



MID-SOUTH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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MSCC Graduate Chasing His Own Dream

While he earned a decent living as a heating and air-conditioning technician, Terrell Cannon knew he wanted more out of life. With encouragement from his wife, he stepped out of his comfort zone, enrolled at Mid-South Community College, and began pursuit of his own dream.



Cannon, 33, will graduate with highest honors with an associate of arts degree on May 8 and will continue his education at the University of Memphis this fall.

Before enrolling at MSCC, “I was really living someone else’s dream,” he explained. “My father was an air conditioning man, and that was his dream. I was good at being a technician, but at the same time, that wasn’t what I wanted

to do the rest of my life.

“I felt down on myself because I felt I was dropping the ball. My wife said, ‘No. What you’re doing is for us. You’ve come so far with your immediate family, but it’s time to move on for your own family. You just seem down; you seem angry for a reason.’ And I knew what it was. I saw

there was something missing; I wanted to be educated more than what I was.”

He knew nothing about MSCC until he asked a friend where she went to school. She told him about Mid-South, and Cannon and his wife, Latosha, discussed their options.

“My wife saw my talent but thought it was possibly going to get wasted,” he recalled. “She said, ‘Do you want to try something different? Let’s cross the bridge and get out of Memphis, out of our comfort zone.’ It was like a fresh start. We made that step and haven’t looked back.”

The Cannons both enrolled in a Nursing Assistant class, and Terrell also took Biology.

“I didn’t know how I was going to transition from working full time and coming straight to school, so I jumped in part time, just to see if I still had it,” Cannon said.

He aced both of his classes and became a full-time student in spring 2013. Cannon also became involved in numerous campus organizations including TRiO Student Support Services, Brother 2 Brother, and Phi Theta Kappa. He received spotlight recognition in the March 2014 newsletter of the Arkansas Association of Student Assistance Programs.

“Terrell has consistently demonstrated an ability to rise to any challenge that he must face,” said Sarah Black, MSCC TRiO Student Support Services counselor. “Terrell’s exceptional academic performance is especially noteworthy, and his 3.8 GPA has earned him President’s List recognition. His classroom performance is a direct result of his hard work and strong focus.”

Brother 2 Brother paired the Memphis native with science instructor Dr. Peter Abanda as part of its mentorship program.

“The more I opened up and told about myself the more he could see who was in front of him,” Cannon said. “If I had questions, Dr. Abanda always pointed me in the right direction. He was an excellent mentor.”

Dr. Abanda said Cannon was an excellent mentee as well.

“I’ve worked with Terrell Cannon through the B2B program for the last two academic years, and it has been a very rewarding experience for me as I’ve watched him grow and excel in his academics and play a very active role in the campus community.

“He is a model student – engaging, articulate, hardworking – and always strives to do better. He is also a great family man.”

Cannon said his decision to attend MSCC has been a good one.

“Everything about my experience at Mid-South Community College has been great, and I’m really thankful. A lot of doors have opened while I was at the school just applying myself. Everyone wanted me to succeed.”

One of the doors opened for Cannon is the NASA CIPAIR (Curriculum Improvements Partnership Awards for Integration of Research) program, a collaboration between MSCC and Rust College. Cannon completed a four-week internship last summer in Mississippi and will tackle a 10-week assignment in California this year.

“When I get out there, who knows the possibilities?” he said.

Beyond that, the father of four said he’s not sure what the future holds.

“I just know I want to fulfill my dream, even though I’m not exactly sure what it is other than to take care of my family and raise my kids with more education than I had,” he said. “The good thing is I didn’t bump my head, so I still know everything about air conditioning if I need to go back and do that for a living.”

For information about TRiO Student Support Services, Brother 2 Brother, Phi Theta Kappa, or academic/technical programs at the college, please call (870) 733-6728, visit the campus at 2000 West Broadway in West Memphis, email admissions@midsouthcc.edu or see the college's website at www.midsouthcc.edu.