

FalconCast, S1, Ep5: “My Non-Biological Brother”

(Electronic music starts)

Ryan: Hi, my name is Ryan Gallagher and today I'll be joined by Armando Libier, my good friend and my non-biological brother. Armando has always been heavily involved in campus activities, including serving as treasurer for Sigma Pi fraternity for two years, as well as working for the university as an orientation leader, building manager and tour guide. Armando inspires me with his persistence and his passion for learning and self-improvement. He's a great guy and we had a great conversation. I hope you enjoy.

Welcome to the Falcon Cast.

(Electronic music swells then fades)

Armando: Hello, my name is Armando Libier. I'm a senior currently at Fitchburg State and my major is Communications Technical Theater. When I came into college, I had no idea what Greek life was, honestly. I had no depiction of it. I never really saw any of the movies that gave it its name, its first impression.

So when I first got, when I first checked out Sigma Pi and everything, it really was how the guys were as themselves and they were all good guys. Open, open and to meet me and talk to me and have a good, have a good intro to me.

It was a sense of community and how people were open to meet new people. Like they influenced me. And now I'm at a point where I'm a senior and I influence other people to be a part of and be involved on campus to help get the same experience that I did to become better people.

I don't know if this counts – I'll say another one later – but COVID was the challenge because of how it affected everything and how it made the college experience not a real college experience because how it was in the middle and how it changed everything from quarantining to online classes.

But there was another realistic, like college challenge I would face – it was the socialness, I would say. How people would always be talking to one another, would be saying drama and stuff like that. I would always keep away from it because I would see people would take things too harsh, would see things going too far and it's just we need to do a way where people need to just calm down, talk about it, and solve things like that.

It shouldn't be behind each other's back or gossip, rumors. It should just be we're adults. We are not in middle school or high school anymore. We just need to mature and act like adults cause that is the best way to solve problems. That can be all of college. Greek life it happens, sports scenes, it happens. Other clubs, it happens.

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There's no way to really, there's no way to really pinpoint it. It's just for an everyone thing.

Freshmen students, when they hear gossip, they think it's targeted towards them right away. They think they had to do something about it, they have to fix it. They have to do a lot of stuff to themselves and to others where I have to make sure I'm clean, I have to make sure they don't know us about me and all that type of stigma.

When you get older, then you're at the senior age I am. You just, it doesn't really matter to you anymore. You're at an old age where you're focusing on yourself and if people do talk about you, I always say they have nothing else better to do.

They're not just, they're just not talking about themselves or worrying about what other people wanna say about another person to make it exciting, to bully, to harass, to college drama, just to entertain them when really they should just focus on themselves and become better structured.

If I was still in their freshman mentality or like first year, I would just say like, “oh my God, they're talking about me. I have to fix this. I gotta get back at them.”

There's no point. It should just be in the mindset – you should just be in the mindset where you need to worry about yourself. You're close friends. How to become better, how to get your way through school and to achieve your college degree.

When I was a freshman, all the seniors, sophomores and juniors, they all graduate. Now they're alumni and I'm close with them. Now that I'm a senior all the people are gonna look at me just for the memories and advice. I'll become an alumni and I can come back as an alumni and give them pointers for them and just talk to other older alumni to have greater accomplishments and achievements just to see how they are. They can help, we can help each other out and become close like that.

Greek Life is a support system for me in ways where they gave me responsibility, they gave me personal achievements that I can say, I did this, I did that. And I helped other people with challenges. The brotherhood aspect of meeting new, meeting new guys, introducing new people to it. To have them be a part of Greek life and seeing them grow up in my eyes was a sense where I was in their shoes. Now I can help them get into my shoes or even become better, to make them better people.

How the media does portray Greek life is funny in a sense from all the exaggerations, all the jokes. It's really not like that. It's all in a sense of just comedy.

You're just getting into college right now. You got accepted to your school and you're scared about it. Just know this. Stop thinking and just do it. Cuz honestly, if you put too much thought into something, you're gonna ruin it. If you think about how this is gonna affect me, why is this

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gonna happen? Just try it out. Once you try it out, then you can have an opinion on it. If you just sit there and overthink, you're not gonna really get anywhere.

Get out of your dorm. Go get outta your room, go out there, meet new people. Will be scary at first for some, but it's best to go out, even if it's for dumb things – or for maybe it is like a fun thing that you'll learn a lot from. It is better just to go out there and try new things, to meet new people than just stay in one place. And maybe you'll take a semester, your first ever semester, you do it your second semester. This is the one thing I'd recommend.

As I told my orientees just to get out there and meet new people.

And from what I've seen –

(Electronic music starts)

Armando: I've seen 'em around campus and they have done that stuff. So it makes me feel like a proud dad. So I feel like that's the advice I can give to upcoming new students or freshman right now.

(Electronic music fades out)

Ryan: This is Ryan Gallagher, a senior at Fitchburg State University studying film video production.

(Perseverantia theme swells)

And you're listening to Perseverantia, the Fitchburg State Podcast Network.

(Perseverantia theme fades out)