**S5 E25: Love1 LoveAll**

(AJ II & RuQuan Brown)

*Previously recorded on* Satur*day, November 23rd, 2019*

0:00 AJ: Benjamin Banneker Academic High School’s RuQuan Brown is an incredibly talented and humble scholar athlete. He holds a 3.9 GPA and 24 college football scholarships offers, including seven from the Ivy League. This week, RuQuan discusses his impact both on and off the field. Stay tuned, you’re listening to *Max Out Time!*

0:23 Intro Song ‘For The City’

0:59 AJ: RuQuan, how you doing man?

1:02 RuQuan: I am super, super blessed man!

1:05 AJ: What’s going on today man? Sounds like you’ve had a long day so far.

1:08 RuQuan: Man, there has been a million and one things that has happened in this day, and I really just got to give glory to God, because I’m learning man.

1:18 AJ: Absolutely, so you’re a student-activist, a community builder, you’re in the community. You started your own brand, a clothing brand, Love1. Tell the people what Love1 is about, and why this issue is so important?

1:36 RuQuan: So Love1 is about a couple of different things, the most important thing right now is, Love1 is a clothing line donated to an organization in New Jersey, where they buy guns off the street and turn them into art. I lost my stepdad to gun violence in 2018, and I lost a teammate in 2017. My teammate wore number 1 and so that’s prompted me to start an organization called Love1, where we could memorialize him and his name and remember him forever. Not only in DC, but really all around the country and all over the world, gun violence is plaguing our communities.

2:13 AJ: Repeat your age one more time.

2:16 RuQuan [laughs]. Yeah I’m only 17 but –

2:18 AJ: He says, “only 17”, who you think you’re Chris Breezy?

2:22 RuQuan: They say that wisdom comes from old age and God. I have to give again glory to God because not only from reading my own bible, but from the from the good Godly wisdom in my family, it’s limitless, so I’m so thankful for them.

2:37 AJ: Where does all this come from? It sounds like you’re a a God fearing young man who is all about serving people. Who instilled that in you?

2:48 RuQuan: That’s a tough one, it’s really apart of my family. My great grandma, rest in peace, she was also a God fearing woman, who wasn’t afraid to be herself and that’s something I learned, that I got to stay me because Jesus loves me, not who I pretend to be. And so my great grandma I think is--was the matriarch of our family, and kind of started that foundation for us. My nana, my mom, my grandma, my dad –

3:16 AJ: So it’s taken a village so far?

3:17 RuQuan: Oh yeah, oh yeah and really we’re seeing it a little different, we’re starting to focus a little bit more. I’ve got to give credit to my grandad as well. There’s a bible verse he told me about where it’s something like, “God will forget your kids because you forgot God.” That’s what encouraged him to acknowledge God, so that his kids and his grandkids could be successful and flourish. He always reminds me that I am God’s promise to him.

3:52 AJ: So was it God speaking and talking to you after you had loved ones who were lost to gun violence?

4:00 RuQuan: That’s easy man, the Bible says, “Any good gift comes from God” and so this has been more than a gift to not only me, but to hundreds and really thousands of people from across the country, I’m sure even the world, so absolutely absolutely.

4:16 AJ: What’s your ultimate goal with this brand and this gift that you have? The many gifts that you have?

4:22 RuQuan: I feel like Santa Clause, I want everybody to get a gift on Christmas. You know what I mean. I’m excited for the –

4:27 AJ: Saint Quan that’s what they call him!

4:29 RuQuan [laughs] I really wanted to be a household and worldwide brand. Even if you never wore Love1, or can’t buy Love1, or choose not to buy Love1, I would love to be part of your everyday. I want you to make decisions to love people. Something that God put on my heart recently, you never know how your one act of love might literally save somebody’s life. That’s why it’s really important, I’m not losing brothers, teammates and my cousin Korey Dooley was shot four times by his stepdad when he was 16. These stuff are not happening out of love, it’s ridiculous, love don’t hurt like that. These things are happening out of poor planning and poor health and poor communities and I don’t mean impoverished, I mean poor as far as quality, we are not doing what we got to do. But, love conquers all, and that’s the that’s the main thing.

5:25 AJ: You’re so young and you speak like you have a lot of these answers, like you’re trying to help incorporate a lot of these solutions. Why? How did it come to you?

5:38 RuQuan: I’m going to be real with you, first of all, I always give glory to God because I have friends, I have homeboys that I’ve kicked it with that are in prison right now for murder. And I think about how God put it on my heart to give him my life and give my life to Jesus, and I made that decision, and the blessings that I have experienced have been ridiculous. I can’t I can’t take credit, it’s not me, it’s a power speaking through me, a lot of people won’t get it –

6:11 AJ: They’re not on the same wave length.

6:12 RuQuan: Precisely, but one day everybody will understand. I’m telling them, there is love way greater than me that encourages me to share only a fraction of what I am experiencing. Even the fraction that I have, that I can understand, is blessing people ridiculously.

6:35 AJ: What is the ultimate goal for this brand and for you just as a leader and as a person moving forward? Because I want people to know what your legacy is and what your legacy should be and why they should listen, and uh hear your testimonies right now. What’s the legacy of RuQuan?

6:57 RuQuan: We’re we’re building it man, like I spoke about my grandad, he shared with us that my brothers and my sisters are uh God’s promise to him. We’re continuing the legacy that he started. Love is the most important thing. It’s called Love1 because love should come first. It’s called Love1 because my brother wore number 1. It’s called Love1 because God is love and God should be the first and most important thing in your life, that’s what it’s about. I argue with my mom a little bit because, my second mom, shout out to you, Dot. I argue with my second mom because we are writing college essays right now, and every answer I want to talk about Love1. There are so much more to me than Love1, but Love1 makes up so much of me, because it’s not just a clothing line, people won’t get it. This is how I live every single day, whether that be in romantic handlings or my athletic handlings or academic, it’s about love.

8:05 AJ: It’s in your spirit.

8:06 RuQuan: That’s it, it’s me, I can’t help it. I am trying to make this brand come to life. My stepdad’s spirit, I want to live through this, my brothers spirit is living through this. That’s what it’s about.

8:17 AJ: Memorializing your loved ones, stepdad, former teammate through a clothing brand. I mean, this is truly one of your many gifts, but your other gifts…I mentioned it in the intro, you’re an excellent, excellent scholar athlete, and um school is first. That was instilled in you very young as well. Who gave you that mindset of academics is most important?

8:46 RuQuan: Shout out to my dad, Slim Supa.

8:51 AJ: Slim Supa? What he a rapper? No I’m just playing.

8:52 RuQuan: My dad is the truth, he um my dad um is a future dentist. The CEO etc. He was reading books to me in the womb and he was playing jazz for me in the womb. We laugh about that, but that’s where it really started at. He was was inspiring that intellect before I knew what anything of that was you know what I’m talking about. Definitely after that, my mom and my step dad turned it up for me. I started playing football when I was 7. Even before that my mom, shout out to my mom, would have me, during the summertime on the weekends or whatever. We would have piles of work books that I’m working through. I would only have to do one or two pages per day, but um while my peers were outside, all day from 11 to 11, I can’t go outside until I have finished two pages. When I went outside I still had the same fun they had, if not more, but it teach –

9:57 AJ: But normal kids, young kids aren’t doing that. You know most parents aren’t doing that.

10:03 RuQuan: That’s right - that’s right and she sewed a seed that does not only allow me to inspire my brothers and sisters, so that she doesn’t have to work as hard because I already set the standard. Also, because that’s what I’m also going to take to my kids, that work ethic and that classroom, that’s got to come first.

10:20 AJ: So, you go to the top magnet school in Washington, DC. You attend Benjamin Banneker Academic High School. Shout out the Achievers.

10:30 RuQuan: Shoutout to Bulldogs man. Come on.

10:32 AJ: Shoutout to Bulldogs y’all some achieving Bulldogs.

10:34 RuQuan: That’s right we got to achieve then we Go Bulldogs.

10:37 AJ: How do you balance school work with community life? With athletics, with college coaches and visits, and all of the whole nine?

10:49 RuQuan: Everything huh?

10:51 AJ: How do you balance all of that?

10:51 RuQuan: Aye it takes a village, shout out to Miss Unique Jones, because of them we can. I’ve been talking to so many people and I’ve been using the term “village” a lot more. She has a a co-working space called the Dream Village and she’s so amazing, she’s the reason why me and you are sitting here, in front of each other.

11:09 AJ: You know that’s my cousin.

11:10 RuQuan: Word?

11:10 AJ: That’s not my real cousin, that’s my play cousin. You know we got the same last name.

11:17 RuQuan: That’s love though! Yeah. She’s amazing, I’ve been using the term, “village”, and she kind of expressed to me the importance of a village. My village, they keep me uplifted, I have friends in my village, I have my parents in my village, I got my stepdad and my brother, rest in peace in my village. Obviously, Jesus is the head of my village. It’s that simple man, the word of God is powerful and that is what has kept my encouraged. I will add that I have eight siblings, um and I call my siblings my babies, because I am the second oldest. My older brother is obviously not my baby.

11:56 AJ: Naw he’s not your baby.

11:56 RuQuan: My babies, they inspire me, and there were times that I wanted to give up –

12:03 AJ: They push you, they push you forward. When you think about quitting, or when you think about not not finishing that last paper, it’s them.

12:14 RuQuan: Easy. Easy because I want to make it easy for my mama. I want that promise that God made to my grandad, I want that to be fulfilled, and faith without work is dead so we got to do the work, and I could be better at it. I will say that having amazing people that are doing a great job, it makes it a lot easier.

12:31 AJ: So college is a big thing for you too? I can just tell from speaking to you that college must be a huge next step for you. What’s the process like so far?

12:41 RuQuan: Crazy stuff man, um I’ve been blessed to have 24 offers to to play Division 1 football, and go achieve an academic education as well.

12:50 AJ: Two dozen offers to play Division 1 football?

12:53 RuQuan: Crazy! I don’t know like…the village, the village!

12:55 AJ: You’re blessed, that’s what why we are here because you are blessed.

13:02 RuQuan: For real and I don’t take that for granted. It’s been tough, you learn a lot, you grow up quick because you have to have tough conversation that I’m still struggling having sometimes. You also learn that you have your parents, sometimes my dad gets on the phone to have a conversation I don’t feel comfortable having. It’s a blessing man, but it also taught me to be careful what you wish for and I’m thankful for every blessing that I have gained but sometimes you don’t know, much is given but much is required, that’s what I always say.

13:31 AJ: Are you starting to take visits, are you doing research on the schools, are they hitting you up, talking to you every day? Bring us into the mind of RuQuan real quick.

13:43 RuQuan: Yeah, yeah, yeah so the football season is over with so we can talk a lot more recruiting. I had a great year with my guys and unfortunately, we don’t get to go into the Turkey Bowl this year.

13:53 AJ: Ya’ll went all the way into the semi-finals, and no one expects Roosevelt Rough Riders to make it to the semi-finals.

14:00 RuQuan: And it’s going to be even crazier when we go get that championship, so I can’t wait until my boys go to do it, and hopefully, I’m on the side-lines watching, maybe even helping.

14:09 AJ: Aye, speak it into existence.

14:10 RuQuan: That’s right. So what it’s like for me man, I’m looking at a couple schools, I like Harvard, I like Columbia, I like Penn, I like UT-Chattanooga, I like Georgetown + or –

14:25 AJ: So that academic to athletic school life has got to be there.

14:30 RuQuan: It got to be there.

14:30 AJ: Those are the top schools in the world.

14:35 RuQuan: There we go and I’m at the number one public school in DC.

14:37 AJ: In DC, say it again!

14:39 RuQuan: I’m at the number one public school in DC.

14:41 AJ: Number one public school in DC.

14:43 RuQuan: Yeah, we’re going to make it happen in the classroom first, that way, when ball is over with, because ball don’t last forever, so when ball is over with –I got to have them books to stand on.

14:50 AJ: I’m glad you pointed that out.

14:51 RuQuan: Easy, but my momma and my village got me right a long time ago. Shout out to my momma, and I’m massively thankful to God for blessing my momma to share that with me and my dad. Man without them man.

15:04 AJ: We’re wishing the best for you, I’m going to take you to this lightening round real quick. I got a couple of questions for you, a little thanksgiving turkey bowl theme type thing. I’m going to start you out with one question real quick. Would you rather have a million dollar NFL contract or have a million dollars donated and raised to your gun violence buy back?

15:26 RuQuan: I really appreciate you asking this question. Love1 is one, that’s easy, come on give me a million dollars please, so that I can take it and buy as many guns as I can off the street, so we can saved our loved ones. Keep your daddy’s at home, keep our brothers at home, everybody be safe, we’re good.

15:45 AJ: Preach! Can the congregation stand up and and and get real loud for RuQuan Brown because he coming in here and preaching today.

15:54 RuQuan: Thank you, Jesus.

15:55 AJ: There we go, amen. Just just on a little thanksgiving tip, Kool-Aid or lemonade? Which one are you drinking?

16:02 RuQuan: Kool-Aid. My stepdaddy, rest in peace, made the best Kool-Aid in the world.

16:05 AJ: Sugar it up! Collard greens or cabbage?

16:10 RuQuan: Ooh my momma can make both of them so I don’t know. I’m going to go with collard greens.

16:17 AJ: Mac & Cheese or candied yams?

16:21 RuQuan: Mac and cheese or candied yams? I’m going to say both, that’s the easiest thing, it’s only good when they’re both together.

16:25 AJ: So we’re mixing them or we–

16:28 RuQuan: Put the whole thanksgiving in one cup!

16:30 AJ: Like the bowl? You can just stir it up?

16:35 RuQuan: Easy! Make sure you get a lot of yams because you’re good other than that.

16:38 AJ: Nah, that’s nasty, I can’t do all of that. It has to be in separate pockets or something like that.

16:42 RuQuan: Watching some Thursday night football, man watch the Cowboys dog the Redskins!

16:47 AJ: Oh my, you done got to my next segment! So we got three games, we got Bears, Lions, who you got?

16:57 RuQuan: I’m going to go with the Bears. Shoutout to North Carolina A&T.

17:03 AJ: Ok Aggie Pride. Ok.

17:05 RuQuan: HBCU.

17:08 AJ: Ok get it done then. You know what I’m talking about. Get it done.

17:08 RuQuan: Easy.

17:10 AJ: We got Saints and the Dirty Birds?

17:12 RuQuan: That’s easy, come on, Saints!

17:14 AJ: Falcons beat them the last time.

17:14 RuQuan: Saints.

17:15 AJ: Just last week.

17:17 RuQuan: Saints.

17:18 AJ: And then the Cowgirls and the Buffalo Bulls?

17:23 RuQuan: You just… disrespected the whole [laughs]… Dallas--you just disrespected

17:26 AJ: You know where we at, right?

17:27 RuQUan: You just disrespected the whole 214, naw man 214,

17:35 AJ: I don’t know what that is, I only know 202, so you going to have to enlighten me. 17:36 RuQuan: Till the day we d-i-e, easy, easy come on Dallas!

17:40 AJ: So you got the Bills?

17:40 RuQuan: Come on Dallas!

17:42 AJ: So you got the? Ok.

17:42 RuQuan: Come on Dallas! Easy.

17:45 AJ: They say Dak is a MVP front runner.

17:48 RuQuan: Make sure you hit me up that night, too. Easy.

17:50 AJ: Ok. We going to see what it is.

17:52 RuQuan: Easy.

17:54 AJ: We can see what it is but lastly, unfortunately, y'all didn’t make it this year but in the Turkey Bowl, we got Dunbar vs HD, this is a renewed rivalry, it’s always been there. Who we got?

18:07 RuQuan: Man, first of all let me say, DCIAA football this year was amazing, so much talent, dogs, great coaching, on a lot of different teams, amazing. Seniors stepped up, I got I got to stay uptown and go with Dunbar.

18:28 AJ: He said he got to stay uptown on 4th street huh?

18:30 RuQuan: Easy, nah that’s not going to be easy but I got Dunbar taking it though.

18:35 AJ: You got the Crimson.

18:37 RuQuan: Those guys are young man and I’m I’m always rooting for the underdogs–

18:43 AJ: HD don’t play around now, they have guys in the league too.

18:46 RuQuan: Yeah, that’s cool. That’s cool, and you ain’t lied but –

18:54 AJ: I ain’t never lied.

18:55 RuQuan: But Dunbar has been doing their thang man, Coach, them guys doing they thang over there –

18:59 AJ: What you think Vernon Davis coming out there and strapping up again? It ain’t the same team.

19:02 RuQuan: Aye we played them guys and honestly…

19:07 AJ: Y'all should’ve won.

19:08 RuQuan: I really truly believe that, both times, but I will say they’ve putting that thang on HD, in a way that we ain’t seen before. [AJ: We are going to find out in a few days.] We’re going to find out, I mean I can’t wait.

19:25 AJ: I would love to continue this conversation around DC and football, and the Cowgirls and whatever is it, but I got to let you go. As always my special guest, Benjamin Banneker Academic High School, SGA President, founder of Love1 clothing line, the list goes on, RuQuan ‘Lockdown’ Brown.

19:46 RuQuan: Yeah, I like that, I like that!

19:49 AJ: You got anything you want to leave us with man?

19:51 RuQuan: I just want to say, Love1 forever, Jesus is King and I want to say, Love1 forever again.

20:00 AJ: Love1 forever, I appreciate you coming on today bruh!

20:03 RuQuan: Appreciate you man! It’s been a blessing thank you!

20:05: Please continue subscribing at *Max Out Time* With AJ II on iTunes. Add @ruthatruth on social media. Like me on Facebook, follow on IG and Twitter, and rate and review this podcast on all podcast streaming services today, AJ out!

20:22 Outro Song: ‘For The City’

20:49 –End–

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