

## **My Goals, Then and Now**

When it came time for me to select a masters program, Michigan State was my first and only choice. I grew up outside East Lansing and it is safe to say my family is die hard Spartan fans. I wasn't sure what I wanted out of my Master of Arts in Education program, because it didn't lead to any additional endorsements or certifications for my current teaching position. However, it is something I am truly passionate about and was hoping it could lead to opportunities in my coaching position. I wasn't sure what to expect from the program. I just knew I wanted to get a degree from MSU after attending Western Michigan for my undergrad. The MAED program offered me the flexibility to accomplish my dream from a distance.

Many things have changed since I began my MAED program at Michigan State. When I started this journey I was still considered a rookie to teaching. I only had a few years under my belt and still had a lot to learn. My goals were simple. I needed learn new ideas and strategies to better myself as a teacher. I also wanted to learn ways to help my students become better readers, writers, athletes, and citizens. I wasn't looking for any specific thing. I truly just wanted information and knowledge to help me become a better teacher and coach.

As I think about my goals now, at the completion of this program, they are similar to when I began. I will continue to seek information. However, the information I seek has become more specific. When I started, I don't think I knew exactly what I wanted to be as a teacher or coach. There were times I had trouble relating information from certain courses I was taking into my daily life as a PE teacher. The disconnect between teaching and learning created some challenges during my journey.

Finally, when I began my specialization coursework for Sports Leadership and Coaching that my goals became clear. That is when I felt that my courses became more than just gathering information. I'm extremely passionate about coaching, especially football. The information I was learning in my courses was immediately put to use. The kinesiology courses helped me shape my philosophy and identity as a coach. These courses helped me realize what direction I wanted to head in as a teacher and coach. Like others, I don't see my completion of the MAED program as an end of my quest for knowledge. This program has given me a specific direction for my next journey.