



John Wallace Isom Jr (The U-Can! Man) left, on stage with Representative Bakari Sellers

One The U-Can! Man best days ever, sharing the stage with two history makers of the past and of the present.

John Wallace Isom Jr (The U-Can! Man) on stage with Dr Martin Luther King Jr



Representative Bakari Sellers Challenge us with 130

Journey Of Excellence (JOE) nuggets.
These are the nuggets I wrote down 17 Jan 2013.

1. First of all me and Mr. Ike Williams drove six hours from South Carolina to be here tonight.
2. The drive here was and is worth the occurrence to share in your Dr Martin Luther King Jr Commemorative Celebration.
- 3. I am excited about this opportunity to share what I consider to be a much needed message for this time in our great country's history.**
4. Dr Martin Luther King had and shared his dream over 50 years ago for America.
5. I whole heartily believe in his dream.
6. I am living the dream and going around the Country showing and telling others the dream is alive and there for everyone to not only remember but live.
7. The question of the day is 50 years later how far have we (America) come.
8. Before Brown verses Board of education there was Briggs Elliott in South Carolina.
9. This case was the first of 5 cases that combine to make up Brown verse Board of Education.
10. There was a cause of separation happening in the school systems during that time.
11. Fast forward to today over 50 years after the successful ending segregation with the Brown verses Board of Education decision.
- 12. How far has America really come?**
- 13. Where does America go from here?**
14. Back then some children only ate at school.
15. Some children had poor classroom material and out of date books.
16. Some children could not attend the school of their choice and had to stay home and work
17. Some students were in poor housing areas with lack of assistance that was needed.
18. These and many more questions are still before us.
- 19. How far has America really come?**
- 20. Where does America go from here?**
21. Do some children in America class rooms have outdated books?
22. Do some children in America have outdated material?
23. Do some children in America only eat at school?
24. Do some children in America live in poor housing (unsafe) areas?
25. Do some children live among chaos in their community?
26. The answers to all these questions are not all but some experience these.
- 27. My answer to how far has America come is;**
- 28. America has made progress but have a ways to go..**
29. Representative Bakari Sellers told and amazing story about the struggles of his Father Dr. Cleveland Sellers.
30. The story was filled with struggle, unfair treatment and most of all endurance.
31. Representative Sellers was very passionate about the story as he shared it with us.
32. At the end he said **the man** in this story was his dad Dr Cleveland Sellers.
33. The story was one that Rep Sellers use to base his speech on as he continued.
34. There was death in the story, people being killed in the story, and people fighting.
35. Most of all Rep Seller remembered how his Father persevered through it all.
36. He spoke about at one point police shot into the crowds for about 8 seconds.
37. Then arrested people and sent them through so call kangaroo (unfair) courts.

38. This story is one that Rep Sellers use to launch into his answer to the 2nd question.

39. Where does America go from here?

40. Simply put Americans need to “Dream with our eyes open”

41. This is a concept to help us continue improvement leading to even more success.

42. When he decided to run for office he knocked on 2600 doors,

43. His competitor was 80 plus years old and had won over and over.

44. This was his chance to Dream with his eyes open (I can win this race)

45. He won dreaming with his eyes open.

46. After he won he remembers getting calls to endorse presidential nominees

47. He spoke with then Senator Barack Obama and he asked him to endorse him

48. Rep Sellers says he had a short list at the time Senator Obama and John Edwards

49. He ask Senator Obama to do two things offer his Mom a job (volunteer)

50. Second, come to his district and meet some of his people.

51. He said Senator Obama said yes I will do it, and he did.

52. He said some things about President Obama he liked were

53. He talks to everyone,

54. He will keep his word and

55. To him everybody is somebody and

56. In America we have no nobodies.

57. It does not matter if you are black or white

58. It does matter if you are American

59. Senator always spoke in terms of us, we, verses them and they

60. He was and is about the people of America.

61. He always talked about (all) Americans doing better

62. He always has that hope for America attitude, often telling America Yes We Can.

63. He notice President Obama understood an acted on Dr King’s “Fierce urgency of now”

64. Senator Obama ended up holding an event in Orangeburg SC which was 19 miles from his district.

65. Rep Sellers was the one of the speakers that spoke before Senator Obama Spoke.

66. The guest list consisted of singer Usher, Cris Tucker, and many others.

67. This all happens while he personally was and is Dreaming with his eyes open.

68. The question many may have is exactly what is “Dream with your eyes open?”

69. It means being able to have a dream.

70. Realizing education is the gate way to the American Dream

71. Trying changing the world everyday`

72. Ordering your steps to go far toward that dreams.

73. Realizing you are part of something larger than yourself.

74. Taking Benjamin E Mays quote to heart.

75. “ In all the things that you do, do it so no man living or dead can do it better”

76. Realizing the Dream of Martin Luther King is still alive and there for the doing.

77. Doing your best to ensure the entire Dream with your eyes open mention points are done.

78. During the election he spoke to both Obama and Edwards camps.

79. Rep Sellers mention that doing his many travels he met many people,

80. He said Americans are amazing people; they have hope and do have that Dream ability.

81. Rep Sellers said he tells Kids to dream big, and be a voter as soon as possible.

82. He said people need to see hope, see love, see dreams being fulfilled

83. He saw the dreams being fulfilled as he served with Atlanta GA former Mayor Franklin

84. Congressman James Clyburn of South Carolina was one who inspired me.

85. He is working with former 1st Lady Jenney Sanford to help people in his district and State

86. You have to be prepared for opportunity before it comes and when it comes.

87. Be your own business owner.

88. When pursuing his college desire to be a lawyer, he had to pass certain tests.

89. He was told you do not have to outrun the lion, just need to outrun persons going for what you are going for.

90. So do your best and dream with your eyes open?

91. One thing Rep Sellers started doing was reading the Wall Street Journal.

92. This helped him improve his vocabulary and overall knowledge about what was happening in Wall Street and the world.

93. He enjoys serving his community and looks forward to growing with them and other Americans as he travels around the country.

94. He always plans to keep in mind his district is his 1st priority.

95. They are a super team of people and he enjoys serving them.

96. This is his ongoing story and it has a long way to go.

97. After Rep Bakari Sellers ended his powerful story and asked for questions.

98. He talked about why he chose Senator Barack Obama over Senator Hillary Clinton

99. He said both choices were good, and in the end he decided on now President Obama.

100. He also praised Former President Bill Clinton and said he felt a connection with him.

101. He also said Hillary Clinton will be a formidable candidate 4 years from now if she decides to run.

102. He also believes she may be America's first female President.

103. He was asked what are some good things to keep in mind if you decide to run for public office? He said 20 things;

1. *Tell your story because you have one.*
2. *Make people want to be around you.*
3. *Don't overlook anyone, we are all Americans*
4. *The janitor, maid, and others are all important because they are Americans.*
5. *Talk to people not at people. People want to be talked to*
6. *President Barack Obama was and is good at this practice*
7. *Dream with your eyes open. (see meaning above)*
8. *Have to be willing to sacrifice your time talent and self because our community needs it*
9. *Build **Value** relationships with people.*
10. *Add **Value** to others.*
11. *Remember every American is **Valuable**.*
12. *Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.*
13. *Take care of your body*
14. *Be prepared for opportunity.*
15. *Served the people in your assigned area.*
16. *It is your number one job, You are being counted on to serve.*
17. *Remember goals created but not pursued are not good*
18. *Create your life goal and go for it.*
19. *Realize Struggles will come; happy times will come, but through it all always remember to dream with your eyes open.*

20. *Challenge yourself first.*

- 104. Get on and stay on the Journey of Excellence (**JOE**)and excel.
- 105. This is my U-Can! Man notes taken 17 January 2013.
- 106. Hope they inspire you to like they have inspired me.
- 107. I told Rep Sellers I will let this speech be my Valdosta State University Senior Focus.
- 108. I am now Racing To The Top and I am on a Journey Of Excellence.
- 109. If I should decide to run for public office I have 20 good things from Rep, Sellers to base my foundation on. WOW!
- 110. If I can U-Can!

110 Plus 20 =130

John The U-Can! Man summed up what Representative Bakari Sellers was and is saying; Americans BE ON A JOURNEY OF EXCELLENCE

(JOE)

Representative Bakari Sellers

We Need To Be Journey Of Excellence Americans

(JOE-A's)

**EXAMPLE
BELOW**



Model Of Excellence (MOE) -on- Journey Of Empowerment(JOE)

Roger Isom Sr has completed the 1st Ever: MOE -on- JOE Story



First Generation College (FGC) Student Story

Elder John Wallace Isom Sr and Mother Mary Elizabeth (Washington) Isom

Education Completed: Both High School (Public School) Graduates

Click Link Below Read about **Our Family over 100 Years of Military Service
See Page 25 of the Recruiter Journal, May 2006 issue.**

<http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/apa/download/RI/may06.pdf>

Parented 9 Children, Roger Isom Sr was the first to attend college.

Below is Roger Isom Sr First Generation College (FGC) Student Story

If He-Can! U-CAN!



Roger, John Jr, Ronnie, Dianne, Kenneth, **Mary, John Sr,(Parents)** Reginald, Margret, Jeffery, Clara Isom

College Education: Continuing the Legacy - Generation to Generation

By, Roger G. Isom Sr.

Submitted to John Isom Jr.

As one of nine siblings growing up on a farm in rural Monticello, Florida, I am forever grateful to my parents and my community for inspiring me to pursue a college education. I was a first generation college student and I graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy with a degree in Aerospace Engineering in 1988. I never would have made it through Annapolis without the continuous support and high expectations of my family (especially mom and dad). My dad was a carpenter and my mom was a maid. They did not attend college, but you never would have known that because they emphasized the importance and value of an education for my generation. They also specialized in “Character Development.” My dad had a quote that continues to guide me: “get an education and get what’s coming to you, don’t get an education and all you get is leftovers.” Well we ate plenty of leftovers growing up, and I didn’t want to have to settle for “leftovers” in the job market.

The priority (through words and actions) that my parents placed on education shaped my approach with my children. I decided that I would be proactively engaged in the preparation, planning, and execution of my children's college education experience.

I am in the Navy. In 2009, I was separated from my wife and kids due to my duty assignment at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. My family remained in Kings Bay, GA that year. My son (Roger Jr.) was in 10th grade and Brittany was in 9th grade. That following summer, I made a decision that my family and I had to be in the same location for the duration of their high school years. My wife and I had to make a financial sacrifice, by renting our home in Georgia at a very low price and accepting the losses so that we could be together. Two years later, I know we made the right decision. Those years were critical for my son and daughter's college preparation (academically and socially). My wife, Lisa, and I were committed to this process with clear purpose and passion. We took a short term and long term view. We realized that our children would use our level of effort and involvement with their college preparation as the template for preparing their children (our grandchildren) twenty years or so in the future. In other words, two generations could be affected by our involvement (or lack thereof) in the college preparation process. Too much was at stake and we wanted the legacy of pursuing higher education to continue from generation to generation. That is how we could honor my parents' (and Lisa's parents) legacy.

Roger Jr. (our oldest child) was the first "test case." We started the summer before his junior year in high school. I read several books/articles on the latest lessons learned for attending college in the 21st century. I accepted the fact that some things about college had changed. I needed to get current information on what I could do as a parent to help my son prepare for college admission, and more importantly, prepare for successful college completion (meaning: good grades, having a well rounded college experience, minimum student debt, and finishing in four years). We visited several institutions including University of Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and Pennsylvania; Drexel, Howard, McDaniel, Georgetown, and George Washington

Universities, and of course the Naval Academy. I really enjoyed the trips because it allowed time for me and my son to bond and compare/contrast the universities. Six of seven universities accepted Roger Jr. In hindsight the college which didn't accept him, motivated him to excel at the college he finally selected. The rejection, although painful at first, increased his resiliency and should serve him well in the future. I also made him an offer he couldn't refuse. I agreed to pay him \$3 for every college scholarship application he submitted. Surprisingly, he actually applied for 27 scholarships. My wife and I laughed when he still asked for "his \$81" despite having received over \$5000 in scholarship awards, not to mention the huge academic scholarship he received from McDaniel University. Roger eventually chose McDaniel and completed his first semester in December. He has made a successful transition.

Now it's Brittany's turn and then we have an empty nest (hallelujah). By the way, the \$3 per scholarship application gesture is not working with her. I probably need to raise the incentive offer (smile). There are some lessons learned I'd like to share with parents, in particular first generation college parents. Most of all, began early (elementary or middle school years) planting the seed of college being a high priority option for your children. Everyone may not want to go to college, but every child should have access and the academic ability to pursue college as an option if desired (or required). Don't underestimate the influence you can have on shaping your child's outlook on college. Communicate "value" early and often through your action and deeds. Get them involved in college prep courses. Start visiting colleges early. Ask friends or co-workers for assistance. Call the college admissions office and be up front about your concerns/questions. Don't be intimidated about navigating the college application process. It can be challenging, but help is available. Don't let fear (or in my case - a little pride) overwhelm you such that you avoid asking for help. Visit colleges in your area. Make a day-trip and have fun doing it. Your excitement can be contagious. Go to sporting events at colleges. Attend college career fairs at your child's high school. Again, be actively involved - early and often. Many institutions are committed to helping first generation students (and parents) succeed at their institution (including

the Ivy League schools). My parents should know. Their grandson Jason (finished Harvard Law School last May).

My parents have been a blessing to me and my career. They started their legacy of college completion with my generation. I am grateful for their encouragement, high expectations, and their no-nonsense approach to valuing education. Six siblings have completed college and I'm so proud my big brother, John Isom Jr., is setting the example by attending college now after 26 years of faithful service in the U.S. Army. For a while, he and his oldest son were attending Valdosta State University together. So the legacy of college attendance and excellence continues from one generation to the next - thanks to the vision, involvement, and prayers of our mom and dad. Dad's powerful words of encouragement still apply today "don't settle for leftovers..." Thank you for this opportunity to reflect and share. I wish the best to every generation of college seekers and want to especially encourage the first generation college families. I am on the sidelines cheering for you with my brother's (John) passionate motto - **"You Can."**

Very Respectfully,

Roger G. Isom Sr.

PS:

Roger Isom Sr was ask to do the 1st ever

Model Of Excellence (MOE) -on- Journey Of Empowerment(JOE) Story

Roger Isom Sr (Best Man In Our Wedding 22 Years ago) You have:

Hit a Grand Slam Thanks For Your

MOE -on- JOE