

Arthur Ashe Essay

What makes Arthur Ashe's accomplishments so great? Was it his determination to win the US Open or his dedication to serve humanity?

As a young athlete, Ashe had perseverance and passion to be a great tennis player. Even when he was rejected from local tennis tournaments because of his skin color, he continued to play tennis with persistence. Ten years later, by winning the US Open, Ashe proved to the world that an African American could succeed on the world's greatest stages. By doing so, he broke all barriers and laid the foundation for the next generation of players. As James Blake said, "Arthur Ashe is truly a role model in every sense of the world to all people."

Although, some people think Ashe's US Open win was his greatest achievement, I believe Ashe's off the court accomplishments have much greater impact on the world beyond tennis. Ashe even said "If I were remembered only as a tennis player, I would consider myself a failure." This shows that Ashe wasn't driven by the glory of fame. Playing tennis was purely for his benefit. But serving humanity was for the benefit of all others. Staying true to his word, he created several organizations involving AIDS awareness and fighting poverty. He also created the NJTL, which provides over 200,000 under privileged kids the joys of tennis while providing them a solid education at little or no cost. Learning about Ashe's life story has influenced me to serve others by organizing penny drives and volunteering at the local library.

I have seen headlines of athletes, who use performance enhancing drugs in the pursuit of winning matches. In contrast, Ashe's life illustrates that one can reach the top through integrity, hard work, and sacrifice. He showed us that how you achieve is just as important as what you achieve. Through his ideals, he conveyed the message that winning isn't everything. Serving others without intentions of seeking recognition or reward was the greatest accomplishment and Grand Slam of his life.