

Dear Robbie,

Thanks for letting me accompany you on your journey with your special stick. I am Mark Douglas, University of Maryland and Turnbull Award recipient in 1991. I grew up in Baltimore and learned to play lacrosse through the local recreation league. After high school, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps (I needed to do some growing up—so I thought that would be the best way) and served for four years. From there I went to the University of Maryland.

My father played professional hockey for the Toronto Maple Leafs. He was the first Defensive player ever to win Rookie of the Year in the NHL, and was on four Stanley Cup winning teams. He spent many years playing and coaching for the Baltimore Clippers, which is why I got introduced into lacrosse. I learned how to skate when I was 13 months old! As a kid, of course, I played hockey, but my mother pulled me off my hockey team because my grades weren't good enough. I hope you don't make the same mistake!

I attended a private boys' high school, Calvert Hall College High School, near Baltimore. My recreation coach Scott Calvert taught me to shoot to the open net and this was a great beginning. Scott became a great friend to me over the years, and still to this day. He also taught me to not be afraid to take chances, and reminded us that lacrosse was just a start point—that win or lose, enjoy everything about it and in your life.

After spending four years in the USMC, I was fortunate that Mike Thomas convinced Dick Edell to recruit me to the University of Maryland on lacrosse scholarship.

Receiving the Turnbull Award was a huge surprise. I remember that I almost fell off my chair when my name was announced at the banquet. To be in such great company is pretty overwhelming. I certainly would not have received the award without my teammates, parents, and coaches.

I could rattle off a long list of great memories of the game—which would include playing with and against the greatest players ever at Calvert Hall, Maryland, and for Team Canada, scoring five goals in a game against Johns Hopkins, and on and on. But what I take away from the game at this point is the fact that I was so fortunate to make the friendships that I did.

After I received the Turnbull Award, I presented it to my rec coach Scott Calvert for all he had done for and meant to me! Don't ever forget the people who help you grow in life.

Dick Edell was my coach at Maryland. Anyone who has ever played for Coach Edell will tell you what a great experience it was and what an incredible mentor he is. He was a commanding presence (he's about 6'5"!) and we all considered him a second father. We never wanted to disappoint him. Dave Slafkosky, our assistant coach, was held in similarly high regard.

I would encourage you to remember that lacrosse is a team game. To do well in lacrosse (and just about anything), you need to learn to work with people and find ways to help other people succeed.

Robbie, I think what separates people is their love for the game. You can tell when people love what they are doing—it shows.

I try to give back to the game today by coaching some young players and keeping in touch with my lacrosse team to support lacrosse events.

I would love to meet you in person, Robbie, so that I could share more of my passion for the game! Please let me know if I can help you.

If you get a chance and like to read, I would recommend *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter.

Good luck, Robbie,

Mark Douglas
University of Maryland 1991
Turnbull Award 1991