

# Character Action Media

## ESPY's Salute Commitment and Service to Others in Honoring Danielle Green

### Primary Virtues

**Caring:** to help others; a caring person tries to understand another person's situation, desires to help others, and then acts in helping others.

**Hope:** confident expectation of the fulfillment of a goal or wish.

**Perseverance:** trying hard and continuously in spite of obstacles and difficulties

### Secondary Virtues

**Courage:** the capacity to meet danger without giving way to fear; to have the courage of one's convictions; to be willing to put one's opinions into practice.

**Discipline:** training expected to produce a specific benefit, moral or mental improvement.

**Responsibility:** accepting and meeting the demands of one's duty in life, being accountable, pursuing excellence.

**Solidarity:** unity of a shared common purpose and / or interest; active loyalty within a group; mutual support within a group.

### Lesson Goals

- Encourage the belief that we can overcome even extreme obstacles in our lives through setting goals and having the discipline to work hard to achieve them
- Appreciate the joy and fulfillment that comes from activities such as athletics that enable us to engage in endeavors larger than ourselves, and to come into solidarity with others
- Inspire students toward caring and service to others
- Motivate students that even at a young age, one can make a commitment to positive behavior

### Leader Introduction to the Video

Today we're going to watch a story about someone who grew up in the south side of Chicago in very bad conditions, and yet has been able to achieve her goals and to live a life of joy and fulfillment. As you are watching, think about the choices she has made throughout her life.

### FEATURED VIDEOS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vN-WjbnqSTs>

Optional segment below from 3:00 onward presents good background on the ESPY Pat Tillman award, and an inspiring segment of Danielle Green's acceptance speech.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4LjzgGx\\_YU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4LjzgGx_YU)

### Leader Transition Statement

Danielle's story is an amazing one of someone who has faced many challenges in her life from a difficult family situation and poverty to losing her arm in war. Let's consider how the choices she has made and the virtues she lives out, have enabled her to not just get through these challenges but also to flourish. First let's take a couple of minutes to read over the definitions of the virtues that relate to Danielle's story and then talk about how they and Danielle's story speak to our lives. (Virtues' definitions for this lesson are included as a separate sheet on the web site.)

### Discussion Question Options

(Discussion prompts and/or answers are in parentheses if needed)

1. What were the goals Danielle set for herself early in her life? (earn a scholarship to Notre Dame playing basketball, and to serve her country through military service)

What virtue did she already demonstrate here at a young age in setting these goals? (hope)

2. It wasn't covered in the video, but Danielle had to take two buses and a train just to get to school each day, and she signed up for the Junior ROTC which is a military training program for students in high school, all while training to excel in basketball. What virtues did Danielle live out in these parts of her life? (discipline, perseverance)

What are some of the goals that we can define in our lives that would motivate us to have the discipline and perseverance of Danielle?

3. Danielle said “basketball taught me about responsibility and commitment, it’s not just about you, you’re part of something bigger”. In accepting the ESPY Pat Tillman award Green also said, “There are a lot of lessons people like Pat and I learned in sports and a lot of lessons we learned in the service. Maybe the most powerful lessons are the common goals, the loyalty, teamwork, selflessness and commitment that individuals show one another.”

How specifically do you think being a part of sports teams and other clubs that compete teach us about commitment, team work, loyalty and solidarity in being part of something bigger than ourselves? Please feel free to share some of your own experiences.

4. After she was injured in Iraq, Danielle said, “A part of me felt bad I wasn’t able to fulfill my commitment as a soldier. But people find other ways to serve.”

How did Danielle find other ways to serve? (She earned a master’s degree in counseling so that she can help military combat veterans.)

5. Danielle told the Military Times in an interview “There is no self-pity, there is no regret, because once you go down that road you get stuck. And then I won’t be any service to the people who come in looking for help. That is my mission now. So I refuse to accept a role as a victim. I am victorious. I can’t be stuck in the past.”

What parts of this statement speak most powerfully to you? (possible answers to discuss - determination to move beyond bad circumstances and events in our lives, focusing on the future rather than the past, focusing on caring for others as motivation and in creating our own victory)

6. Danielle spoke of how she was so moved that her fellow soldiers searched for her wedding ring for hours after her arm was blown off and that “idea of people caring for one another is still at the core of my life.” How can we in this school and community become better at making caring for one another the core of our lives?
7. It wasn’t covered in the video in detail, but Danielle didn’t have the support of a parent or parents to push her forward and encourage her toward higher goals. In addition to her own hope and determination, what other people in her life do think likely cared enough to encourage and support her? (She has mentioned in other speeches the importance of the support of her basketball coaches and teachers.)

## Extended Activity

**Required materials: poster size paper, tape and markers**

(Leader reads) When accepting the Pat Tillman award Danielle said, “we can all find ways to serve our community. We can all find ways to support the people around us. We can all find a purpose on this earth, larger than ourselves.”

- Divide students into small groups of 3-4. On two blank sheets of paper, print the headings ‘Support the People Around Us’ and ‘Serve our Community.’ Discuss and record examples for each. Be ready to share your ideas with the large group.
- In the large group, post 2 pieces of poster-size paper with the headings ‘Support the People Around Us,’ ‘Serve our Community’.
- The leader or selected student solicits and records ideas from each small group for the 2 lists.
- The group as a whole then votes for the best 2 ideas for each list. Do this by asking for a show of hands for each idea whether it is worthy of the #1 and then #2 idea for each list. Each student can only vote once for each ranking.

## Journal Writing Options

1. In your journal, write about one way you think you can live out Danielle’s challenge to ‘Support the People Around Us’ and then ‘Serve our Community’.
2. Elaborate on each idea by explaining how your hopes and your experiences influenced your choices, and exactly how you will live out each idea.
3. In her acceptance speech Danielle presented a challenge to all of us watching, “What’s my purpose? What’s my passion? What do I want my legacy to be? How can you live as a full human being?” Write about how you want to answer Danielle’s challenge. Outline a dream you have for your future and how you will demonstrate discipline, perseverance, and if needed courage, to work toward and fulfill your dream.
4. Write about a positive team, club or other group experience, where like Danielle in sports and in the Army, she had an opportunity to be a part of something larger than herself.

## Additional Articles

<http://goo.gl/PgwIHD>

<http://goo.gl/YfS2V1>