

CALLIE HERD: THE 21ST CENTURY HARRIET TUBMAN OF EDUCATION

BY RONALD HERD II

*“Every great dream begins with a dreamer.
Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion
to reach for the stars to change the world.”*

~HARRIET TUBMAN

Ladies and gentlemen, scholars and laymen, hopeful boys and girls get on board! The “Herd Express” is coming through! The train will make scheduled stops at all points related to the further growth of your intellectual prowess and scholastic development. The destination? Your future where you assume the role of a well educated and productive citizen of your immediate community and greater society.

With that intro I welcome you all into the wonderful world of Callie Herd. Ms. Herd, with limited financial and empirical resources but unlimited will power and a Rock of Gibraltar faith in her God and Lord and Savior has created a stunning modern day miracle of Lazarus proportions. She has singlehandedly resurrected the old African adage “it takes a village to raise a child” on the internet via her award winning blog, *Planning & Preparing for College (Scholarships)* located at <http://www.ctherd.blogspot.com>. Her educational blog (which is loaded with seemingly unlimited resources and links on scholarships, jobs and internships) has literally helped thousands world-wide to achieve their dreams of pursuing an affordable higher education as well as help others find invaluable leads in creating fruitful and rewarding careers in the hottest industries afterwards.

How did this single mother achieve the status of being the 21st Century Harriet Tubman of Education, you may ask? It all started with her growing up in a large and close God-loving family where she was taught that “one should always do unto others as you would have them do until to you.” She also learned and observed from an early age that the best way to get what you want is to help others get what they want. In other words, she stresses that being useful and in service of others via volunteering will open doors and possibilities you never dreamed of.

For example, Ms. Herd’s enthusiasm and passion has always been helpful in getting people to

follow her lead and to see the world through her lenses and sensibilities. That charm helped her to get approximately 100 volunteers in less than 2 hours’ time for the funeral program of celebrated American author Alex Haley of *Roots*. Ms. Herd earnestly believes that volunteering is an integral




part of receiving a well rounded education. She practices what she preaches by ensuring that all three of her biological kids participated in long term programs and projects which involved community service. The result has been that her two eldest kids received combined scholarship offers and incentives of well over one million dollars, as well as first rate college educations to top tier schools. Her youngest will be entering high school this fall and will no doubt add to that amazing bounty in 4 years.

Callie instinctively understands that volunteering experience helps to bring out exceptional leadership traits in everyday people. She knows that leaders who can empathize with others are important in creating new opportunities and paradigms for their respective communities.

As we all know the health care debate has been a very divisive issue in our country for some time now. However, Callie has been able to see this conflict as a teaching moment with a silver lining. For several years now (without any financial compensation and limited help) she has been the Memphis representative for the prestigious Annual Symposium on Career Opportunities in Biomedical Sciences and Health Professions. The purpose of the Bio-Medical Symposium is to get more minorities and people of color to pursue a career in the health care profession. The annual program is organized by the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools, Inc. (AMHPS) and the member schools. “The Memphis Group” has become legendary for their professionalism, winning the respect and reputation for having their business cards, resumes and portfolios in full force at the symposium.

Ms. Herd is not only a master teacher but also a master student. She recently went back to school and even encouraged her oldest child (the author of this article) to join her. The end result: mother and son graduated together with MBA degrees in December 2009. Bitten by the education bug again Ms. Herd is back in school pursuing her Master’s degree in Education or MaEd. She is also a Hurston Wright Fellow as well as a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

What is truly remarkable about Ms. Herd is that she is the epitome of what can happen when one believes in something greater than one’s self and is willing to put forth the effort and focus to manifest fleeting dreams and ideas into amazing reality with concrete results. 

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