

Dear Crusader Nation,

I want to begin by saying it deeply saddens me to write this letter to the Valparaiso University fans. Throughout my time here there have been numerous trials and tribulations but I never could have envisioned this one. Due to recent events, I have chosen to opt-out of my 5th year. I value and appreciate the support and encouragement I have received from you all and feel that it's important to provide clarity on this unfortunate and gratuitous situation.

On January 9th and January 10th, I did not play in the two games against Missouri State due to covid protocol. On January 9th I was blessed with my first son, Noah Saint Robinson. Given my personal situation as well as covid protocols, I did not attend these two games. Coach Lottich informed me that I had his full support on whatever I wanted and needed to do but also that he still wanted me to come to practice the following week. In order to show my dedication and loyalty to the program, I resumed attending practice on January 12, and continued to do so for the remainder of the week.

On January 14th, during the beginning of practice, the team was notified that we were scheduled to play against the DePaul Blue Demons. This posed a problem: if I were to play I would not be able to come home both due to Chicago being a hot zone for covid and DePaul's number of stoppages of play due to positive covid cases. I let Coach Lottich know that I would like to sit out to provide support for the first week of my son being born. Since a week prior the coaching staff helped me secure a new apartment, (that was set for me to move in on January 18th) so I would be able to mitigate the risk of my newborn son catching covid. I thought that I would continue to have his support that was shown over the last two weeks.

On January 15th, before practice, Coach Lottich invited me into his office. He told me that I had two options, to play against DePaul or opt out for the remainder of the season because he could no longer deal with my inconsistency. I was completely caught off guard by this statement as I have constantly kept him informed with my concerns, intentions, and goals for the season.

Despite coming off the bench, I am top three in every statistical category except for rebounding (in which I am fourth), and free throw percentage (in which I am currently shooting 81.8%). Off the court, my teammates can attest that I have consistently been a leader that has tried to be the gel that keeps us together during our tough times. It is clear that I thrive under pressure and would be able to manage any difficulty in scheduling the new addition to my family. I felt my situation could be classified as growing pains, rather than a perpetual problem that would result in my having to opt out of the season. However, I made the executive decision to put my family before any other priority and, as such, must opt out.

To my son and family,

I made this decision to set a standard that our family comes first. In the past six years I have lost my brother to cancer, my father to a heart attack, and my grandfather to old age. It has taught me many things but the most important one is how precious life is. Now being the oldest male in my family, I want you to know everyday I will put you first and not think twice about it.

To the Coaching staff

Thank you for the many life lessons that you have been a part of me learning during my time at

VU, it has been a blessing.

To the Crusader Fans

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to wear the brown and gold. It was an honor and pleasure to play in the Athletics Recreation Center.