

TFS Athletic Legend Hall of Honoree Destinee Johnson '10

Destinee Johnson, from Atlanta, GA, attended Tallulah Falls School from seventh grade through graduation in 2010. While at TFS, she received numerous honors and awards: Outstanding Industrial Arts Student, Coach's Award Basketball, Heart Award Basketball, Coach's Award Track & Field, Outstanding Strength and Conditioning Student, and 2009-10 Indian of the Year. Destinee earned various Athlete of the Week and Indian of the Month awards while lettering in volleyball, basketball, and track & field over the course of playing all four years in all three sports.

After TFS, Destinee earned a Bachelor's degree in Sports Management at Emmanuel College (2015) and is currently advancing towards a Master's in Leadership at the University of Dallas.

As an Emmanuel Lion, Destinee competed in track & field one year, basketball one year, and lacrosse four years. In addition to lettering in lacrosse, she received the Coach's Award and was named to the Conference Carolina All-Academic Team. Destinee is second all-time in ground balls in lacrosse for the Lions. She was also a Student Athlete Advisory Committee representative.

Destinee was an Assistant Women's Lacrosse Coach at the University of Alabama Huntsville for two years before becoming the Head Women's Lacrosse Coach at the University of Dallas, where she is in her third year leading the Crusaders. Whether leading her squad in community volunteering or winning the last game of the season with six multi-sport athletes, two of which set school records,

Coach Johnson's young team is poised to make an impact.

Coach Johnson has big plans for the future. She intends to continue to grow the game of lacrosse, mentor and teach kids and collegiate athletes, work her way up to Division I women's lacrosse, and start a lacrosse program at TFS one day.

Reminiscing about her career as an Indian, Destinee fondly recalls having to beat Coach Cyndy Campbell up the hill during PE, weekend Walmart trips, travelling for away games, and to never buy a "Get out of Please Coach Neal Day pass" at the Christmas auction (because you still have to do the PCN!).

Destinee's motto of "It's not about me, it's about the team" was demonstrated in high school track & field when she would volunteer to run the 1600m or 3200m - even though she was a thrower and not a runner - at the Region meet so her team had a chance for another point.

Coach Neal fondly recalls the impact Destinee had upon TFS athletics. He wrote this in a T&F team summary about her, "You have a coach's mind...You are one

of the most patient athletes I've ever coached. You exude an inner confidence that you WILL get it, that you'd like to get it NOW, but even if you don't, you WILL get it! That rubs off on others and that mentality is crucial to the fibers of a team."

Destinee still lives by principles she learned while at TFS. "Remember to keep God first in all things (Coach Hammock). Always share your smile with more people (Bob Loder). Dream, and then work to fulfill that dream - no excuses (Coach Neal)."

To Destinee Johnson, being inducted into the TFS Athletic Legends Hall of Honor is both an achievement and a responsibility. She emphasized, "It's an honor to have achieved this level of success. Even when you think no one's watching, there is at least one watching. There's a saying, 'talent can only take you so far and your character is what keeps you at the top'. Whatever achievements I've earned over the course of my life clearly have not just been due to my athletic ability but also due to the belief and dedication of so many. The values and skills taught by my family, friends, teachers, coaches and mentors were fundamental to shaping me into the woman I am today. I will forever be grateful for this honor and moment I have to share with others."

From Coach Hammock - "Destinee Johnson was one of the most humble, compassionate, and hard-working athletes I have ever been around. She sincerely cared for her teammates and coaches; her integrity was, and is, unquestioned. Even after high school, she kept improving as an athlete and was always looking for ways to broaden her scope of influence as a person. TFS is very proud of who Destinee was when she attended Tallulah Falls School, but also even more proud of the wonderful young woman she has become."

From Coach Cyndy Campbell - "Fierce competitor, great leader and loved by everyone. Enjoyed watching her play high school sports and lacrosse in college. Always knew she would make a terrific coach and am so proud of her accomplishments. Funny memory...Both Mo and Destinee teaching me how to dance in the parking lot of a fast food restaurant after a volleyball match. Not pretty."

Coach Neal summarizes the privilege of inducting Destinee Johnson into the inaugural Tallulah Falls School Hall of Honor by exclaiming, "The one word that continues to succinctly both describe and remind me of Destinee is patience...the kind of patience that is proactive, assertive, with antennas up waiting for the right opportunity. She was undaunted by mishap or adversity. I will always remember the mature perspective she had about achievement; she truly understood that the process was what counted. She refused - even in high school - to be defined by success or failure. She chose - yes chose - for her effort and the things she could control to be her defining traits. She was steadfast in not getting caught up in anything that deterred her desire to be an incredible teammate."