

My Hero

My hero is Earvin “Magic” Johnson, a hard working man on and off court. He has a great basketball player, playing for 13 year with the Lakers. He was also a dedicated and generous businessman. But to top it all off, he had HIV, but in a good and positive way like Lance Armstrong had cancer.

On the court, Johnson was a symbol of physical domination, unselfish with his ability to steal and pass. Johnson is considered one of the most successful players in the history of the game. In 905 NBA games, he scored 17,707 points, 6,559 rebounds and 10,141 assists, translating to career averages of 19.5 points, 7.2 rebounds and 11.2 assists per game. Also Johnson shares the single-game playoff record for assists. He was also the tallest point guard in the NBA and led 5 teams to championships. He was a 12 time All-Star, and won a gold in the Olympic Games in 1992, in Barcelona. In 2002 he introduced Larry Bird. Larry later was put in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. The Lakers reached the Finals for the third year in a row, where Johnson's Lakers and Bird's Celtics met for the first time in the post-season. For his feats, Johnson was voted as one of the 50 Greatest Players of All Time by the NBA in 1996. This all changed when he was hit with bad news.

In, 1992 Johnson told the world that he was retiring on doctor’s orders. After testing positive for HIV, he still made it to the All Star game that season, with a victory. With a comeback like that he was ready for anything. Johnson initially said that he did not know how he contracted the disease. At the time, AIDS was commonly associated with homosexuality, and only a small percentage of HIV-positive people had contracted it from heterosexual sex. Later Johnson was the founder of The Magic Johnson Foundation. The Magic Johnson Foundation has teamed up with Los Angeles-based AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), the nation’s largest HIV/AIDS medical provider, to open four HIV/AIDS clinics. Founded in 1991, the Magic Johnson Foundation (MJF) has become one of the most recognizable charitable organizations in the world.

For most people a life of helping people and playing basketball would be enough, but for Johnson, not really. Starting a late night talk show, called The Magic Hour, but it was canceled after low reviews. But why stop there, he started a small movie company called Magic Johnson Productions, a promotional company; Magic Johnson Theaters, a nationwide chain of movie theaters and Magic Johnson Entertainment. But what, he also was hired in 2001 to be an NBA analyst for Turner Network Television. Johnson also helped with small neighborhoods by building 116 Starbucks, 31 Burger Kings, a dozen 24 Hour Fitness Gyms, and a T.G.I. Fridays. He says other companies considered similar moves but were afraid to move into the neighborhoods Johnson has invested in. Johnson is more then a hero to me but to all he helped and entertained.

Johnson wasn’t just a businessman, but a leader; not a basketball player, but a star, not an HIV survivor, but a healer, not just Magic Johnson but a hero. As a business man he pledged to help others;a leader with an optimistic attitude as an athlete that all can consider their sports hero. Many articles praised Johnson as a hero, and U.S. President George H. W. Bush said: "For me, Magic is a hero, a hero for anyone who loves sports."