

Goals Reflection Essay

One Girl, a Goal Statement and a Wedding

By: Mallory Opiela

I would like to start off with another quote from one of the greatest coaches of all time, John Wooden. “Goals achieved with little effort are seldom worthwhile or lasting.”

After reading this quote, I started thinking about my professional goals statement I wrote back on June 26, 2010. It was about one month until my wedding and I was so nervous. I remember figuring out the guest lists, making sure my bridesmaids stayed in line, and praying that everything was going to be perfect. At the same time, however I wanted to start working toward my Master’s, and I was filling out my application to get into the MAED program at Michigan State University. It was a crazy and hectic time, but looking back on it, I would not have it any other way. The goals that I set at that time put me on the right path to become the athletic director I am today. In response to Wooden’s quote, my goals will last, because of the effort I have put forth.

I remember sitting at my parents’ kitchen table, trying to figure out my professional goals as a third year teacher and coach. What did I want to accomplish from this program? What did I want to improve upon? How was I going to do all of this while continuing to teach and coach? Looking back, I was a newly crowned, 25 year old athletic director of an entire school and I had no idea of what I was getting myself into. I loved sports and athletics and I wanted to develop an athletics program which would be nurturing and understanding to my athletes who had learning differences. I wanted my athletes to experience the same pride and accomplishment I had when I participated in athletics and I wanted a program which did not outcast them because of their learning differences. I knew I had an opportunity to develop a program which would be truly one

of a kind and I did not want to let my athletes down. My main goals I wanted to focus on included becoming a more educated athletic director, keeping up-to-date on the latest and greatest coaching techniques, and overall becoming a better well-rounded leader for my program. They were simple at the time, but they were the starting point for me as a young AD and helped me develop my current goals for our program.

My original goals of becoming a more educated athletic director and a well-rounded leader were very basic at the time, but they were the building blocks and a great starting point for our program. I have really pushed myself and I have realized this is a developing process and my overall professional goals will keep developing and improving throughout my career. Currently, my goals still include my original ones, but my main goal right now is to build a supportive athletic community, which includes athletes, parents, and other teachers from my school. My primary goals were to educate myself and become the best AD for my athletes, but after going through the program, I now know that I cannot do this all by myself. I need to include the athletes, their parents, and our teachers more for this to be a program which truly makes an impact for our athletes with learning differences. The more support our athletes with learning differences have from their coaches, parents, and teachers, the more they will feel like they are a part of something and it will help shape them for the rest of their lives.

Upon graduating from the MAED program, I will not be an all knowing leader that has the answer to every question, but I will be an athletic director who is educated and has the confidence to continually build on my education and who will continue to build her program for the betterment of her athletes with learning differences, because they deserve nothing but the best.