

It's well known that Tanner Allen earned a plethora of accolades in helping to bring the first national championship to Mississippi State University Athletics.

But Allen guesses not as many people realize how much he has struggled. In fact, on Aug. 2, 2024, the Pensacola Blue Wahoos, the Double-A affiliate of Major League Baseball's Miami Marlins, released Allen, leaving him to wonder about his future in professional baseball.

To Allen, the setback is just part of God's plan that is going to make him a better man.

"If He got me out of baseball, He is definitely trying to get my attention," Allen said Tuesday. "I am thankful He is trying to work in my life."

Allen is going to impart that message as part of his appearance as guest speaker at the Fields of Faith event at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the New Hope High School football field.

In 2021, Allen played an integral role in the MSU baseball program's run to the school's first national championship. Among the numerous awards he earned that season were: C Spire Ferriss Trophy winner as the best college baseball player in the state of Mississippi, first-team All-Southeastern Conference, SEC Specialty Award winner of the SEC Player of the Year, American Baseball Coaches Association National Player of the Year and first-team All-American by five publications. Allen finished his career at MSU with a .339 batting average and 281 hits in 210 games.

After the Miami Marlins selected Allen in the fourth round of the 2021 MLB First-Year Player Draft, he started a professional journey that saw him hit .229 with 16 home runs and 93 RBI in 911 minor league at-bats.

Allen said getting released was “humbling,” but he said is going to give baseball one more shot. He feels his situation will become clearer after the World Series, and that he is “hoping and praying” he gets another opportunity.

To ensure that happens, Allen has been traveling from Dauphin Island, Alabama, where his mother and father still live, to Sturgis, Mississippi, to work out, to hunt, to fish, to get his mind right and to “keep the main thing the main thing.”

Part of that process is associating with great people, like former MSU All-American Jake Mangum, who Allen worked out with Tuesday at MSU’s Palmeiro Center.

“If you’re going to be the best at something you have to hang around the best,” Allen said. “Jake is one of the best baseball players in SEC baseball history, and he has helped me tremendously.”

Allen said part of his talk Wednesday night will focus on building relationships with quality people. He used the phrase “iron sharpens iron” to stress the importance of making smart choices when picking friends and acquaintances. Allen said that message is crucial to young people because there are so many negative influences, which is why Allen is excited to share his story.

“You never know who you will have an impact on,” Allen said. “Our job is to reach out and plant the seed and let God bring the rain.”

Allen believes his release is part of life’s roller coaster ride. He understands he will face many more successes – and failures – along the way and that he will be able to stay on track because God is in control.

“Just because you’re having success don’t forget about God. He is the one who got you there,” Allen said. “When you’re not having success, He is the one down in the valley with you.

“When people look at me, especially in Mississippi, they think what success that guy had. He was part of the first national championship in Mississippi State athletic history and what a great guy, but what they don’t remember or realize is I struggled and failed as well. I think people relate to that. It is all about how you respond to that failure, and I think I have been open to my mistakes and what I have done wrong. I think that shocks people because all they know is the superstar, but one way to impact people is to be honest and open with them. The best way to learn from a mistake is to learn from someone else’s mistake.”