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## Morgan Jones

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Morgan Jones

Photos submitted by Hailey Blood

“Never make excuses” is something Morgan Jones has heard many times in his past, but now, it is something he spreads to others. I had the opportunity to meet Morgan Jones my sophomore year of high school during my tennis season. He became a new assistant coach for our team that year, but little did I know, that he would be teaching us much more than just tennis. Ever since my sophomore year, he has been a helpful mentor and continues to be just as helpful to this day. Throughout the last 3 years of getting to know Morgan Jones as both a coach and a mentor, I have learned many things about him and his story that I feel are important to share.

In my interview with Morgan Jones, I got to learn some key components of his life and what events in his life have shaped him to be the man that he is today. I first asked him about his childhood and what kind of person and student he was growing up in high school. He described himself as a relatively good kid in high school, but he said he was very unmotivated and did not challenge himself at all. Throughout high school he simply focused on passing and didn’t intend on going to college after high school. Morgan didn’t involve himself too much in high school,

except he played on the tennis team. His relationship with his parents growing up and even today, is very strong. Morgan said that he never wanted to let down his father, even still to this day. His dad really pushed the military after high school, so that was Morgan's goal as well. His mindset in high school was not caring about school at all, but instead, focusing on other things like watching tv or playing games. He mentioned that one of the things he used to say to himself (which he now says is very stupid) was that you never see a "homeless pretty person," so by saying that, he made the assumption that he would end up being successful in something.

Morgan described that the main flaw in his mindset during his high school career was that he continually made excuses for himself and tried to rationalize situations. He stressed that he would always try to find a reason why something was not his fault. In contrast, now he is extremely focused on his school, and what he wants to do in the future. After being in the navy for about 5 years, Morgan feels that this is his last chance to get his life together. He stressed that he knows what it's like to work undesirable jobs like being a trashman, or a warehouse worker, and he decided that he wants more for himself. Now after working those jobs, he has motivation to strive higher and work towards goals that he never imagined he would have. As far as making excuses, he now tries to put all of the blame on himself. He used a group project as an example: if he were to get a bad grade on a project back in high school even though he felt he did his part, he would get angry and blame the other group members. Now, he says that he looks at those situations differently and asks himself, "what could I have done better?"

Like I mentioned earlier, Morgan says his dad has had the biggest influence on his life and his dad was the reason why he wanted to go to the navy. His dad was in the Navy, so he really pushed for Morgan to go into the navy after high school. At first Morgan did not want to go but then he changed his mind during his junior year. What changed his mind was that he saw

some of his friends getting locked up or getting into some shady situations and Morgan didn't want to be a part of that. Instead, Morgan wanted to separate himself from those situations. His dad was the one who always reminded him that those certain lifestyles were not the way they lived so that was a big reason why Morgan didn't engage in those activities.

Something that sticks out about Morgan, is that he has a lot of tattoos. He started getting tattoos at 23 years old and he mentioned, "my dad did not approve of me getting tattoos at first, so I finally had the guts to get my first one at 23." His favorite three tattoos are the tower bridge tattoo across his arm, his hummingbird, and his chrysanthemum. The tower bridge is one of his favorites, despite the fact that his ex-girlfriend paid for it, he laughed and admits it looks the best. His chrysanthemum represents his mother because that is her favorite flower and lastly his hummingbird represents his dad because his dad has always fed birds.

A huge part of Morgan's personality is his ability to "roast" people, so when I asked him who was the funniest person you've met throughout your life, he was quick to answer. He told the story from when he first went into the Navy. He thought he was the funniest guy there, but soon realized that may not be the case. Morgan told the story of his best friend Carter who he met in the Navy, and is probably the funniest person ever. Even though they were best friends, they always made fun of each other to get a laugh. After being in the Navy, he has tried to become a more empathetic person because when he looks back, he admitted being a little too harsh when trying to get a laugh. In order to be a more empathetic person, Morgan has been getting more involved in the community. While he is going to school to be an optician, he works as an assistant coach to the girls and boys' tennis teams at Brownsburg High School, and also in his free time he participates in community service where he reads to kids weekly. He describes

his experiences reading to the kids as something that is very humbling and has played a big role in his personal growth.

In conclusion, knowing Morgan Jones has proved to be an important relationship to not only me, but to my teammates and the other coaches as well. Getting to know his story from his high school career, his military experience, his current college experience, to his future goals, has motivated me to limit the excuses I make for myself, and to go after my goals even if I take a different path than others.