

# Black Horse Pike Regional School District

## Spotlight on Alumni - March 2021

**Keanu Taylor, Timber Creek High School c/o 2014**



**JOHNSON & WALES**  
UNIVERSITY

**1. AA: Upon graduation, what post-secondary path did you take and why?**

*Keanu: Upon graduation, I attended Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. There, I pursued a degree in Culinary Arts and Nutrition. I also later pursued Food Science and have an MBA in Finance. My goal was to be completely independent from the moment I graduated high school. With the unlimited job opportunities Culinary Arts and Nutrition offered, I felt it was the best road to guaranteeing employment after college. As I got older, I began to find that a career in finance is something I would like to pursue long term. Eventually I would like to combine both expertise and run my own businesses - restaurants, food products, financial coaching etc.*

**2. AA: Describe your career/profession today?**

*Keanu: Today I am a Food Scientist for Glanbia Performance Nutrition in Illinois. My role is to assist in creating formulas for the products used by the many brands they represent, such as Slimfast, Optimum Nutrition, Isopure, and much more. In addition to employment, I am also pursuing a CPA in hopes to transition careers as a Financial Analyst.*

**3. Looking back, would you have done anything differently and why?**

*Keanu: Thinking back, I wish I got more involved in the various clubs the school offered. I did wrestle, ran cross country briefly and did track, but I wish I would've looked into more clubs. I also wish I pursued AP/Honors courses. Then, didn't really understand how those types of courses could have earned college credits. I may have looked more into that based on knowing what I know now.*

**4. AA: What impact did Timber Creek have on your career path/profession?**

*Keanu: Well, before arriving to TC, I never stayed at the same school for more than three years at a time. Timber Creek will always be an integral part of not only my education but my life. As I told Mr. A, I was surrounded by a community and culture that changed me for the better in so many ways. The school had a higher graduation rate than previous schools I was in. It did not take long, because of the people at TC, for me to feel like I belonged in the 90% that graduated. They made me feel like I belonged PERIOD! I mattered. School mattered. Timber Creek will never fully know what they have meant to me but after this story, I hope the message is clear.*

**5. AA: Were there specific teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators, secretaries or other professionals that had a major impact on you while in school, and if so, who were those professionals and describe how they helped you along your HS journey.**

*Keanu: I told Mr. A I could list so many. Let me start with Wrestling. The wrestling program, **Coach Cottone, Coach Ritz, Coach Fruits** and all that volunteered...you change my life. To me, wrestling was a family. Trips to tournaments, being pushed each and every day, learning with a purpose, realizing the dedication needed to be successful at such a rigorous sport. I loved wrestling and will never forget what TC Wrestling means to me. **Ms. Karim** was my Accounting teacher, hence my pursuit of CPA and obtaining*

my MBA - Finance. She helped me in many ways. **Ms. York.** As you can imagine, Ms. York increased my passion for cooking and was a great teacher. **Ms. Birm (Mrs. Curiale).** Once I had Ms. Birmingham, I was never intimidated by Math again. She was able to teach Math in a way for me where I finally got it. She may not realize it until she sees this, but she helped me a great deal. **Mr. Grottini** was not only my SS teacher but he pushed me on the track. He is a great coach and though Cross Country didn't pan out for me, I still did Track and that program was great for me too. I am passionate about writing. **Ms. Evans (Mrs. Monroe)** was amazing. She really taught me a lot about writing and is a main reason I continue to love it and blog to this day. I took many writing courses in college. Ms. Evans was the best writing teacher I ever had BY FAR. Again, I could go on and on...just know the culture there was like family to me and everyone I came across helped me enjoy those years.

- 6. AA: Which school clubs, sports, activities, etc., if any, did you participate in when you attended your BHP high school? If so, were there any moments or experiences that you can recall that helped you become the person you are today?**

*Keanu: As I mentioned, I was a wrestler, ran cross country and ran long distance events for track.*

- 7. AA: Please share your memories of Timber Creek that might inspire today's student body?**

*Keanu: I think my fondest memory was traveling with the wrestling team. We were very good. We still talk today. Traveling across states for tournaments was cool. At times I felt like we were special. The coaches, parents, the whole thing...it was just a great feeling to be a part of it.*

- 8. What advice would you give to our current student body?**

*Keanu: I think I would tell today's high schooler to think long-term. Whether that's college, athlete, entrepreneurship, military, or entering straight into the workforce. There is life outside of high school. Begin to plan early. The four years go quickly. I realize you guys are learning in unique ways during unique times, but you WILL be better for it. You are more advanced in so many ways. We will all get past this. Talk to your teachers, counselors and coaches often. They are there for you. I was not always open*

*to that but the people I mentioned, and others, really helped me out of a shell that I would have never thought I would break out of in high school.*

*If this is your senior year and you are not proud of what you accomplished in high school; just remember you're still young. You have a lot of living ahead of you. You can change the course of your future today and live the life that you expect from yourself. We can control the hand that was dealt to us, but we can control what we do with them. Take action or fold, the choice is yours.*

*Lastly, don't be afraid to fail, or to embarrass yourself. It's better to try and fail, then to not try at all. There's things I am just building the courage to do now, which would've been easier today if I failed in High School. So whether it's asking that crush out to prom, or auditioning for the schools play, go for it. That's what it means to be a charger.*

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***“I had the honor and pleasure of educating Keanu in my Accounting course as a senior. From the first day of class I was impressed with this amazing young man. He was always polite and had good conversation. Keanu aspired to be a chef and went to Johnson and Wales University. He is a Food Technologist at Glanbia Performance Nutrition (GPN). Keanu is an avid writer. He has written on many topics such as Cancer, Cooking, Cell, Food & Beverage and much more. To add to his repertoire, he also does public speaking. Since then, he has an amazing Instagram fit channel to help people with their weight and health issues. He creates amazing well balanced meals and advertises it to his audience. He has been a beacon of light for Timber Creek High School.”***

***~ Ms. Verna Karim, Business teacher, Timber Creek HS***



***Where Inspiring Excellence is our Standard and Student Achievement is the Result!***