A Brief Autobiographical Tale from One, Liam Stockwell

The second son of six children, born to hard working parents who put themselves through school. (Electrical engineering and education; history, respectively) Being raised on a single income (my father worked as skilled trades for General Motors Corp.) in the farmland of Michigan north of Detroit made for many rather tough learning experiences as a child. We supplemented as much of our diet as was possible, considering you’re feeding six kids. (Plus and a number of cousins and close friends throughout the years. My parents having taken on seven on top of the six of their own.) Growing a large garden every year and raising many farmyard animals taught the simple values only learned through hard work. From chickens, geese, and turkeys for meat and eggs to sheep, pigs, and cows we were taught from an early age that the day starts early and evenings can be full of love as well chores. We learned for ourselves the importance of a full days work and a job well done.

With a grandmother that raised more children than I feel comfortable even mentioning and more caring aunts and uncles than one could shake a stick at, I have been blessed with tough love and many teachers since the day of my birth. My grandmother, Laone Trese, spent many years in college earning two bachelors and a master’s degree in landscaping and horticulture. This, of coarse, leading to many hours spent digging beds, transplanting herbs and flowers, and learning detailed knowledge of the fauna of her beautiful gardens. (Both Laone’s and the entire downtown district of Clarkston, Michigan, which she took upon herself to be the caretaker of.)

With years spent traveling this country and living in different states and climate regions I learned much, albeit offhandedly perhaps, about the care and growth of plants from California’s southern slopes to Oregon’s temperate rainforests to Wyoming’s dry-land crops. With bicycle rides across many beautiful states and countries I have come to take great care in understanding the diversity of my surroundings. From the lush greens of the Northwest to the seemingly harsh sparseness of Wyoming I have come to realize that the beauty of this planet and its diversity are never further than the ground beneath ones feet.

When I moved to the central region of Wyoming for the solitude and healthy aggressive outdoor sports scene a number of years back, I would never have guessed where it would lead. A work accident forced me to take a few years out of my life in the mountains and head back to Michigan for the sole purpose of family and friends. Two years in and out of the hospital, five major surgeries dealing with the near loss of my leg, a hundred weeks on crutches and many of the most difficult lessons I have been forced to learn in my days. I have made it back to the this beautiful state to attend the renowned College of Agriculture at the University of Wyoming and rehab my left-lower-limb in the mountains, rivers and vista of this beautiful state.

Since I have been involved with this institution I have been blessed to meet some of the most brilliant and engaging individuals I have ever known. From the involved students to the empowering Professors. From the close-knit town of Laramie to the strengths of the academic community. From my appointment as ACRES Student Farm President to my close work with Professor Urszula Norton. From the openness of the individuals that have welcomed me into their society to the first-rate relationships that I have built with the eccentric Dr. Dave Wilson and my Arts advisor Professor Margeratte Hayden.

I have been an extremely lucky young man. My family. My friends. The hand me down knowledge I was imparted with as a child and the hard-fought lessons I have been forced to learn as a man. I have been blessed. I have been lucky. I have been wide eyed enough to pay attention to my life’s surroundings and thankful enough to want nothing more then to build on that knowledge to the fullest of my capabilities and spread it to the best of my abilities.