

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT: JOSHUA DIXON



1. What year did you graduate middle school?

2003

2. Catch us up. Tell us what you're doing today:

Wowza. I've been on quite the journey from my grassroots at Ida Price. I was fortunate enough to attend Stanford University on an athletic scholarship and won a few NCAA titles with the Stanford Gymnastics team. Post-graduation, I continued my involvement with USA men's national team through the 2016 Olympic Games. I reached a point where I had accomplished many goals in the sport and was ready to move into the next chapter of my life.

From sports at the Olympic level I moved right into running the tail end of a coordinated campaign in NV for now Senator Cortez Masto. The political sphere had always intrigued me, and it was a large part of my studies at Stanford. I was asked by the Senator to serve on her policy staff in DC and I was out there for about a year learning and contributing in a great way.

Currently I am running a harnessing my extreme entrepreneurial spirit by helping to run two different ventures. One that handles accounting automation/ enterprise resource planning for a billion-dollar industry and another that handles the ecommerce growth of a manufacturing firm. All very exciting projects and I'm happy to put my skills to use.

3. (Optional) Please share with us some information about your family.

My family is great. I have two older sisters and the most loving and caring parents in the world. We have a mix of engineers, educators, and coaches and in my family and I wouldn't have it any other way. Fun fact, myself and my siblings were all adopted at birth and are all half related. An eclectic, Bay Area family at its finest ☺

4. What might (someone) be surprised to know about you?

That I have an intense passion for tennis and music. Let's start with tennis. I started playing on a purely recreational basis in HS and it quickly became a love of mine. It's interesting, the sport that I took to the highest level and was my number one (gymnastics) is relatively contained in that no matter the scenario, stage, environment, you really just want to mimic what you do in practice day in a day out. The "suffering" and toiling repetition manifests itself in a structured, calm existence on the competition floor- there are really no external factors that should directly affect one's performance. Tennis, in many ways, is the complete opposite. You're always trying to disrupt/ frustrate whomever is on the other side of the net with your ball striking, movement, and play. The "fight" is front and center it's such a physical game that I really enjoy; additionally, I can confidently say I'm rpretty darn good.

Music on the other hand. I am very knowledgeable around musicians/ singers from the 60's, 70's, and 80's. It's quite hilarious when I'm with groups of friends and I'm the designated DJ. They know that they'll be getting Dixon's list of Aretha Franklin, Teddy Pendergrass, Sam Cooke, Staple Singers, Ray Charles, Otis Redding, Luther Vandross, Donny Hathaway, and many more. Hahaha yes, I know my current music, but my go-to's are great voices which is hard to come by nowadays, don't be afraid to dive back several decades.

5. How did Cambrian help you become the person you are today, both personally and professionally? What do you think makes Cambrian such a special place to learn and grow?

So much of who I am today is because of my supportive family and environment in which I was brought up in- Cambrian was a large part of that. Cambrian school district shaped me into who I am today by teaching me to stay enthusiastic about learning. I was taught to not be afraid of the unknown. I was encouraged that if you want to do something, work hard and go do it. I experienced that contribution to a community went hand in hand with individual achievement. I learned compassion by being in such a diverse environment on a day-to-day basis. I was always encouraged to set high goals and not to be afraid of being uncomfortable whilst pursuing them.

6. Who was your favorite teacher/coach/Cambrian staff member?

I can recite all of my K-8 teachers in about a minute. 3rd grade I had a memorable classroom with Ms Zaballos. Ida-Price I can't ever forget Mrs. Sangha, Mrs. St. John, Mr. Olsen, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Finley. All of my teachers taught me and challenged me in the best of ways. They all fostered my development the way any great educator should. This impactful work will never be forgotten and I certainly do not take any of it for granted.

7. What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Cambrian? We'd encourage you to recall a moment or event that had a particularly strong influence on your life.

I don't think it was one moment in particular but there are several that stick out in my mind. One of them was Gold Rush camp in 4th Grade, Science Camp in 5th Grade, our boardwalk trips in middle school, competing with the track and field team, cafeteria sing-alongs in elementary school, and math songs with Mrs. Sangha (that is still can sing LOL). Winning the turkey trot and coming home with a turkey-Hahaha. All of them I remember like yesterday but I have to say that competing with the track team really taught me prioritization that I would take into high school, college, and succeeding as a student-athlete.

For my parents it was always, give something your very best, be a good person, and your education is very important. It just so happened that I was a very athletic individual. Knowing that I would want to go to a gymnastics practice 5pm-9pm, daily, and before that came a full day a school, track a field practice or competition, I learned to prioritize quickly. Okay, so if my homework wasn't done my window of opportunity to hangout and have sleepovers with friends on the weekends was limited. If I didn't tackle some of this work during the school day, my nights would be pretty tiring after a 4-hour practice because I had homework and project responsibilities. My ability and knowledge to sustain the levels of energy throughout the day came from just being young and youthful but also learning good nutrition practices from my parents and family- hahaha although I have a massive sweet tooth. At the end of the day I learned that hard work and prioritization is needed to achieve any goal, and I quickly learned what being a student-athlete meant. Something I would take to the high school realm and Stanford University.

That being said, I am also very proud to say that I revitalized the Derek Jackson Scholarship whereby I've created a small fund to continue the financial award for student who demonstrate high achievement on and off the field of play. I received the award when I was a 6th grader and it gave me confidence that other believed in my work to help a team succeed. Additionally, myself and a great friend of mine from High School have a scholarship foundation that awards college scholarships to college-going students from our High School. Another way that I can give back to my community where I grew up and say thank you to those who helped me on my way and help provide that opportunity for those to come.

8. If you had one message for teachers or staff, what would it be?

Thank you. The passion for your work in shaping minds and teaching lessons truly does make a difference.

10. What do you wish other people knew about Cambrian?

Small but mighty.