

An Essay for the Omega Psi Phi Scholarship of Eta Omega Chapter

"How the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted my college and career aspirations."

Covid, the Cops, and Community

By Doug Evans, IV

I grew up in a pro law enforcement family. My dad is a 25-year employee of the Atlanta Police Department. It was understood in the Evans household that we would be pro law enforcement. As a junior in Middle School, I had my first racially tense encounter. My best friends were well off and white and I didn't see the world in color but by how a person treated me. My mother tried to tell me about the class separation and the way I would be judged as I got older and bigger as a young black male. My dad has talked to me about what to do if ever stopped by the police. It all sounded good, but when they rolled up on me, I could hear my heart beating and I could feel the sweat running down my forehead. All the stuff my dad told me to do went right out of the window...taken over by fear. I was nervous and could hardly talk when the police officer came to me and said, "hey you...get on the ground"! I am on the honor roll but now I am being racially profiled.

While the world was being attacked by a virus in 2020, the Black community was being attacked by police brutality. While many in other communities had better access to healthcare, Covid exposed the disparity in the access to medical care in black communities. Before Covid, I had planned to get most of my tuition paid for by getting a baseball scholarship to one of the top HBCUs in the country. I knew that this plan would change in March 2020, when our highly recruited players on my team that were graduating seniors had the season cut short due to the Corona Virus. Many of the players that were not yet recruited would later realize that March 2020 would be the last time they would ever play. Covid had forever changed the way we do sports in America.

In closing, I discovered that to level the scales of the justice system as a black man and student athlete in America; I would need to put more emphasis on getting my college degree

as opposed to just focusing on baseball. I would like to get my degree in business finance and use my training to educate young males on financial literacy. My mentor with the 100 Black Men spoke on how we would need to look at picking majors based on the impact of Covid in the marketplace. Jobs like nursing and healthcare, law, or technology; would be more lucrative in a post Covid world. Many career paths have ties to social media driven sales, like YouTube, Uber, and internet marketing. With this Scholarship, I plan to use my degree to get a grant for young men ages 13 to 19 to teach them financial literacy. After I am gainfully employed, I will give back to younger students and spread the message of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift to them.