

### Bon Voyage

As I set sail on all the sea of opportunity, I have come to realize that there are many things I wish to accomplish in my future. Eventually, I would like to travel to a destination located OUTSIDE of the United States. Possibly a remote island somewhere off the coastline or a sandy beach with clear blue water that can be seen for miles. Regardless of the location, it is the experiences that I want to encounter that creates a lasting memory and above all a learning experience. The list continues with other elements such as, skydive, fly a plane, scuba-dive, own a boat, and even camp in the Everglades. In addition to the personal things I wish to accomplish, my educational and professional goals continue to grow with every new experience I encounter with lifelong learning.

There is one task that I can begin to cross off my list, earning my Master of Arts in Education degree. The end of this summer will mark the completion of my Master's degree and I could not be more proud of all that I have accomplished in a little over a year's time. Upholding a full-time job, managing my many responsibilities, all while obtaining a higher education is not an easy task. However, as technology progresses, so does education. Online learning has made it possible for me to continue my education in the comfort of my own home. Without this form of education, it would have been extremely difficult, and potentially unrealistic at this point in my life to complete my goal of continuing my formal education. Online learning has opened up a world of opportunities for not only educators such as myself, but for youth as well. Every person's or family's situation is unique and online learning makes learning possible in every circumstance. Online resources and social media avenues make learning "on-the-go" possible.

While working through my master's courses I was able explore many social media avenues such as YouTube videos, Teaching Channel videos and blogs about special education to help broaden my understanding of associated terms, techniques and experience that would help my on my continued journey to move forward with my concentration in Special Education. Two of my master's courses in particular, *Classroom & Behavior Management in the Inclusive Classroom* and *Promoting Positive Youth Development Through Sport*, offered many resources such as videos, blogs, discussion forums, and peer collaboration to explore and expand my knowledge on many different teaching/coaching techniques. I decided that another goal I would like to accomplish is to create and teach a gymnastics class designed to cater to children with special needs. Sports offer many developmental benefits to all children and this would be another great addition to expand the gym's gymnastics programs. Every child learns in his or her own way and my coaching philosophy is simple, do what is best for each child. Expanding education programs in the gym would allow for our gym to do what is best for each child, regardless of their ability.

As I look back on professional and educational goals accomplishing a Master's degree was number one on my list. Since that goal is almost complete it leaves me wondering what my next big task should be. "What goal could now be added and placed at the top of my list?" At the beginning of my journey through the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) program, I viewed my higher education being complete with a master's degree, however, as I look further into my future I do not see myself stopping here. This thought crossed my mind in June while I was attending a gymnastics camp in Pennsylvania. Sharing personal coaching experiences with fellow colleagues turned into a discussion about higher education and I discovered that acquiring a degree in exercise science may be my next goal. I have only just begun to research the possibility of working towards a Doctoral Degree in Exercise Science, and if there is an online program available, the likelihood of this goal becoming a reality may be in my near future.

Technology has definitely changed and helped shape my view on virtual education. I feel that I have only scratched the surface with all that technology has to offer. At the beginning of the MAED program, I was a little hesitant about completing my entire degree online, however, this program went well above my expectations and I believe that online learning is filled with a lot of unmasked potential that will only develop into greater things as technology progresses and grows with society.

One way to look at my Master's degree is to view it as a starting point, rather than an ending point in my professional and educational career. With all of the many opportunities technology has to offer, I see myself growing with society, while maintaining my goal as an educator to be a lifelong learner for my students so I can better teach the growing youth of America.