The Road for Gabby

By Hannah McCurdy

Gabrielle Christine Victoria Douglas, known professionally as Gabby Douglas, is a nine time award winning olympic gymnast for the United States. She has also earned two silver medals, as well as two bronze. She is at the Senior International Elite Level. Douglas is currently taking a break from gymnastics to focus on a career that doesn't have to do with gymnastics. Through hard work and determination she was successful in obtaining those medals, and excelling in her life.

On December 31, 1995, Gabby was born to the lovely couple, Timothy Douglas and Natalie Hawkins. Douglas was the youngest out of four siblings: Joyelle, Arielle, and Jonathan. At the age of six years old, she started training at Gymstrada, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Douglas was very successful, and won many competitions at a young age. She then resided in Newport News, Virginia, until the age of fourteen. She continued to prosper in the world of gymnastics, and soon was on her way to West Des Moines, Iowa, to work and train with Coach Liang Chow. Liang had coached Gabby during the olympics and got to know Gabby not only as an athlete, but as a person. She was very good friends with him, and he helped her train to be the great gymnast she is today.

Due to her siblings having to be in school, it was a tough decision to make. Lots of arguments and planning was made, such as how they were going to let Gabby go to Chow, and where she would stay. The final decision was made when Gabby was given the opportunity to live with a family who had a daughter training at Liang’s gym as well. When Gabby arrived in Iowa, she met the Parton family, and became very close with them. It was very hard the first couple weeks being without her own family, but she managed to keep contact as time went on. Eventually, Gabby’s siblings finished school, and her family had moved to Los Angeles, California.

In 2012 she was in the summer olympic games. Despite the competition, Gabby won gold in the uneven bars event. She was ecstatic and very surprised, because she had been in a category with very skillful gymnasts. In the Summer of 2013, Gabby decided to move away from the Partons to be with her family, after a long time of being away. She was no longer training with Chow, but she was still training for the 2016 Olympics in Rio. At a meet in 2015, she came in second All Around (AA) behind Simone Biles, who had been a two-time world champion. In March of 2016, she won the AA title. After that, Douglas had been put on a team alongside Simone Biles, Laurie Hernandez, Madison Kocian, and Aly Raisman.

Douglas has been very successful throughout her life. One of her most famous quotes is, “You just have to be yourself and go full with confidence and be courageous.” She had to overcome many obstacles and make many sacrifices. These sacrifices lead to her success, and she has earned approximately $275,000 in her career of being an olympic gymnast. She is now known as the first AfricanAmerican to win the individual AA event. She showed everybody that through your ups and downs, if you keep trying, you will soon succeed.