.

Being involved in student council is one of the most endearing and most positive impacts that I felt in my life. It will go down in my life's experiences as meaningful and impacting as I set forth to achieve the goals set for my life.

I was fortunate to serve as Sophomore Executive, Vice president, and President at Lebanon

High School during 1978-1981 and as TASC VP '80-81.

Life is set up like a game of football or basketball, in that you will experience situations in Quarters. I have just completed the second quarter; like in those sports mentioned, the first quarter is about sizing up your capabilities, your shortfalls, a comprehension of your competition, and what you need to strategize to adjust, compliment or improve upon what you did in the first quarter. The second quarter is to implement those improvements to position for success in the third and fourth quarters.

I can say that to travel, share stories of success and opportunity through TASC were the most valuable experiences of a lifetime. Why? Because it was something that we could build on. Listen to the point, "we"! You will see many folks who will lead their lives with an "I, me"-- I did it! Complex, as if all things happened because they were the sole successors of achievement. Well, I'll beg to differ in that my greatest successes were because in my life we acted as a team.

"No man can conquer alone, however one can fall by himself with no acclaim. Wish no harm upon others, but help one another, because without each other we are alone, an island, because we have no support or friends. Caution to be so humble, and yield to the less fortunate in that if you have your life, health, family, a roof over your head and the blessings of God, that you have more than most. I encourage all to be the best that you can, because you can be, not because you have to, but because you can!"

My advice -- "Chances are that you will live to see tomorrow, so plan for tomorrow; plan for success, plan for your future, plan for what you see and what you want to be, and plan to share your results with your friends and family because each quarter of your life is a building block. Once you've been a TASC member -- it automatically means that now, and in the future you will, Lead, Lead by example, Volunteer, and be committed to others for a cause for the betterment of all because it's part of the principals of being from Tennessee -- the Volunteer State, and the Tennessee Association of Student Councils commitment to be the best who we can be and help whenever we are called to duty!"

Editor's Note: David Howell lives in Lebanon and is a graduate of Lebanon High School. He recently played a leading role in helping produce the Tennessee Association of Student Councils state convention at Wilson Central High School.