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My time at Riverdale High School (RHS) was very special. I made so many close friends that I am still in touch, even to this day.

At Riverdale, I felt a sense of belonging because I was surrounded by so much diversity and culture. It felt like my second home.

Some of my fondest memories include my time on the basketball team. There's something amazing about being on a varsity team that made me feel fantastic!

As many know, I was a very talkative and social person during my high school years, always roaming the halls trying to make new friends. I now realize how hard this may have been on my teachers because they had the difficult task keeping me quiet during class.

I would like to give a special shoutout to Mr. Thomas Rhymes! He may not be my principal anymore, but it still feels right calling him that.

From the moment I started at Riverdale, he always pushed me to be my better self and although I had a few visits to his office, he always reminded me not to follow the crowds and to reach for the stars. Even

today, our one-on-one meetings stick with me because they helped me get over a hump and pursue my career.

I recently saw him when I was working on a story for the CBC and it was wonderful reconnecting with someone who had such a positive influence on me.

Although I was never the student with the highest grades, I had so many teachers who supported and believed in me and it's thanks to their encouragement that I graduated and moved on to CEGEP. All their hard work paid off, because now I'm pursuing a career in journalism at CBC Montreal. This never would have been possible without the continuous guidance from everyone at Riverdale High School.

I would like to thank all the teachers, support staff, coaches and principals who believed in me and reminded me that my future was bright. I recall one teacher even told me I should run for student union president. Those are the moments that made me believe in myself.

Even after all these years, I'm always proud when bumping into former classmates and teachers when I'm out on the field reporting. When I hear how proud they are of me, it really reminds me of how lucky I was to have crossed their path. Their support still motivates me today and I'm grateful they believed in me.

My time at Riverdale High School and the Lester B. Pearson School Board helped shape me to become the man I am today.