Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Period\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**United States History II, 1900-Present**

**Mr. Collison**

**2012-2013**

Dear Students,

 Welcome to US History II at Peabody Veterans Memorial High School! I am looking forward to getting to know all of you and working together to have an exciting year. I am anxious to get to know each and every one of you as soon as possible. However, this may be a bit difficult as I’m teaching over 100 students this year. As a result, for your first real homework assignment, **I would like each one of you to write a letter telling me a little about yourselves.** I have included some questions and specific topics I would like you to touch on that I believe will help me get to know you better.

* What are your interests out of school?
* What history classes have you taken in the past?
* What are your favorite historical figures or events? Why are they your favorite?
* What do you dislike about studying history?
* Is there anything you think I should know that would help you learn and be successful inside the classroom?

Our classroom is not a one-way street. In order for you to learn best and feel comfortable in the class, it’s important for you to know about my background and interests as well…

 I was born and raised in Trumbull, Connecticut, a suburban town about an hour from New York City. As a freshman in high school, I decided to stop playing baseball and picked up lacrosse, a new sport at the school that year. At the time, I had no idea the impact this decision would have on my life. I played throughout high school, was a captain my senior year, and helped lead the team to the semifinals of the state championship in just four years as a program. One of my lacrosse coaches, who was also my history teacher, helped me realize that teaching was what I wanted to dedicate my life to.

 I studied history at Union College (Schenectady, New York) and played lacrosse throughout my undergraduate career. After Union College I got a job teaching, marketing, coaching, playing, and expanding the game of lacrosse overseas in London. It was there my passion for history and teaching came alive. On school breaks I had the opportunity to travel throughout Europe and North Africa, where I went to incredible historical sites and museums. I went to Dachau concentration camp, the D-Day beaches, the Acropolis in Athens, and even rode a camel into the Sahara desert. I love talking about my travels and would be more than happy to answer any questions or tell stories throughout the year.

 I have many interests other than history and teaching. I am a sports fanatic, and love talking football, hockey, soccer, basketball, and baseball with anyone who will listen. I am a movie buff, and enjoy watching, talking about, and making fun of them. I also greatly enjoy hanging out with my friends and family.

 I love studying history and am looking forward to the interesting perspectives you all will bring with you to the classroom. Much of history is an interpretation of facts and opinions that create a story or paint a picture, similar to the analysis you might see on ESPN, CNN, or in movie reviews, and each person may interpret those facts slightly different. I am excited to explore topics throughout history and listen to your opinions and thoughts.

 Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts and interests with me. This will count as your first homework assignment for the year, and if done thoroughly will kick off the year on the right foot.

I am looking forward to an exciting year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Collison