

Kinesiology student speaks to motivate across generations

By Caitlyn Sabbert - Sep 23, 2015



Kel Neil, senior in kinesiology, has a passion for motivational speaking. As a member of multiple clubs/organizations at K-State, he has had the opportunity to join multiple motivational speaking groups and reach out to many others in a positive way. (Vail Moshiri | The Collegian)

Mikel Neil Jr. is his name, kinesiology is his major and motivational speaking is his passion. The 24-year-old from St. Louis, Missouri, is a transfer student from two different colleges. He said he is now a member of the fraternity Phi Beta Sigma, UNITY, Rise Foundation and Study Soup, and he is the founder of Stimulus Overload at K-State.

His younger brother, whom Neil said is his biggest motivation, battles with chronic granulomatous disease, an immune deficiency disorder. Neil said that almost all of the men in his family have this disease except Neil himself.

There are seven men and 23 women in Neil's family. He said that he wants to set a great example for the men and women he is related to; he is the only member in his family who will have a college degree, other than his grandfather who had a degree in cosmetology.

"I think I do have a lot to share and a lot of wisdom about some different things, just because I watched my grandfather," Neil said.

Neil spoke to middle schools and high schools in St. Louis with the Rise Foundation about different character-building skills, adding in a step show performance for entertainment. Along with K-State giving him the opportunity to join a motivational speaking group, he said he is able to reach out to many others in a positive way.

"I love K-State," Neil said. "K-State changed my life. My dream is to change lives and help people be confident in themselves and set examples for people to let them know they can do this too."

Neil said his dream is to be in front of the camera hosting events and shows, bringing different artists together. One of his skills is group cohesion.

"I think (Neil) is an inspiration to others, how he connects to other people on campus and just tries to get to know every person he doesn't know," Jesse Hill, president of Phi Beta Sigma and senior in computer engineering, said.

He said that Neil doesn't just have an everlasting impact on people his age, but also those who are older than him. Neil said he would call himself a "gap-bridger," as he likes to correlate the wisdom from one generation to another.

April Warren-Grice, coordinator of professional development in the social justice education department, is one of Neil's former high school teachers.

"He reminds me of why I'm here as a professor, to help students like him succeed, because with the right support he could be anything he wants to be," Warren-Grice said.

She said Neil reminds her of why she is at K-State by talking to her about his research ideas and helping his brother. Neil has kept his friendship with his old high school teacher to this day.

"A lot of people look up to him; I think that they want a piece of what he has, where he's just really outgoing, really friendly and overall a great person," Jordan Jackson, sophomore in management and human resources and co-founder of UNITY, said.

Meagan Miller, senior in mass communications, said Neil has affected her and that he helped bring unique groups of people to work together.

"Kel has helped me stay positive and step outside of my comfort zone," Miller said. "I would recommend that every single person should try to get to know him or work with him at some point."

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