

# For *our* Quarterback

school rallied in support of varsity quarterback after heart attack

On October 10, junior Josh Boyd went to play basketball with his friends at Sonny's Sportsplex, just ten minutes away from campus.

"We was playing basketball for a little bit and these firefighters came in," Boyd said. "They said they wanted to play too, so we played them next, and about ten minutes into playing them, I fell on the firefighter's feet. They said I stopped breathing three times, that I had a heart attack."

The firefighters performed CPR and Boyd was rushed to the ICU in Columbia. He was then flown to the Medical University of South Carolina clinic in Charleston, where he had open-heart surgery the next day.

"I woke up and I was just confused; I didn't know where I was. I was just asking questions, like, don't I have a football game tomorrow?" Boyd, the varsity football team quarterback, said. "But it had happened Wednesday and I woke up Saturday and they said the football game had already passed. I was just confused. I had a lot of questions. I don't remember nothing. I just feel like I went to sleep."

His teammates were devastated, but they were determined to help him.

"I wanted to be there for him," senior Twontae Wallace said. "I wanted to

do anything possible to build up money for him and his family, to show him that we're not just his teammates but his brothers — we wanted to keep a smile on his face. We thanked the firemen for saving his life, because if they weren't there, who knows what could've happened to him."

Three days after leaving the hospital, Boyd, fitted with a new defibrillator, surprised his teammates at the York game. Although happy to be back on the field, Boyd was stuck on the sidelines.

"They said I wouldn't be able to play football again," Boyd said. "That was a big part of my life, and I wanted to make it big in football, so now that I can't play no more, I've got to move on to something better."

Boyd found guidance from track coach Lawrence Terry, who experienced the same thing last year and began training Boyd through low-intensity workouts.

"We call each other Iron Man because we've both got defibrillators," Boyd said. "It's supposed to like help you if you pass out, if your heart stops, but they said that it probably won't ever stop again. They say they it feels like a donkey kicked you in the chest — I don't want to be shocked."

Without football and basketball practices, Boyd had free time which he used to catch up on missing work, play his favorite games like NBA 2K and Fortnite, and give motivational speeches.

"Like when people ask for my story, I go places to speak about what happened to me to kids younger than me who play sports," Boyd said. "I tell them what happened to me and how my life changed but how I'm still getting better after what happened. Just to keep your head up and push harder so you can be something in life."

As he's recovered, he's been encouraged by support from his community. Seniors Ella Rayl and Aleyse Scarborough created a "For Our Quarterback" GoFundMe that raised \$4,178 from 151 people in two months toward Boyd's medical bills.

"I just wanted to help Josh; it was as simple as that. I knew that if I were ever in that position, my mom would need help, and I would want someone to do that for her," Rayl said. "Everyone from the community supported it and it was so great to witness everyone coming together."

Boyd thanked Rayl, Scarborough, and everyone who donated. He has continued to share his story.

"People in the community will see me when I'm at the store or at a basketball game or something and just be shocked to see me. Some people at this school that I don't know just started saying hey to me. So I say hey back," Boyd said.

"Everybody asks for autographs. It's not that big a deal. I take every picture someone asks for. I don't turn down nobody because I wouldn't want to be turned down if I asked somebody a question."

He has used his newfound prominence to share his positivity. Boyd considered his life to be forever changed, but didn't regret it.

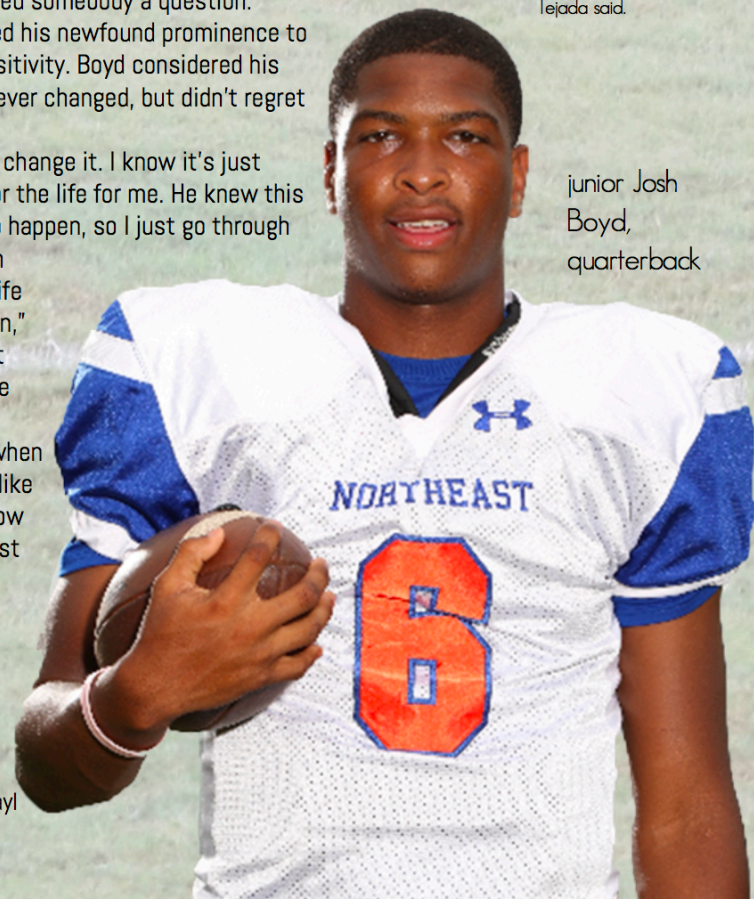
"I wouldn't change it. I know it's just God's plan for the life for me. He knew this was going to happen, so I just go through with His plan and live my life the best I can," Boyd said. "It just made me feel like you don't know when you can die, like you don't know when your last day is."

Football coach Joseph Gamble watches intently at the home game. "I'm proud of my guys. They worked their tails off during the season, even though our record didn't show," Gamble said.



Aiming for the ball, junior Selvin Recinos-Tejada practices before a home game. "I felt like this year was a rebuilding year for us," Tejada said.

"You don't know when your last day is."  
// Josh Boyd, junior



junior Josh Boyd, quarterback