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Samuel Oteng: “Hard Work Pays Off”

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Hard Work Pays Off

by Samuel Oteng

I believe that hard work pays off. I remember the first time my dad brought home two professional cameras when I was 12. He was a photographer in Italy before coming to the United States. He drove two hours away to a camera store and bought 2 Canon professional cameras with my aunt’s credit card. “I took a big risk but eventually it will pay off,” my dad would often tell me. My father believed that you should never be afraid to ask for help. “The worst that can happen is that they say no,” he always told me. My dad started by learning as much as he could about the cameras. He would ask other local cameramen for help and network.

Next, he began looking for event ads and flyers. He would call whatever number he would see on event flyers to try and land a gig. I would listen to some of these calls, and he was often told that a cameraman was already hired or that one isn’t needed but he didn’t stop. He kept calling and spoke to whoever he saw had an event coming up to try and land a gig. He tried whatever he could to get his name out there. It took time but eventually, he got his first gig to take pictures at a church fundraiser. As time went on, he started to get more events and he paid off his debt in no time.

I was also interested in cameras and video editing when I was young. I would often play around with editing and making video edits that I thought were funny at the time. I enjoyed editing so much that I would also watch video tutorials. I tried to learn as much as possible about the video editing software Adobe Premiere. My dad noticed that I was interested in his work, so he decided to teach me as much as he knew. When I turned 13 my dad started taking me along to whatever events he would get. He also allowed me to edit some videos. I would help as much as I can. Most of the time I would take pictures if he was recording the video. In about a year and a half, he expanded the business, and we began capturing all types of events like weddings, concerts, and more.

My dad still runs the business. The business has grown, and he now has 4 video cameras and 2 professional photo cameras. He also purchased two DJ mixers and now plays music at events as well. He doesn’t need to call coldly to get events and every weekend he is booked for a gig. Although I still help my dad out with his business my goal is to now start my own. I love recording music videos and editing them. It gives me a chance to be creative and it is also very fun. Watching

my dad's work ethic by working with him, I learned that hard work pays off. What was once a hobby became a success because he loved doing it. I believe now that if you work hard on something that you enjoy, it will eventually pay off.

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