

STOCKTONSpeaks!

JOHN PATRICK NISBY

Being the son of two high achievers might be a burden for some people, but John Patrick Nisby says that he has a “wonderful life”. His parents have played positive roles in his upbringing, introducing many factors into his life that have inspired and motivated him.

John is a 15-year-old African American student at St. Mary’s High School. Born in Stockton, he has lived here all his life and now resides with his parents in a gated community. Their large home serves as the gathering place for family celebrations. John remembers with fondness the pleasure he felt when many of his extended family, including some members from Texas, came to his home to celebrate Thanksgiving. Their visit made him realize that, though distance separates them, one from another, they are all still family and will be bonded together forever.

John’s parents, as one could expect, have been important influences on him. They helped him acquire a religious faith which John has found “guides me in the right things to do.” Attending Catholic schools since he was a youngster and growing up in his family where religion is important has strengthened John’s ability to make good decisions as a young person.

Another major lesson transmitted by his parents is the importance of athletics in his life. John’s father, who is now a land developer, had a long, successful career playing professional football in the National Football League. John himself now participates in athletics and wants to follow in his father’s footsteps. John agrees with his father that keeping oneself in shape through athletic competition is an important part of personal development. His mother, a physician, reinforces the notion that exercise and athletics are necessary for good health.

Many parents tell their children about how hard they had it growing up and how much easier things have become for their children. John's parents are no different in that regard. But he knows that everything his parents tell him is true—his life, so far, *is* easier than theirs have been. John realizes how hard his parents have worked, and he knows that their resolve is what has made them successful professionally. He wishes to emulate their ambition and dedication in reaching goals in his own life, however different his own personal goals may be.

As he comes of age, defining those goals will be one of his main tasks, one that is his alone. As his parents have always told him, "Don't let anybody steal your joy."

Thus far, John Patrick has been successful in following that maxim.

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Ethnic Group: African-American
Generation: Youth