

Shaping Talent  
December 6, 2017

## “WHEN I REALLY TURNED THE CORNER”



WESTERVILLE, OHIO – Sometimes you lose what you want, only to find what you need. Ask Nick Fields, the 17-year-old son of Mike and Ashley Fields. Now a senior at Westerville Central High School, Nick has learned some of life’s tough lessons – through basketball.

“I’ve always been a shooter,” he said. “That’s how I’m best known. Shooting is my absolute favorite part of the game.”

Nick started playing competitive basketball in the third grade.

“I did it because it was all I knew,” he continued. “But as a grew and matured, I realized I play basketball simply because I love it. I love the competition. I love the big stages. I love winning. And I really hate losing.”

By the time he was in eighth grade, he started training with former Buckeye and NBA star Lawrence

Funderburke. “He has a very small group of kids he trains in basketball,” Nick recalled, “and I was lucky enough to be in that program.”

Then Nick went to Westerville Central and became a starter – in more ways than one.

“I’ve grown in up in the church my entire life, but had never looked at a relationship with the Lord as a possibility until after my sophomore year. I was on a mission trip with my church in St. Louis when I first met the Lord and felt His immense power and love.”

Then life took a turn his junior, and again his senior, year.

“I tore my ACL shooting the game winning shot in our first game,” he said. “I rehabbed back my whole junior year.”

Then at the start of his senior year, he said, “I stepped on the foot of someone on the other team and went back down with my second torn ACL in nine months.”

“I was devastated as I lay there. However, once I calmed down and my knee was stabilized, I remembered the Lord doesn’t make mistakes. I’m simply living out his perfect will for me, no matter how confusing and backwards it may feel.”

He had surgery, again, which he said went incredibly well.

“I’m well on my way to being the same healthy kid I’ve always been,” he said. “The only caveat being I’ll likely never play basketball again. I was never told I can never play again, but it’s in my best interest that I prioritize my health over my love for the game, and I know it.”

“Still, I know the Lord has so much more planned for my life.”

One change, Nick said, is that he now plans to become an orthopedic surgeon. Another: In 2016 he won an FCA Outstanding Christian Leader Award.

“Before this injury,” he explained, “I had purely head knowledge, and no way to know what I believed was actually true. Then I was forced to apply my faith and it changed my life and my eternity.”

“This injury is when I really turned the corner,” he continued. “I realized my worth is only in Him, and He used this time to show me whatever happens in my life, He’s still going to be right beside me, pulling me closer and closer into His immense love.”

It’s a change, his mother said, that’s been obvious – and amazing.

“God gave Nick strength during these times,” she said, “and Nick responded by diving further into his faith and relying on God to get him through.”



“It’s been amazing to watch,” she added, “and Nick has become a strong, faith-filled young man as a result.”

“I know the Lord has a perfect plan for me,” Nick responded. “Nothing that can be taken from me can affect my eternity, and I’m so aware of that truth.”

“He taught me, and is still teaching me, patience. He showed me His immense power and love, and how beautiful those two things are when they exist in harmony. And He’s taught me so much more, I can’t even begin to mention.”

“It hasn’t been easy,” Nick concluded. “I always just assumed I would play basketball forever. But I’m now pursuing the Lord with everything I have.”

Shaping Talent focuses on the influences that lead athletes to succeed. The people who helped them. Their work ethic. How and why they turned something they like into something they do. In other words, how God shaped their growth. If you have a suggestion for a future profile, contact Rye D’Orazio at Central Ohio Fellowship of Christian Athletes at 614-682-6551 or email [rdorazio@fca.org](mailto:rdorazio@fca.org).