

My Third Son

by Steve Upton
Board Member

In 2007, Carl Lynn asked me if I, along with my family, would consider being an advocate for one of Restoration Academy's students, DeQuarius 'DQ' Woodruff. Before accepting the challenge, I wanted to know what he meant. Carl gave me the simplest and best answer: "Just show up in his life".

We as a family began looking for ways to encourage DQ, beginning with his football games. We cheered for him as loud as we possibly could. Before we knew it, we were enjoying his games as much as any other high school games. Basketball season followed offering just as much excitement as DQ excelled as a player, and we enjoyed cheering for him at every chance.

One of the greatest blessings of our relationship with DQ is partnering with RA's staff to help DQ accomplish his long-term goals. As a family we simply look for ways to participate in DQ's life as if he was one of our own children.

Throughout our time getting to know DQ it was a joy to see him show diligence and success on the playing field and in the classroom. This year was capped off celebrating DQ's graduation ceremony, as he is RA's first student to receive a football scholarship.

As an example of the character that has been forged into this young man's life - one June morning in 2009, my phone rang. It was DQ wishing me a 'Happy Father's Day'! Earlier, he had also surprised my wife with Mother's Day wishes as well. Having DQ as part of my family has been one of my greatest joys.