

## Early Retirement

I am a 17-year-old male. But I am far from the typical teenager that drives beside you, blaring the new expensive speakers, wearing designer clothes, possessing gadgets and accessories such as an I-pod or Oakley sunglasses. Why am I not that guy? For two reasons. One, I am saving money so that I can have more opportunities at a young age. Two, I know the difference between buying a necessity and wasting money.

The fact is that the earlier in life one saves, the more money that saved dollar will make. By beginning early, not only will the savings increase dramatically, but less money will be needed to reap more profit. It is always important to keep financial options open; life throws curve balls and what once was a lifetime goal changes with experience and time. One possible curve ball is the acceptance letter to an elite school that must be thrown away because there just isn't enough money, money that could have been there if investments had been made at an early age.

Learning as a youngster the difference between a necessity and accessory is quite possibly the most important lesson that can be taught, and puts us that much closer to becoming a responsible adult. It is this distinction that divides future debtors from future investors. People who work toward fulfilling their long term desires or goals actually succeed in life, not those who buy the most expensive I-pod to make themselves feel cool for a couple of days. Our lives can change in an instant, but it is up to us to have the financial strength to be able to overcome these hardships, and this strength begins as early as childhood, when we are trying to decide whether we should buy that new fancy toy, or save our purchasing power for the future.

Everyone has heard these long drawn out stories about saving instead of wasting money. When these stories lack cold, hard facts, people do not tend to listen. When telling a younger person about investing in the future, he wants actual percentages, how much of his dollar does he have to save? Is the return going to be worth him giving up some of his childhood wants, for the future, which for him seems to be an eternity away? The fact of the matter is that at the age of 15, if a student invests a thousand dollars and receives a 10 percent annual return, with a hundred dollar deposit compounded monthly until he is 65, then the amount of money received from this investment would more than triple the growth of the fund of a person who began depositing at the age of 35 with double the initial deposit. This 15-year-old would have over 1.5 million dollars to sweeten his retirement.

A thirty-year-old with a substantial sum of money has many opportunities. I intend to be that thirty-year-old but it's going to take both time and smart investments. I have one main goal that will help me fulfill all my other goals. This one main goal that I, and my family have invested in for many years, is not a material good, but something much more valuable that will help me even more in the future. This investment is in education and more particularly, going to college. I have many dreams that I know will not be able to come true unless I have the best possible education. This means not only investing money, but also my time in academics in order to be able to go to the college of my dreams. Being able to pick and choose the college that would be best for me, can only be made possible through hard-work and determination today. My goal is to be able to sort through my college list and be able to go to the one that is going to have the best

learning environment possible for me, and that is why I have diligently invested both time and money since eighth grade in order to make my dream come true.

Getting a good education is my starting goal which is going to prove the most beneficial as all of my other goals follow from success in college. After college, I want to become the owner of a professional baseball team. This is easy to say, but in fact is going to require the most time, energy, and investing that I can handle, but I'm ready and willing because nothing that good is ever easy, otherwise everyone would own a baseball team.

Every one has dreams, and in order to fulfill these dreams, all doors must remain open, and there is no better way than by investing early. Day after day we make decisions to invest or spend. From big to small, investments and temptations are always present, and it is up to the individual to think of the future and not the immediate thrill of wasting another dollar. It's hard to believe, but dollars, even change, adds up, and what was "chump" change to one, could become retirement fund to another.

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