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Demos: Not goodbye, just see you later

By Khari Demos
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JAMES NEISS



There's very rare moments in life where you can think about your impact.

The word impact has been dawning on me in recent weeks. So I decided to check out some quotes on the term and one of which that stood out was "Every action we take impacts the lives of others around us. The question is: are you aware of your impact?," which was said by Arthur Carmazzi.

I didn't think leaving the Greater Niagara Newspapers would have an impact on some people, but it's been flattering to see how wrong I was about that. The coaches I've shared this with as of late have said how it's a bittersweet thing for them. Although they want to see me advance in my career, they'll miss the interactions we've shared. I couldn't agree more.

One interaction that stands out to me was when my favorite athletic director — who shall remain nameless — called me this week to thank me of a story I recently did. But as I shared them of my departure, I wanted to thank them because there's been so many people like them in my tenure that have made a positive impact on me.

There's too many people I want to think for my time here. First and foremost, Mark Scheer, Matt Winterhalter and John Celestino, thank you guys for even bringing me on. You really gave a kid from Western New York a shot at living out his childhood dreams and I'll always be thankful for that.

To my friends on the business side — Teresa, Kathy, Greg and Dawn — the many nights we spent laughing in the office on evening shifts were endless. Thank you all for the memories and please don't be strangers.

To the newsroom staff, you've been like family for me. I'll always brag about working with the brightest light in the world, Michele DeLuca. Your power and positivity have always been so uplifting, and to have been your colleague was a blessing. To my master sensei, Rick Pfeiffer, thank you for your mentorship and guidance. I've learned so much about being a reporter from you and I only hope to be able to chart out a career as long as you have in this field.

Also, shout out to my guy Ben Joe, the nicest man in the world. Good luck to you and all you do with writing. Shoutout to our photographers as well, Jim Neiss and Paul Battson. I know you guys were sick and tired of all the running around I had you doing, but your role in this operation always saved the day with giving people visuals. And to our unsung heroes, Mary Dreyer and Mike Klemm, hats off to you guys as well. All your help over the years does not go unnoticed and I hope you realize that.

And I only got to work with him for a short time, but thank you Joe Genco as well. I love the passion and enthusiasm you have for this field and I know the Gazette is in great hands with you. I'll miss all of you guys so much.

Last by not least, Mike Meiler. The Yoda to my Obi-Wan; the Mickey to my Rocky; the Marv Levy to my Jim Kelly. Need I say more? I can't thank you enough for all you've done to help mold me into the writer I've become today. Your patience and belief in me are some of the main reasons why I've been able to grow so much.

I remember how excited I was when you first nudged me to apply for the role in the first place. Then for you to go out of your way to seek me out and bring me back once I was furloughed? That's major man. I'll forever be indebted to you and I'll always be appreciative for your part in grooming me over these years.

And to all the kids, coaches and ADs out there, THANK YOU THE MOST. I have loved working with you all and being able to shine light on some programs I've been around since I was a kid has been amazing. The amount of places I've been with this job has been tremendous to experience; whether it was covering football games on the Bills home field, to going to state competitions, and everything in between, each moment has driven me to keep pushing, to be better for you all.

With that being said, I'll be heading over to the Bee Group Newspapers to write for a section of their papers on the sports side. I'd also like to announce that I'll be launching a UB Bulls football podcast with the Bleav Podcast Network, which should be available

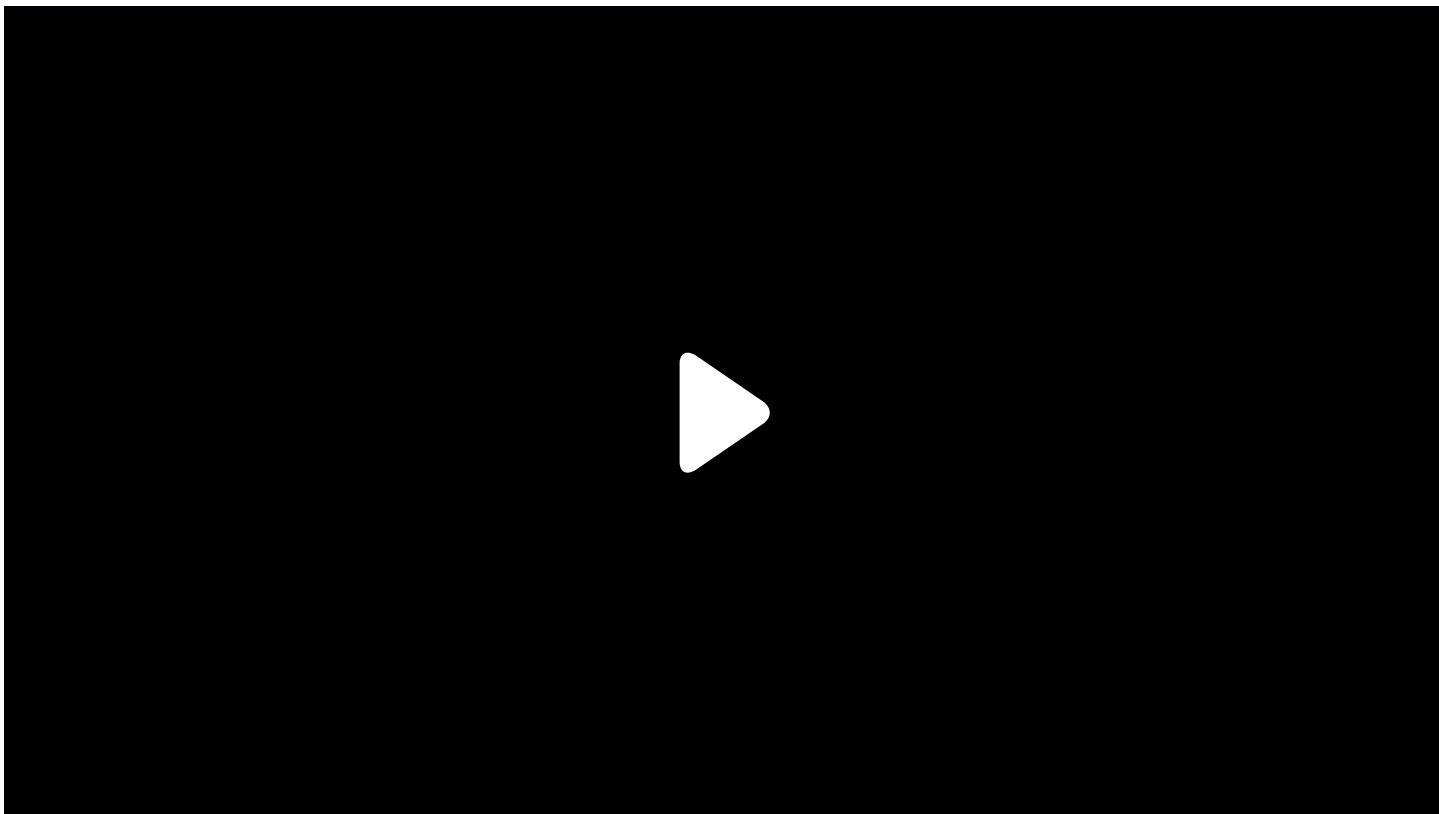
for streaming in the near future. Thankfully, due to me solely covering high schools at the Bee, I'll be able to do some freelance work here with fantasy football columns, UB football stories and more.

So this is not goodbye, it's just see you later. To be able to say I was the lead writer at a place that did stories about me as a kid has been an honor. But it's all about the people I've come across on this path.

The impact you have had — all of you — is what I'll look back on the most. I just hope my impact on you all has been the same.

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