

**Oral History Interview of  
David Quirino**

**Interviewed by: Daniel Sanchez  
March 10, 2012  
Lubbock, Texas**

**Part of the:  
*Hispanic Interview Project***

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## Interview Series Background:

The Hispanic Interview Project documents the diverse perspectives of the Hispanic people of Lubbock and the South Plains. These interviews and accompanying manuscript materials cover a myriad of topics including; early Lubbock, discrimination, politics, education, music, art, cultural celebrations, the May 11<sup>th</sup> 1970 tornado, commerce, and sport.

## Transcript Overview:

This interview features David Quirino, high school instructor and wrestling coach at Randall High School in Amarillo, Texas. David recounts how he got into wrestling, his college wrestling career in Kearney, Nebraska, and his professional career as a coach and teacher. David discusses his passion for helping young people in the community, and emphasizes the importance of athletics in shaping young adults.

**Length of Interview:** 01:04:16

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### Keywords

Wrestling, High School Wrestling, College Wrestling, Athletics, Community Outreach

**Daniel Sanchez (DS):**

Good morning my name is Daniel Sanchez. Today's date is March 10, 2012 and we are in Lubbock, Texas. Today we are doing an interview with David Quirino over his wrestling career. Joining me this morning is Dr. Jorge Iber from the history department. First of all thank you, gentlemen for coming in, David we are going to start off by asking you your complete legal name.

**David Quirino (DQ):**

David Quirino, Junior.

DS:

When and where were you born?

DQ:

I was born in Amarillo, Texas on October 9, 1971.

DS:

How about your parents? Let us know where and when they were born.

DQ:

My dad is David Sr. he was born in Sweetwater, Texas. My mother is Petra Patsy Duran and she was born in Big Spring, Texas.

DS:

And what years?

DQ:

My dad was in—well he is twenty-one years older than me so that would have been—

**Jorge Iber (JI):**

Nineteen fifty.

DQ:

There you go, and my mother is a year younger than him.

DS:

What were their occupations, or are their occupations?

DQ:

My dad works for the department of the interior in Washington, D.C. Mainly his duty involve working with the Americans with Disabilities Act and he travels around the country to make sure facilities are handicap accessible—parks, stadiums, and old theaters in New York City. His desk is the final desk for complaints with the public. They will file a complaint locally, it will go regionally, and his desk is the final desk, and he will get involved in there with issue or violations for Americans with disabilities. And my mother, she is still in Amarillo. She's just a big supporter of all the kids and is there for all of us. She has been a great mother to have, just a loving mother raised us all and still there.

DS:

You mentioned “all.” How many are there?

DQ:

Myself, I'm the oldest. I have a sister that a year younger. A brother who is seven years younger in Kentucky and then another sister who is eight years young who is in Amarillo as well.

DS:

We are doing this one about sports. Can you first tell us when you first got involved with sports?

DQ:

I sure can. I remember vividly. Amarillo growing up had an organization called Kids Incorporated. It was started by Cal Farley who got the whole Boys Ranch going out there. My first experiences were track, and then from track we went to basketball. And this would be kindergarten for track—first grade. And then in the later years, once we were able to pick up a basketball and lift it with our arms and be able to shoot it, then it became basketball. Then tackle football, and eventually middle school and high school sports from there.

DS:

Let's talk about those first experiences. What was it like? Did you have the support from your parents?

DQ:

I did, I just remember when Kids Inc. got started, and it still is, based on volunteerism, in which I was the first coach for all my children—I have four children myself. And my oldest is a freshmen; I was their first coach. I just thought it was important that the experiences that I experienced growing up with Kids Inc.—my friend's fathers were the coaches. And I just looked up to them so much. I just remember the amount of respect I had for them. And then learning how to compete and be a team member from them—and our friends were able to hang out, and not only be at school together but then after school we would all go up—and I remember Dennis

Falk and Kenny Falk his son, who is my best friend today, and we would load up in their Grand Cherokee Wagoneer and go to Ellwood Park and practice track and hand-offs and exchanges. It was just so much fun, and then we would all go get ice cream after the workouts. And just the team building and the unity and the experience just—it's funny how I remember that more than the competitions. We were there for the competitions but the camaraderie that we got out of it just has a special place in my heart. I just continue to do that with my children, and with all of them I have been their first coach for all four of them. It was an experience to open the doorway into athletics, and then the competition and keeping the score. And remembering the color of the ribbons—that became important later on. You didn't want the purple ones, you came to find out later on you wanted the blue ones. So that all came later, and understanding the actual reason for the competition.

DS:

Okay, well let's talk about that growth and also kind of parallel with your career in academia?

DQ:

Well I remember after that, turning eight years old and Ben Dotson, whose son I'm still good friends with—I was eight years old and we were talking at the house and we talked about the Maverick Boys and Girls Club and getting involved there, and was it going to be boxing or wrestling? I remember being in our yellow LTD Pontiac—big gigantic wagon of a car, driving to the Maverick Club, and as we were going under the underpass my mother asked me if I was going to be enrolling in boxing or wrestling, what did I decide. I remember going right under the underpass and saying wrestling, just because I knew what boxing was, I just didn't know what wrestling was per say. I walked in the door and signed up for wrestling and it was three years before I ever won a trophy, and I won a third place trophy. And I remember carrying to Lee Bivins Elementary School to show my English teacher, being so proud of that trophy. She just encouraged that and that was the fuel. I was like, Man, you can get praised for doing these things, and the reward of the trophy itself. Everyone starts to recognize you as being successful and I started putting things together—I'm going to work harder at this. From there on I continued to wrestle and compete. I never won a tournament, but that was always the goal, to become the champion just strive for that. Going to practice and understanding what I was going to practice for, and trying to earn that gold. I don't remember when I won my first gold, first championship, but I remember it being a fueling point in my life to push and strive for things. Once we left elementary school we ended up going into middle school. Was it Perot that installed no-pass, no-play rule and made a big push for that in Texas?

DS:

I think he was, yes.

DQ:

Well, I fell victim to that. I was in seventh grade and I didn't turn in my industrial technology project, and I had a chess board that I had not completed. I wrestled that week, and I wasn't supposed to be in the finals of the championship, and because of my grades I got withheld from the tournament. I let my team down—that was the first time I had experienced a setback of athletics that had nothing to do with athletics. I didn't take care of my academics. And talk about the shame and the disappointment and the letdown—it never happened again. It was a great learning tool, but I fell victim to that. I just remember going to the tournament and just being so embarrassed I didn't want to be there because I let my team down. I didn't perform and earn points for the championship, or towards the championship for the team. Those two things right there I learned that I needed to balance it and it became especially important because if I wanted to do this athletic thing that I loved so much, I better take care of the academic portion of it. I remember there being a lot of heat and people thinking, This is so unfair, and this is not right for kids, but to me this was a good thing. It taught you to balance your life and it taught you to take care of everything, not just one thing, because ultimately the academics was why we were there anyway. It was a just a carrot out there to hold us accountable, and I'm thankful for that. I have athletes that fall victim to it now and I share that story with them, hopefully so they can learn from my mistakes along with the techniques and giving them an avenues to gain success sooner. The pitfalls are there to prove and show an example that we need to take care of business, called the academics.

From there I was on the football team. I love football, football was my first passion. I was a linebacker, I played basketball, I wrestled, and I ran track. I played four sports in middle school. Our basketball team, for three years: seventh, eighth, and ninth grade years, we lost one regular season game, won the city championship every year, won the city championship in track. We always fell a little short in football to Bonham in middle school, but we were competitive—and Sam Houston for that matter—Sam Houston Middle School. I just was a part of great teams and great athletes. And I really go back to the Kids Inc. because a lot of the success that we had on our teams, those kids were with that Kids Inc. team when we first got started. So we just learned a lot about counting on each other and working together and striving for those goals. I think that just propelled us and propelled us and propelled us each and every year to greatness.

JJ:

David, what was the ethnic makeup of some of these teams, at your junior high school?

DQ:

With black and Latino—those two sub-pop groups—I don't know if that's what you call that sub-pop groups—but those two combined with the white athletes you has it was 50/50. We had Jerry Brown, Greg Lewis, David Grey—African American. Then you had myself and Adrian Hillburn—Hispanic descent. So the teams were smaller then so we had five and five represented, so it was right about 50 percent, which is probably pretty rare I guess.

DS:

Well I was going to ask; when y'all were out playing tournaments, did you see others that look like you wrestling against them?

DQ:

No in fact, we joke about this, but we were outside all the time and we didn't have the electronics and gadgets the time-consuming activities—the internet—that kids have where they can stay indoors. We were outside playing all the time. We had a park called Triangle Park and a park named Julian Park and we would play, tag in Triangle Park. In Julian Park, trees were just so happen to be lined up ten yards apart for eight trees, so we played football using those dimensions. And then if you turned a 45 degree angle, the park comes at a corner, we would play baseball. There was asset of trees that if you could get the ball over the trees, not into the trees, and if it cleared the trees and came down in the trees, that was your home run. So we had those kind of things that kept us busy. And obviously you had to have ten, twelve, fifteen kids, and luckily the park had a water fountain right there, which I thought was one of the greatest inventions ever, because you step on the pedal and there's water coming out, and you're like, How does this work.? You're looking for the plumbing. It was a nice cylinder water fountain. And that was our home, we were all there.

And getting back to that, people thought I was African American. We would take our shirts off and I always had a buzzed haircut and I was the darkest Mexican you had ever seen in your life. Man who is that black kid? Well that's David but he is not black, he is Mexican. People thought we were really good at track because we had all the black kids on it and they thought I was one of them. But we didn't see many of them competing; it was a bunch of white kids, and I knew no difference. I really didn't. We were just people as far as we were concerned. My parents, Kenny's parents, Greg Lewis, Chris Mason—all those people, it never was brought up. In fact I remember being in middle school and not knowing until other students brought it up. What does that have to do with anything and why are you saying that? You're kind of at a loss because you were not exposed to that growing up, that, "You're this and you're this."

We grew up speaking Spanish and I knew that was special, I knew we had chorizo and menudo, and I knew we had different food. You grow up with that and it's an everyday common occurrence and that's what you do .When you go to some else's had they had different food, the regular Malt-O-Meal, shakes, and stuff like that they would make. You just got exposed to different things. But I knew no difference, I just knew that there was a difference as far as pigmentation, but it really didn't matter. They were trying to win and we were trying to win, and we didn't want them to win at all at any cost, so tried our best to keep that from happening.

DS:

You mentioned earlier about how it took forever before you got that first taste of victory. What was it when you were that young that kept you going? We live in a world where everybody wants quick gratification, and what was it like for you?

DQ:

The biggest drive, and I share it all the time, was my father and mother just saying, “I love you mijo I believe you can do it,” and that was it. And if I came back shorthanded I just felt like I let them down. I’ll jump to a story—my junior year we’re at the state championships, I have lost three matches up to that point and I’m in the state finals. The gentlemen I’m wrestling he is an undefeated senior; he is going for his third state championship. I go out there and I get thrown and pinned in like thirty seconds. I come off the mat and I walk back into the hallway and you’re kind of at a loss, when something happens like that. It’s like getting knocked out in twelve seconds. You wake up and it’s like, What just happened? And I remember going back to the locker room and I just didn’t want to face my dad. I felt bad, like I let the family down—I let him down, and my mother. The best thing he said was, “Son I love you and I’m here for you,” just good words of encouragement. I just started crying uncontrollably and it’s just that was my drive to get the praise. And I think going back and winning that third place trophy, and the praise I got from that, or the lack of it—and maybe not getting it is what I didn’t want to happen, maybe that was it. I just didn’t want to disappoint people or let anyone down on my performance, and I felt like I did in that situation.

I come back my senior year and I’m an undefeated state champion, I’m 29-0, twenty-five are matches I win by pin. After that loss I get on that bus my junior year, and I remember sitting in the bus and looking at the stadium we were at—the dome—I don’t remember what it was called but in was in San Antonio. I said, It’s never going to happen again. I’m doing something great next year. I don’t know what it is but I’m doing something great next year. And I just so happened to go undefeated and win the majority of my matches by pin, and ended up earning a scholarship to go to Kearney, Nebraska. I think that was a drive, is just letting people down. And they didn’t tell me that I let them down, I just felt like that was what I was doing.

DS:

What do you think it was that led to your successes? Was it anything specific, or was it a combination of the coaching and the training?

DQ:

I had numerous coaches—great men in my life. My philosophy when I go and do clinics is—I tell coaches all the time, I begged, I borrowed, and I stole ideas that other coaches did and had success with. Wrestling has been around since the bible, but obviously I’m not that old, so there’s been techniques and things that have worked through time and I just look for those things and try to implement them in our program. My shortcomings too—with when I have a single leg and I don’t move my feet I’m going to get thrown. And I got beat out of the All-American round in college because I quit moving my feet on a takedown finish. That I share with the kids. All those experiences, whether it was summer camps, middle school, or my high school or college coaches—the experiences I gained from them, I just take and I put them in my memory bank and

make copies and put them in coaching folders, and when it's time I go back and go through all that information and take what I think I need for this individual to be successful.

DS:

Now you mentioned college—let's talk about that transition from high school to college. Was there like a recruiting going on to go to wrestling? Or were you even thinking about that? How did that happen?

DQ:

My parents didn't go to college—well my dad started but he didn't finish and my mother didn't either. That push, that drive wasn't necessarily existent in my household. It was, take care of school, don't get in trouble and work a part time job if you want to have a car to pay for the insurance—that was kind of what was happening. Luckily for me, Henry Harmony, my club coach at the Maverick Club was a graduate from Kearney, Nebraska, and I would wrestle for in the summers. He said, "What are you doing Quirino? What are you doing next year?" and I said, "I really don't know." It was my senior year. And he said, "We are going to Kearney we are going to wrestle in the main Nebraska-Texas duel, and we are going to get exposed to Coach Ed Scantling, and we are going to see what he thinks, and we are going to see about going to Kearney." We go there I have a great experience, the coach liked what he saw and talked to me and I remember calling home and saying, "I think I'm going to Kearney Nebraska for college, Mom and Dad." Next thing you know I'm loading up and getting ready to head up to go to Kearney, Nebraska and wrestle division 2 level.

JJ:

What was happening in Kearney at the time that you got there? Because again, I'm doing the math now in my head, if you were born in '71 and you won your senior title in what, '89?

DQ:

Eighty-nine/ninety.

JJ:

Eighty-nine/ninety. So by the time you get to Kearney, Nebraska you are beginning to see some of the stuff that we talked about with Garden City, where you have the meat-packing plants and all these things taking place in various parts of the Midwest. What is, for lack of a better term, the "scene" like, as far as Latinos in a place like Kearney, Nebraska in 1990?

DQ:

Nonexistent, in fact it was 1 percent total minority enrollment. Then you start to figure out that first of all, the way Texans speak going to Nebraska they're like, Hey he is different. Not only is he different from the way he talks but his skin is different. There was a bunch of white farming

community kids there and that was it. We had a few international students but again the draw, I think, internationally as far as minority populations that they counted at Kearney, that's where the majority of it was, was the international draw with China, Japanese, and African American, but it was not nonexistent. The good thing about it was the wrestling team, the wrestling community, it was a tight knit group, close—small, very small world. A bunch of those teammates were all farm raised kids that had good values—farm values to wake up early, take care of chores, take care of your neighbor, luckily those kids embraced us.

Clint Hilker was one I remember vividly. He was from Pender, Nebraska, a small farming community, and just a gullible, happy-go-lucky farm kid and you just wanted to be around him. He kind of drew you in. Then we would go to his farm and I got my introduction into livestock, and cows, and hogs, and just the smell. And being tricked by Bjorn Thompson who owned a farm in Minden, Nebraska, [said] that we are going to vaccinate cows. I'm like, Okay, what do we do? This was my sophomore year. So we loaded up myself and my team. We had never done this. He said we are vaccinating cows—he was pulling my leg this whole time but I didn't realize it. He goes, "One of you is going to hold this white cane with a flag on and you're going to wave it and get the cows attention. And the other one—you are going to walk up behind it and you're going to double under hook it like in wrestling—by the horns." We look at each other like, Are we are really going to double under hook this thing? And he goes, "You've got to walk quietly. You can startle him because he is going to be focused on that flag and if you spook him he is going to turn around and hit you." I'm like, Oh, we are going to die, but you don't admit that because you're macho—"Alright I'm holding the flag first. No I'm holding the flag first!" And so we get in and I'm crawling over the pen to try to get over the back of this cow to get ready, and he goes, "Hey I'm kidding, I'm kidding!" And I'm like, "You idiot! What do you mean you are kidding? Come here!" And he pulls us into the barn and he goes, "We're going to walk him through here." And there was this big contraption that locks them in and then they vaccinate them. Who was the gullible guy really, was it the farm guys or the city guys? But you know the experiences with those families—they just welcomed you into their home and made you feel a part of their family and what they were a part of there. And you would go and work on the farm irrigation pipe and loading that stuff up. You learned a lot about how they became who they were and the hard work that they did.

JJ:

Can you flesh out a little bit more—because you had said that the wrestling community was a very small, tight knit community—do you think that if you, if for some other reason would have wound up in Kearney, Nebraska as a Mexican American from Amarillo, Texas, that you would have had these opportunities or this exposure if you hadn't been a wrestler?

DQ:

No, I don't, I really don't. I was a 5'6'' 160 pound linebacker at Tascosa High School the year Mojo, the Friday Night Lights movie came out. We played them in Amarillo. We scored first,

then they scored a lot after that. But I can't share stories like that about football, the humbling experiences that wrestling gives you one-on-one. I love football, it was my first passion and I loved it so much, I still do and I coach it now. But I can be a left guard and fall on my face, fall down and miss my block and if the tail back runs around the right end and still scores a touchdown, we still win—in football. In wrestling, if I fall on my face I'm getting put on my back and pinned and it's over. I think that being an experience for most wrestlers, they understand when you've been down and you've got to get back up and if you're back up, still getting back up at the college level, you're the kind of guy that shares the same experiences that I have. And so, I don't think if I would have gone to play basketball or football I would have got that out of that team concept sport. And don't get me wrong, those bring other experiences too that you can share and mold you, but I don't think they're anything quite like wrestling.

DS:

Well let's talk about that team while you were there. Talk about some of the successes y'all had and some of the best opponents you faced individually.

DQ:

Yes, one of the best opponents that I faced actually was a teammate; you can wrestle in open tournaments so you can enter as many kids as have in an open tournament. We had a gentleman named Ali Amiri-Elasi (later changed to Ali Elias,) who was a four or five time Iranian national champion. And he has got an interesting story about how he came about being in the United States. I'm a freshmen coming in at eighteen, and he is a senior wrestling at twenty-eight because your clock does not start for NCAA until you enroll. So here I am an eighteen year old, walking into the program, trying to earn a spot in the 150 pound weight class, and here is this stud that has already won two NCAA national titles. And I'm thinking an eighteen year old, I'm going to beat him and take his spot, and I just got an awakening like no other. First I learned about man strength—a twenty-eight-year-old man versus an eighteen-year-old young man.

So it was great because he was able to teach me about a time and a place. Right now was his time and my time and place was to come in and understand college wrestling, because different things had changed. The time periods change, there's a writing time, there's different rules that apply that I really needed to become accustomed too. He was instrumental in doing that with few words and a lot of actual hands-on learning experiences that would call for a lot of ice bags. But he was one of my greatest opponents in the room, and mentor. He took me under his wing and was great role model for me and my career in college. In college wrestling you get to enter tournaments and they're open divisions.

So we would wrestle Iowa, Oklahoma State, OU—all the big games. We would go to a tournament in Omaha, Nebraska to the Kaufman Open, and you would just draw the meanest, toughest, kids in the country. I got an education again, quite a bit. I didn't have quite the success that I had at the high school level; the playing field and level jumped up so much. I did have success; I qualified for the nationals. I missed becoming All American by one match. I was

losing by two points, I was on the bottom position, I get up I escape that one point with twenty seconds in the match, so now I'm down by one. And I hit my elbow past high crotch and I've got the kid's leg picked up—all I had to do was just finish it and I'm in the medals. I'm driving and I stop moving my feet, and I kind of just vapor locked and the kid over under hooks me, steps through and hip tosses me right to my back and I lose the match and I'm out of the medals. And I just sit there deflated on the mat, and the clock buzzer runs out, and so it was a tough nip and tuck situation. Every match was like that. It was within points, within seconds. It was anybody's match to win. It just so happened that he ended up winning that match and my senior year I get injured right before everything hits. I'm having a great year and I'm ranked number 5 in the country. We go to Chadron, Nebraska to wrestle in a tournament and I have single leg picked up on the kid again, and I quite moving my feet and the kid does a leg whip and brings it back and I tear my meniscus in my knee. So I have to try to get through that injury and get back on the team, and the timing was just bad. I couldn't make it back in time because the injury was just too severe. I couldn't get back to weight so I had to wrestle off in a weight class above, and I did, and made it to the regional meet, but they were just too big. I couldn't do much with my knees the way they were at the time and going up a weight class, it was too much for me to overcome.

I ended up getting pinned my last college match of my career, and again, I really firmly believe—when I was seventeen years old, I'm sitting in history class and I had a student teacher tell me why he became a teacher, to be with his children and his family. I said, you know that sounds interesting. And I sat there and I remember looking out the doorway, and I-40 runs along Tascosa High School, runs east and west. For some reason I started thinking, Life is like the interstate. I can go this way or that way, and I can do this or I can do that. And again, I really hadn't committed to what I was going to do with my life as far as college, and I felt like I had a calling from God saying, You're going to be a teacher and you are going to be a coach. At seventeen years old, that's all I'd ever known and done. And I pray a lot about that, you know when some of those seasons when it's not as productive—God, do you still want me doing this?

DS:

It's like you read my mind because I was getting ready to ask you, when did you decide you wanted to teach, and I was thinking it was in college career but here it was in high school.

DQ:

Yes I was a junior, and that student teacher, he had a child that was very ill. I think she had cerebral palsy, I believe—something—she was wheel chair bound. And he just said, This was going to give me an opportunity to be with her, I don't know how much time she's got left on earth. I've got spring break, I've got Christmas break, I've got fall break, I've got summer; I don't have to ask for that time to be off when my child is off. And that kind of planted a seed that maybe that's kind of what I want to do. I wasn't sure. And shortly after that, that's when I just felt I had the calling that God said, This is what you're going to do. And I made up my mind at

seventeen. Again, mind you, I didn't know what it took though, I didn't know that you had to go to college to get a degree, how many years—was it a master's, was it an associate's or a bachelors? I didn't really know, but it was planned. Thankfully Coach Harmony was there to say, This is how you're going to do it. Because he asked me on the trip to Indianapolis, Indiana for nationals, "What do you think you want to do?" "I think I want to coach and teach." "Well then you're going to go to Kearney and you're going to go do this duel," and that's how that all kind of steamrolled into my position now.

Luckily, an experience too that I had that I'd like to share because it greatly molded me—I went to officer candidate school for the marine corps while I was attending college in Nebraska. And one, I wanted my resume to really start to resonant and also, they gave me a tuition break from the state. So I had an academic, I had a minority, I had athletic, and then I had the state funding that helped me with officer candidate school in the marine corps. It ended up paying for my college. My parents—I share this story—I didn't receive a vehicle until I was as sophomore in college in Nebraska. But I remember my parents taking me to Kearney and everybody loaded up in the van and dumped me off and we go to the bank to open an account. And this might embarrass my mom and dad, but they gave me fifty dollars, that's all they had. They said, Here we go son we love you, we've got fifty dollars for you right now and they deposited that in that account. I let that fifty dollars ride forever. I just thought it was like gold, I was rich, I had fifty dollars.

Because of my scholarships, they didn't have to worry about the tuition and taking loans and all that. I just remember that being—now, I look back on the sacrifice that it probably was, because my dad was a mechanic and my mom was a stay at home mom at the time and there were four children to feed. That's not going to warrant you a lot of luxurious and a lot of perks. So I was thankful for that raising. And I question my wife because we are trying to look at getting a car for my sophomore daughter right now. My wife, we dated, and she remembers me not having a car in college. I said, You know, I made it, and we are doing pretty good now. Does she really need this car and would she really appreciate it? The responsibility of having a sophomore driving around and all that just starts to weigh on you.

DS:

Well let's talk a little bit about once your college career was winding down and you were thinking about being a coach and instructor in high school. Or did you have it pinned down to that? Did you know what you were going to do?

DQ:

I graduated from PLC Juniors and Seniors, and my brother was wrestling at Tascosa. My senior year of college he was a junior. And we were on some break, fall break, or something at Kearney. I came back and I was fortunate enough to watch him wrestle in a duel against Randall High School where I currently coach. That coach was temporary coach to fill in until they could find a coach they could implement to be the man running it. At the weigh-ins, my brother

overheard the Randall coach talking to Coach Cobb, the Tascosa coach which was my coach as well, saying that they were looking for a coach. And my brother hears that and he knows I'm about to graduate. So I'm out in the stands and he comes running out there, "Hey David, the Randall coach is looking to get out of coaching and they are looking for a coach, you need to get that job. Then I'm going to come over and wrestle for you my senior year." And I'm like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, let's focus about this duel right now then we will talk."

The duel happens, I talk to coach Cobb, he says, "Get your application in to Canyon Independent School District. As coach is looking to get out, he doesn't want to be the coach. He the food director, he has too many irons in the fire, and I'm going to mention you're name to him." So he did, and then he goes back to central administration talk to them. I get all my final stuff, my resume, all my transcripts, all that put together and I send it in. I get a call from Dr. King, and he goes, "I would like to visit with you. When you can come in?" I said, "Whenever. I'm home for the holidays for these days." He goes, "Listen, I've gotten the greatest reference that you didn't even list on your paper. I don't know why you didn't put it on their but something is not right." I go, "I'm sorry, what are you talking about?" He said, "Do you remember a Georgia King?" "My high school counselor? That's your wife?" And after that it was over. And he goes, "She told me all about your experiences at Tascosa and the drive that you had what you wanted to become. Let's just talk about how we are going to do this and your philosophy—" And it kind of went from there, it was great. At the time I told Lori, "I'm going to apply for this job, if we get this teaching position I will be an educator, and if I don't, I'm going to officer candidate school, back to the basics school in Quantico, Virginia for six months as second lieutenant then it's going to be a military career." Thinking back, I wasn't a very good planner. I just threw one application in and if it was a denial then it was off to the military. And we have all the Middle East stuff going on and I'm not thinking about the big picture. I'm just thinking about—narrow minded here and there, and walking along in my little pond, and just oblivious to what's going on in the big picture.

DS:

I have to say this, because there's one other person I have interviewed that had something similar. He was in his second year at one of the academies and decided that if he stayed one more year, he couldn't go on. He would have to fulfil his military career. And so he applied to numerous schools. The only school he applied to when he decided was Rice. And he put in one application and said, "If they accept me, I'll transfer there. If not I'll complete my military obligations and do this." That was Al Gonzales.

DQ:

Oh really?

DS:

You're here in good company there.

DQ:

The decision making, yeah. How am I going to get to point B?

JJ:

I'm going to slip out. I'll be in touch.

DQ:

Thank you very much.

JJ:

Thank you, sir.

DQ:

Appreciate it.

JJ:

Thanks for the opportunity.

DS:

Don't forget to close the door.

JJ:

Okay.

DS:

Yeah just go out through these last doors. Let's see how much time we have. Okay.

DQ:

I forgot to watch that.

DS:

We've got forty minutes, so. Well let's keep going with that. You just got the job and you start planning for the future. What was that school doing as far as their wrestling program when you got there?

DQ:

It was not very good. And I share this story and I shared it with the paper the other day. They were interviewing me because I was getting inducted into the wrestling hall of honor. Kearney was a great team, we were in the top ten in nationals, and I came off of Tascosa's state runner-up team, so we were having a lot of success. Now I'm the head coach, I'm the guy in charge, and

we are not winning, we're getting beat pretty bad. I'm thinking to myself, I'm doing something wrong. I thought I was doing a disservice to the kids, to the school, to the people that hired me, and I wrote my letter of resignation at Christmas my first year in.

I was in a lull, I was at a low point, because when you wrestle, you feel like you are out there with the kids. And when they go out there and they win, you're elated for them. And when they lose, you just feel so bad like you've let them down in some fashion, with the weight training, the technique, the mental preparation, the physical preparation. Something that I was supposed to make sure was there I felt like I wasn't doing. So I started doubting that I even needed to be in that position and maybe somebody else can really get the job done. So I sat down and wrote out a full page letter of resignation, and I didn't even know how to do that, I didn't know you could just do two paragraphs. I wrote why, this is why I'm having to do this, to convince me to let me go.

I remember calling up my buddy Mark Ramirez, he was a teammate of mine at Kearney, Nebraska as well. And I talked to him after this event that we had and we just did poorly. And I talked to him and read him that letter, and he talked me out of it. Thank God, he talked me out of it. I remember I was in the bathroom, trying to be quiet because we lived in an apartment and I didn't want to wake my wife up. I was reading in the bathroom, and forty-five minutes to an hour later we're through talking. And I just remember crushing it up, crumbling it up as hard as I could and throwing it in trash can, thinking things were going to get better right away. It was two years before we won a duel, two years later. And we ended up winning our first district title. All those feelings like in third grade when I took that trophy to that teacher, and we brought that district championship to the school and all of a sudden everyone was like, Wow, alright! We are the champions of the district. And that just became the fuel.

And to this day, that trophy sits in our trophy cabinet and it's one of the oldest ones. That was 1999, and anything else that is that old we had pulled it out of the trophy cabinet but it sits center in that trophy cabinet. It's one of the oldest, ugliest looking ones because it's so old. But it sits there, and it's a reminder for me that we have to remember where we came from, because we've been ten time regional champions, eleven time district champions since then. For a decade we have been winning those two tournaments, not only the district tournament but the bigger one, the regional meet. We've been kind of the torch, as far as region 1 and district 6 is concerned. But I'm always quick to remind myself—and I call them the dungeon days—of the three years of losing, and the trial and error, and just changing the workout regimen, and changing the attitude of how we are going to conduct our workouts, and the phases we are going to go through during the season. These are constant reminders of what we were and that trophy sits there to just keep me in check, and just because we did it before doesn't mean we are going to do it again.

DS:

Well as you look back, what do you think was the biggest hurdle to get to that point?

DQ:

Kids believing in the system, kids believing in that program, that it is going to work. Finally having the success of—you know we were having a little success, because when I first got there we went to the state meet and we brought home a state medal. We brought home a state medal every year that I've the head coach. So that run was going on, but it was only happening with just individuals, we weren't having it through the whole team. As soon as the individual continued to have this success and encouraged his teammates to buy in and get involved in what he was trying to accomplish and do outside of the training in the program, it started becoming contagious, and the lineup started believing in each other. Then we all started gelling very well and flowing together—cohesive and continuity. It all just started blooming. It was like you finally got the seed planted and it started to blossom and grow into this garden.

We are able to go through every individual and use their individual athletic abilities and fine tune them for what they needed. But there was a core base of fundamentals that we always did together. Then we would individualized them and work with each individual based on body type. If you have a long guy, you want to use more leverage moves and distance outside take downs. If you have a short squatty body, more physical kids, you would close the gap and get hands on and hand-fighting combat, close quarters grappling wrestling techniques. So you fine tune those things for those individuals.

I think that's kind of what I learned along the way too is that the individuals—early on I was kind of having a blanket for everybody, that this was what we are all going to do and this is what everybody does. I needed to draw back on my shortcomings in my matches because if I wrestled a longer, lankier opponent, I had a harder time using my double leg takedown for instance, how to use heavy hands to close the gap because they would try to keep me at bay and shoot long range attacks at me low leg ankle picks at me, things of that nature. So I had to readjust my approach on teaching the kids. So that is what I think really helped nurture Randall Wrestling, is realizing, yes, there is a bottom layer, a foundation of fundamentals that we do, but after that you've really got to try to get with those individual kids and help them out with their physical attributes, and we have gotten pretty good at that.

DS:

Yeah. And in that aspect it really is markedly different than, for example, basketball. Because there is one way to properly shoot a basketball. But for wrestling, like you mentioned, it depends on a person's physique and how they need to play.

DQ:

Exactly. I love basketball and I remember the drills that we would do, everybody was doing the same drills all the time. For shooting, just like you said, but if I'm going to take a shot in wrestling, I might be a knee pound double guy and be really good at that because I've got the shoulder and arm strength to do that. Or, if my kid does not have it for his shot and take down, it might be a low leg single leg to snatch it up and go into a match ground situation and use physics

against him to earn the take down, versus imposing my will and maneuvering his body into position to earn the point. So that's exactly what it is, it's a chess match, it's a set-up. They make their move then I make my attack, and then they try to counter, and I'm countering. So it's a set-up, attack, and counter type of world that you really get immersed in, and you really just try to find out for the best avenue for success for those kids. We can set up high to attack low or set up low to attack high, set up left to attack right, or and vice-versa. So it becomes a pretty complex situation.

DS:

You mentioned that it took a few years before you got going, what was it like when you finally made that turn?

DQ:

Again, I just left like my dad was proud, my principle was proud, my wife was proud to be married to this man that is leading a team into championships. My children—I felt like I could hold my head up high in front of them, I felt like I wasn't failing. (laughs) I still feel that way to a certain extent, but I don't know that that's necessarily true so much anymore. The competition is the competition and there has got to be a winner and there has got to be a loser. It doesn't mean you're a failure if your hand doesn't get raised or your team doesn't win the title. Prime example was this year, we were going to for our ninth consecutive regional title, and we were wrestling at Randall.

I despise wrestling at home. It's just such a distraction. And we end up losing the tournament to El Paso Franklin. Going into it, this was the last year for 1 division in wrestling, next year there's going to be a 5-A Division and 4-A Division and below. I really wanted to win that title because of that fact, plus we're at home, but it didn't hurt so bad. The first thing I told the kids—because they were pretty disappointed, because we put a lot of stock into it. The first thing out of my mouth—I gathered them all up and I said, "Guess what guys?" And they're all sitting there listening and some are kind of tearing up, some are not wanting to look at me in disappointment. I said, "The sun is coming up tomorrow guys." And they're like, What is he talking about? I said, "I have a feeling the sun is going to come up tomorrow and we are going to be okay. We've got a couple of weeks to get ready for state. We can have a better performance there." I just started letting that water be under the bridge and be gone. So early on, that was a big drive. It instilled in me, having that success, and feeling, again, like I said, feeling like I was letting a lot of people down—that just fueled me to make sure that I was at work, I had great workouts planned, the kids were productive, working harder, but smarter at the same time. Not just working harder but being effective with the workouts.

Again, going online and to website like Flowrestling. A wrestler that I admired named Ben Askren, wrestled for Missouri, he was a two-time national champion. They were interviewing him in a room, in his hotel room right before his finals match—or he was at some kind of international competition somewhere. And he just talked about, you always hear coaches barking

about work harder, work harder, he goes, "I understand that, but you've got to at some point and time acknowledge that you have to be working smarter. Smarter can beat working harder, because if I'm working hard on a technique that I'm really realistically not going to use, that's not working very smart. I need to be working on what my opponent is bringing to the match and working on that, and then now I'm working smarter and I'm going to be more effective because I'm more prepared for that match.

And so that's kind of helped me out—not kind of, it's tremendously helped me out. I've put together a booklet for wrestlers that are beginning to kind of ease their mind into competitions and I reference like Ben Askren, and I reference Brandon Slay an Olympic champion, he was a teammate of mine who won the gold in 2000 in Sydney. Ed Scantling, Henry Harmony, Johnny Cobb—all my coaches—all these ideas and philosophies are just hybrids of what they have thought me. I've just cut and condensed and pasted it all together and just said I was a product of many coaches and many philosophies. Not one coach just did it for me; I didn't have one coach since I was eight years old that took me all the way through my college career. It was a multiple of influences. At the Maverick club; Austin Middle School; Tascosa; Kearney, Nebraska; summer camps; and all of that I'm trying to coral and put together as much as I can on paper to help you become successful.

So the drive of—getting back to what helped get to that corner again, the drive to be successful, the marine corps training, getting up at five a.m., doing PT before we got to eat breakfast, then going on nine mile hikes, setting up camps out in the mountains, having a half shelter and depending on another marine to put your half shelter with yours so that you could have shelter over night to sleep and survive. Get up and dry shave in the morning, because you had to pass inspection—canteen water shaves, you know. All of that—those experiences—I just draw on them. Becoming a football freshmen coach, organizing practices for mass groups—that helped me as far as being a football coach at Randall as well. It's not just any one thing it was all those experiences.

So that's why I tell our athletes—you know we have so many kids that want to specialize in one sport and take the avenue of, I'm going to be a baseball player, when 1 percent of high school athletes go on to the next level. High school baseball players, they want to specialize, specialize, specialize. I wouldn't be who I am if I did that at all. If I didn't play football, basketball, wrestling, and track at Austin Middle School, I wouldn't have had of had all those coaches and been able to draw those experiences to help me be successful. If somebody would have told me to do that it would have been total disservice, and kids get today from club coaches. I understand that they want to work with those kids and make them better because that's their product but it's not right and it's not good for the kid—for the whole development of the kid. If all they work on is baseball and they want to become a—and I'm just using baseball as an experience, I'm not saying baseball because we're having that issue. I'm just saying that—or even wrestling for that matter.

If I have a kid just be a wrestler all the time and then he wants to be a football player, well he hasn't worked to catching a football. He doesn't know, I've got to make a triangle, catch the

point of the ball and watch it all the way in, catch, tuck and look it in—all those little fundamental basics. I'm doing him a disservice. I have a kid who is going to be a senior next year who played football as a sophomore, did not as a junior, but now is looking to go back as a senior. I'm encouraging it. He is a senior wrestler, he's been out of it a year, but I am encouraging it because of what it can bring. I had a senior this year who was a starting defensive end who blew his knee out the second game of the football season and was out for six months. We didn't get to use him this year. You can't live timid, like, What if they get hurt? Well it's a part of sports; they can get hurt wrestling too and be out.

DS:

They can get hurt walking to the grocery store.

DQ:

Exactly. Whatever.

DS:

I think you bring up an interesting point, and it's something that a few of us have alluded to in other interviews, about how it seems how athletes now get sidetracked into one—instead of multi-sports like you in your era. Now it's like you're going to be a football player, you're going to be a basketball player.

DQ:

It's bad. And I'm going to brag a bit about Randall, you know I've been there about seventeen years, and the philosophy at C.I.S.D. is play multiple sports. We tell the kids, We want your talents everywhere, Logan Brittain, defending sophomore state champion high jumper, jumped 7 foot at last year's state track meet in Austin. Played football for me as a freshmen, qualified his freshmen year for the high jump, doesn't have quite the meet he should have. I think he ends up fourth I believe. His sophomore year he comes back and wins it. Well the kid is on the football field, the kid is on the basketball field, and obviously he is on the track team. He is running sprint relay, he does the high jump, he does the long jump, he does the triple jump. Can you imagine if we took him and said, Alright, you won the state championship as a sophomore in track and that's all you're going to do for now on. The football team wouldn't benefit because he is gazelle and he will catch anything on a football field. We wouldn't have been at the playoffs three rounds deep the last two years without a talent like him. The basketball court as well, they wouldn't be as successful without talent like him. And he is just one.

Our quarterback is a phenomenal athlete. I believe he is going to be a D-1 quarterback. He is going to be a senior this year and I think he's going to go somewhere big. But he is there and he is on the baseball field. If we just harness all that and don't allow it to be shared, that would be a total disservice to Randall. If you look at Randall athletics across the board, we do really, really good. And we're in the Lone Star Dodge Cup run, it's a points system of all the 4-A schools

based on championships won, and we are always in the top ten for the whole state, and top five for a while there for a good four year run.

The philosophy is share the athletes, share the athletes, and it's tough to break sometimes because those kids get it ingrained in their heads with their club coaches and their parents for that matter, that we are going to specialize and we are going to do this year-round and we are going to get really good at this. Well you know what? That kid might not be just that one-track sport that might not be their calling in high school, it might actually be something else, and now we are denying them the opportunity to hone in on those skills, sharpen those skills we're and doing them a disservice. And I don't believe in that. I believe let's try everything if time permits. There are going to be some things that overlap, it's going to be tough to do. But we can get through it because you can do things in the evening to make up for that lost time. If you have that attitude about it you can accomplish it.

DS:

Well and also you mentioned the athletes. When you were in high school and your coach asked you that question of what you want to do with your life—do you take that time with your student athletes and help them prepare for life after high school?

DQ:

I do. Going back to the GI Joe reference, “knowing is half the battle”—getting into their sophomore year, I start telling them, Your junior year you're going to take the SAT as many times as you can because you've to get exposed to that exam and you've got to get a good score to get into college. We're going to start taking care of GPAs. This is why, and the scale. If I want to go to an Ivy League school, this is what they're looking for. If I'm going to go to a Ju. Co. [junior college], a two year school, then this is what to look for. You try to lay out the playing field for them. But we plant that seed their sophomore year and we start hammering them. Not that it works, because come junior year the first SATs come through—Alright, how many juniors have signed up for their SAT? Oh coach I forgot, and I'm like, Guys we have to get on this. When they walk in their locker room, they have all the testings and the dates and the registration deadlines. So that's the first thing they see when they walk into their locker room. Then after that it's the wrestling posters and the goals and all that but there it is to kind of just burn a little bit. They are getting better about it, but you've to start talking early. Because if you wait, like I did, a lot of the money is gone.

I was fortunate enough that Kearney was looking for minorities. They were looking for an athlete to fill a certain weight class because their reigning national champ was graduating. God was looking out for me and coaches were looking out for me and it just worked. It's not always going to be that way, so we've got to try to get on that a little bit earlier, so we talk it up. We've got a coach that just checks grades and he's always on grades, and he gives me the list and weekly we go through whoever has academic issues. And you know, a lot of times it is taken care of and the teacher just hasn't entered the grade. So I've learned to quit stressing so much about that,

because the papers are on the teacher's desk, they just haven't had time to—with all their class loads, they haven't had time to enter that information, to adjust it, because we have an online viewer to help out our kids, and it's an access for the parents as well.

DS:

So with your coaching abilities, are you also an instructor?

DQ:

I teach physical education. And that presents a whole new challenge. That has been a big drive of mine, because a lot of those kids are kids coming from broken homes—no dads, a lot of times they have a problem with the authority, and male figures are really not existent in a lot of their lives. It's sad, but I'll talk to those kids and find out that 15 to 10 percent of them are on probation at fifteen years old. I draw back to that, you know God wanted me to be more than just teacher and coach. He wanted me to get into this kids' heads and help them understand.

Randall's dynamics is a low minority influence as well.

In my PE classes, I just so happen to have a lot of those kids that are minority and not minority.

But there is an opportunity there for me to connect with a lot of those kids. It's like two bulls meeting at first. They've got this macho-ism about themselves. And to be frank, I'm speaking about the Hispanic guys right now. They just can't be told that they've got to suit out, they can't be told that you've got to go see the assistant principle because of this issue. They're going to do it on their terms. And you just try to take them under your wing like my coach did, and break that shell. I have a former PE kid, Eddie Perez, who was a lot like that. He's got his own catering business now. We just ran into each other, and he said, "Coach, I was listening but I wasn't listening. And I'm sorry I didn't buy in all the way, but I think about you all the time and I know I was a jerk in class and I know I was a jerk in other classes. And if I would of just woke up—and you were there shaking me, trying, knocking on the door. I understand that now." He was apologetic about not being receptive. And I go, "Man, but look at you now. You understand. You own your own business and you're looking to bigger and better things." It's a catering business that he runs out of his father's restaurant in Canyon. He is looking at a building right now. And I go, "But what did you learn? You were a bullheaded knucklehead weren't you? And guess what? You're going to have employees and you're going to have some of those. You're going to have to understand. You're going to keep being there and keep knocking like I was. and let the light turn on for them because they are going to need you. You can't be the guy that you were and just kick them out the door, "Fine go! Beat it! Get out of here!" You've got to understand them and you've got to have these different tools of communication: understanding, listening. And he goes, "I know, I do, I do. I'm thankful and I am going to do it." It didn't happen right away but here we are, eight years later it's happening.

DS:

Okay, it looks like we're winding down with time. We've got maybe half a minute. So let me ask you one thing about your career both as a coach [break in tape] This Is Daniel Sanchez. This is tape two of my interview with David Quirino on March 10, 2012. David I just finished the last tape by asking you to look back on your career both as an instructor, as a former athlete, and as a coach, and tell us what you're most gratifying moment is?

DQ:

It's the thanks. Having former students that are wrestlers, PE kids, that go off to the military and come back in uniform and say, Thanks for being on me. Thanks for holding me accountable. Thanks for doing what you did. That's it. As a coach the thanks is a kid going out there and not necessarily winning, but you see the daily workouts out there on the mat being applied.

Victorious or not that is the thanks right there. Your peers nominating you for honors such as Texas Wrestling Hall of Honor, that kind of stuff. I've said it before, that's been the greatest thing right now because it's the newest, but even greater than state championships, because all these other coaches that I looked up to when I was wrestling—these guys are still coaching, and they're voting me into this elite little club. I've been watching idly for seventeen years all these inductions and I want to be a part of that big boy club, that how I looked at it.

Finally, this year I was able to be inducted. It was a great honor to have former state champions there: my first state champion ever, Michael Sherrill; my first two-time state champion, Guillermo Sanchez; my first high school All-American Brandon McDonald, he was there; my family and friends from all over to be down in Austin with me in that weekend. It was just so fulfilling and gratifying. I'm still on cloud nine over that thing, and to receive that nice plaque and for my father to be there again saying, "Mijo I'm proud of you." Just the same words over and over, that's all it took was, "Mijo I'm proud of you." And that was the drive when I was eight years old and that's the drive now that I'm forty. Just that praise as an adult just never gets old. I use that to help remind me that I need to celebrate the little things with my athletes because I know how special it makes me feel. So if it makes me feel that great, I want them to feel that great, so we'll celebrate the little things, and we have done that a lot.

DS:

Have you had an athlete gone on to emulate you and coached?

DQ:

Yes, my first two-time champion, in fact, he's at the Boys Ranch. He is doing that full steam, full force. I've got other kids in the corrals waiting to graduate and go off and do the same thing themselves. So it's starting to happen.

DS:

Wow, that's really a cycle because you mentioned Cal Farley was instrumental in the league you played in.

DQ:

It's funny how this circle just keeps coming around and around and around. He was part of the Maverick Boys and Girls Club as well, Mr. Cal Farley. So there he is where it all began and now he is getting in the ranks.

DS:

You know, you've had an interesting life, and it seems like it's always been motivated from within. What was it that your parents gave you within to make you just have that drive?

DQ:

A faith, a strong faith. Walking to church every Sunday, we would walk to St. Mary's and go to Sunday school. I think that for me—I know, for me, started it all because of that faith, hope, and love—that faith community, being as supportive as it is. And then coming home and having the mom and dad there to do that for me, to continue to nurture that. And just the love of the family, that tight knit group. When you're growing up and you're at the poverty level, and all you have is each other—you're outside playing and making up games with an empty plastic bottle, playing kick-the-can or tag—all you have is each other. I think the drive was that, Alright, I'm a product of this house, this home, this faith, this family, this name, and I'm out there now. What are the results that this product is bringing back? I just wanted it to be top notch, to bring honor and pride to my family. I think you can do that and channel it in the right way, and not let it get in the way and get you into trouble and to make you look for shortcuts and ways you don't need to be going. I know it was a driving force to bring that—when you look into your parents' eyes and that pride and love of—just so happy of what you have accomplished, there is nothing like it.

DS:

You mention that close knit family, and you talked about how your brother became a wrestler also. In what other ways did your younger siblings follow your example?

DQ:

Just working hard, we would get paper routes and be competitive in paper routes. If one person was sick, the other sibling would go and take care of that paper route. We didn't all have paper routes, we had one, but we all worked on it. We would get the *Amarillo Globe-News* would deliver the papers and we would rubber-band them up. If it was a rainy day, snow day, we would put them in sacs, load up the big—we had the big draped on—I don't know what they call it, but it carried the newspapers. We figured out a way to put it on our bike, and it was a chore because it was a weight load. We would work with each other, run by each other, get a newspaper, go and

run and throw it at the door, and cut the corner, take a turn. They would ride the bike, when it got lighter—the younger siblings, and I would run. We just worked together; we met common goals together.

When it was time to go out there and do it independently, there was the confidence of, Man I've been here and I've done this, and I've trained for this. I've seen my brother do it and I have seen my sister do it, it wasn't something new that we weren't exposed to. We were ready for it. With a family of four, you hardly see that anymore. I've got that now. I've got three daughters and son, ranging from fifteen to one. They are all experiencing athletics. Last night we are at Plainview and my daughter was running the 4x200 relay, and the open 200, and my daughter is playing this weekend—my second daughter is playing in a volleyball tournament. My son, I'm going to be his coach again in track. We're going to start Kids Inc. track in a couple of weeks. He is six and my daughter is one, and she's just going to be sitting on the side line watching it all. When it's her turn she will be exposed to it.

I think that's one thing that families are missing out on, in my opinion. So many people are just having one or two kids and the dynamics are just not the same. And yeah, economic times are tough, but you can make it happen. We are making it happen and we are both teachers, not the greatest paying jobs, but we have done those programs that teach you about managing your money. I would wish that on everybody to have three or four kids and experience that as much as you can, because—more so for the kids, it does great things for the kids. I wouldn't trade it for anything. Yeah you do have your heartbreaks along the way. We've got ours going on with my siblings right now, but we're going to get through it. Again, that's why that family is there and that's why you are going to get through it, because you are there for each other. It's just a great opportunity to become a human being, a person of the community that people can count on.

DS:

Well, you know you've reached this point in your life were you are that person, and you're also that person that has been honored for your career. So I assume that as young as you are, you're going to continue coaching and teaching?

DQ:

I am.

DS:

And what are you looking forward to now that you have this honor in the bag?

DQ:

It's been seventeen years, and really, I'm just about half way. The blessing is that we have our baby girl now. We call it a blessing because it wasn't a planned thing. But she is one, so before she graduates it's going to be another eighteen years. The way I look at it, I'm halfway there. I've got to be motivated. I've got other children coming in to my school daily, yearly. That I feel

like I'm there for a purpose to be bridge for them to be successful, to go out and go against the odds that they think that they might be dealt with right now. A lot of the kids that we have in my PE class come from Next Step and High Plains Children's Home; they are placed out there by court. They are a step away from serious jail time, to be honest, and those are the kids that I'm looking at. I'm reaching and throwing that life preserver to, and saying, Hey here grab on to this for now. I'm going to talk to you about why later on. I just need you to show up for class, suit out and participate, and we're going to talk as the year goes on.

It's tough because a kid that moves with their family from being in another city because of military, they've still got their family. These kids are getting uprooted out of their home and plucked out and put in a new environment and new school system. Their defense mechanism is up, and you can understand that, I mean I would be. So you just try to break that ice and just chip away really easy because if you come in with a wrecking ball, it's over. You have to come in, and there's a way to do it. That's where I'm at right now, without sacrificing my athletes obviously. Because I've got to work with those kids in athletics.

And I'm finding right now, it's in the weight room. It's giving them an opportunity, a tool, to get in the weight room and challenge themselves. Give them individual workout sheets and setting a goal, "Here you can do three pushups? Alright in two weeks we want to hit seven. And right now you can't do a pull up? We want to try to get two." Then they reach that and surpass that, and all of a sudden—I tell them go home take a picture of yourself and put it in your drawer. And then when we're done with this six week regiment, take a picture again and look at those two. But before two weeks is over, they already feel it. They already feel the change. They see it in the mirror when they're brushing their teeth, and you see it in their workouts. Then I'm able to really get in, they really open the door. I've got this program and I started it this year. I'm calling it Metamorphosis, and I want to get t-shirts for the kids. I'm going out in the community and I'm asking people to donate a t-shirt, or a haircut at one of the nicer salons in town and doing things like that as rewards, and I think we are on to something here. That's going to be the drive right now, and we'll see how this plays out.

DS:

We had some workshop, I didn't attend, but some ladies had come here and tried to teach young ladies self-esteem, and I think that's what you're talking about. Building up that self-esteem and saying, Yes, I'm worth something.

DQ:

Exactly, bottom line.

DS:

We started off in sports and went to a social context, but that's what it is all about.

DQ:

It is, and even in athletics.

DS:

I mean athletics has changed our society for the good.

DQ:

Yeah, because if you have an athlete that's not confident, they're not going to compete and perform out there. If they're not confident, it's because there is something about themselves that they are not confident or comfortable with, and you change that through training. And the next thing you know, their hand is getting raised and they like that feeling, and then it just becomes a snowball.

DS:

Well I really thank you for this morning. I think we covered a lot of areas. Is there something that I didn't ask that you would really like to get on the record?

DQ:

People have got to really understand that the village is really needed right now. The village is needed to raise our kids. There's teachers out there that feel like, My class is my class. It's only fifty minutes. I need them to come in for fifty minutes and I'm going to dictate all this stuff to them. They're going to write it down. I don't care how they do it but they are going to regurgitate it to me and I'm done. But we're not that way. And I understand you went to college to be a teacher and teach this academic subject matter.

But if you want that kid to really excel in your classroom, you just show them personal interest and connect with them in that way. It really doesn't take much. It may take fifteen seconds, twenty seconds to go over there and say something to this individual and they're going to be hooked, and you're going to have them and you're going to reel them in. Then you're going to get production out of them. Not just because you said so, and because you're the authority, and you're the teacher. I understand that they've got to have a sense of respect to come in and do those things, but if I can get you to buy in, hook line and sinker, it's going to make my teaching job a lot easier. That goes for the teacher, that goes for the assistant principal, that goes for the P.E. [physical education] teacher, the English Teacher, that goes for the church they are involved with, their pastor, that goes for everybody that they are in touch with. It just takes us all. If we all just do a little bit—I'm not saying sacrifice and neglect your family, because it can happen. It's happened to me. I've really dedicated time and effort, probably too much sometimes.

But you need to understand that kids need us, they need us now more than ever, and it's challenging for them. And they need to know that there is a little hope, and there is a person that they can go to and confide in, that they genuinely feel like they can. Chances are, your academic

performance out of that individual will go up. And then you can start encouraging them to go on to bigger and better things and be that person for that next teacher.

It all connects. It's all a tight community. It all goes back to that village concept. I know a lot of people are like, Ah, is that really—? Mrs. Clinton caught a lot of heat there for a little bit. Maybe not as much as I think she did, but I believe in that. I don't think we're there to raise those kids; the parents have got to do their part. But they have to understand that there are boundaries, and that there are rules, and there are certain things that you can and cannot do—consequences for those actions. But at the same time they've got to understand that we're all human beings. I'm not just a droid here. I'm just going to dictate this to you and you get back to me and get out. We've got to have personal connections far as professional, student-teacher, I'm here for you, What is going on?

I remember a kid that didn't see his mother, in my PE class, we were talking. He would go home to an empty house. His mom worked the night shift. They would go in passing—she was getting ready for her four o'clock clock in, and here he was coming home and she would work all through the night and he would fix dinner for himself, prepare a meal, and do his homework, go to sleep, get up, and they would cross paths again. He was looking for contact; he wanted to shake somebody's hand and feel like he was having conversations with people because he wasn't getting it at home. It was an empty home. Those are the kind of things that we need to understand. Just because I was fortunate enough to have my mom and dad my siblings and all that—not everybody is in that boat. And more so now—a family of four, that is going away. The village has got to get strong

DS:

I think that is a good note to end this on, thank you for coming in.

DQ:

Yes, sir. Thank you.

*End of Interview*