

March 14, 2010

The Detroit College Promise  
30100 Telegraph Road, Suite 408  
Bingham Farms, MI 48025

Dear High School Freshman:

I wanted to take a moment to sit down and write this very important letter to you. As you are about to enter high school for the first time, you have so many wonderful things to look forward to. The most important item that I wanted to bring to your attention is the importance of getting a strong education. Education is the gateway to opening up so many exciting opportunities for you in life and as you move forward. It is the one thing that will never let you down. Please remember that.

I am the youngest of five children and my parents divorced when I was four years old. My dad was never an active part of my life and my mom raised our family with the small amount of child support she received from my dad and from being a waitress. The tips she made from waiting on tables provided our weekly groceries, which wasn't much. Through all of the hardships and challenge, she always took the time to remind me about the importance of education and how I needed to always keep my grades strong. She had no time to oversee how we were doing in school or to partake in school functions that most parents did, but she repeated the importance of education on a constant basis and how becoming an educated person would help make a difference some day as I moved forward in my life.

When I entered into high school, things became much worse in my life and my mom remarried a man who was an alcoholic. He drank continuously and was always spewing out derogatory words to my brothers, sisters and me. Our home-life was very dysfunctional and because of that, my friends could never come over. Through all of the dysfunction, I continued to work hard in high school and earn good grades. I graduated with high honors and with the help of my guidance counselor, I was able to secure grants that would allow me to go to college. I went to a large state university and worked in the evenings. I didn't have much time for the "fun things" that college life can provide, but I didn't mind. As long as I could stay in college and earn my degree that is what helped me maintain my focus. During my summers, I lived with my best friend's family because my stepdad said that once we turned eighteen, we could not come back into the house. I worked two jobs in the summer and paid for groceries at my best friend's house as a way to thank her family for taking me in. During the summer of going into my junior year, I managed to find a summer prospect for employment with a large corporation that paid well. Due to my strong work ethic, I was offered a full-time job with the corporation and accepted it. It was a wonderful opportunity for me because this corporation would also pay for my college courses in the evenings, if I maintained a "B" or better average in the classes that I would take to finish my degree. After four long years of working full-time during the day and going to school at night, I earned my bachelor's degree in computer science and was so proud when I received my diploma. As I worked and went to school in the evening, I lived in a small, but comfortable apartment that had a bedroom, kitchen

and bathroom. I had very little furniture and was able to buy a used bed and kitchen table from an ad in our local paper, for minimal cost; but to me, having my own place was heaven because it was peaceful and there was no dysfunction in my life. I relished the time alone and learned a lot about myself as a person and about my ability to “dig my heels in” when challenge presented itself. I never gave up. A lot of my friends were blessed to have parents pay their way through college, and have good lives, but the hardships I endured really taught me a lot about perseverance and helped me to mature very quickly. The main thing that it instilled in me is that going through life will always provide obstacles, but if you stay strong, keep the faith and work hard for everything you achieve, the end result will definitely be positive. Strong work ethic, determination and the ability to stay focused will pay huge dividends. Trust me! People will always take notice when they see a young person starting out that has a commitment to hard work and wanting to learn. You will never go wrong with this mindset as you move forward and remember to “pass the torch” and inspire someone else whenever you are on your road to success!

Best of luck to you during high school and beyond and God bless you! Always strive for the best and always give your best. You can do it!

Sincerely,

Lorraine  
Educational Consultant