

“My Promise to Pittsburgh” Submission
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The Pittsburgh Promise may not apply to me but my promise to Pittsburgh does. I have attended a private school, Winchester Thurston, since pre-kindergarten so I am not eligible for the financial assistance offered by the city of Pittsburgh. I do, however, feel a great sense of obligation to Pittsburgh for all of the experiences and exposures I have been provided throughout my life. My school uses the “city as our campus” so I have learned, lived and grown in Pittsburgh for the last 17 years.

What is my promise to Pittsburgh? Here it goes...I promise to earn my college degree and most likely a professional degree. I promise to work hard, be an active participant in my school community and return to Pittsburgh ready to create an honorable life that will benefit the city. Why would I promise this? By living in Pittsburgh, I have learned about all kinds of people and lifestyles. I have seen transformation in the skyline, industry and thinking of the citizens. The transformations have taught me about resilience, commitment and the power of hard work.

Living in a “sports city” has also provided some life lessons. I have seen rebuilding, spirit, team work, perseverance and even a little luck along the way. I take all of those qualities with me as I prepare for college. When I tell someone I am from Pittsburgh, they always want to talk sports. Of course, I am happy to oblige. Older people remember the “steel curtain“, younger people mention Big Ben or the new stadiums. Regardless, I am engaged in the conversations with pride and enthusiasm. Even when Pittsburghers have differing opinions on plays or players, they are unified in their love of the teams. In the big picture, the take-away is you can have different ideas but a common goal.

Have you ever noticed the feeling of world peace that exists in Pittsburgh the Monday after a Steeler victory? We may not agree with every play call but we all relish the sense of satisfaction of reaching our shared goal. I don’t mean to oversimplify the world’s issues but maybe we are on to something really important. If the people of the world could focus on our shared goals for a great life, then perhaps the play by play would be less important than the shared victory in the end.

My Pittsburgh Promise is my sister, Gali. She is currently in 7th grade at Winchester Thurston with me. She is counting the days until she can attend Taylor Allderdice for high school. My dad went there and Gali will love the size, diversity, spirit and challenge of public school. She just knows it is the right fit for her. Although Winchester has provided her with a great foundation, Allderdice will offer her the next experience she craves.

I am thankful that the Pittsburgh Promise exists. Any student, like my little sister, who can go to college with this help is a victory. Who knows, that may be the student who returns to the city to make positive changes in their community. I feel the same obligation. I take my promise to Pittsburgh seriously and intend to make good. Go Pittsburgh!