

A Brief History

I was born in Hood River, Oregon on September 23, 1984 and I was raised to maturity in Parkdale, Keizer, and Woodburn, Oregon.

Throughout my youth, I learned the value of diligence and service. As a boy, I enjoyed hiking, camping, and scouting, ultimately earning the rank of Eagle Scout. At age 12, I served my fellow Boy Scouts as a Senior Patrol Leader, and without question, my experiences in scouting gave me many opportunities to learn and grow. Even today, I continue to live the Scout Oath and Law.

In school, I always wanted to be the “center of attention,” and as a result, I was often in trouble with my teachers and adult-leaders. Fortunately, many of my teachers successfully encouraged me to focus my energies on schoolwork and on extracurricular activities (such as journalism and wrestling). I attended high school at Woodburn High and also at Winema High in Salem, Oregon. I graduated as a junior in 2003 and immediately began my college career at Chemeketa Community College (also in Salem).

After one year at Chemeketa, I was called to serve a full-time, two-year mission for my Church. I served in the San Pablo, Philippines Mission (from 2003 to 2005) and I learned many invaluable life-lessons as a foreign, Tagalog-speaking missionary. I learned much about myself: my ambitions, my limits, my strengths, my weaknesses, but most importantly, my passion for teaching, instructing, and coaching. Had I not served this mission, I would have pursued a career in waste management rather than a career in education.

As stated, my passion for teaching stems from my service as a missionary (and also my days as a youngster). In the mission field, I spent my days teaching and encouraging others, always wanting to “do more” and “raise the bar a little higher.” Whether presenting in front of a small group or teaching a class of forty students, I exhibit a positive, enthusiastic attitude for learning and growing. (Why teach if not to encourage learning or growth?)

From my experience, a positive, enthusiastic attitude is one of the best approaches to teaching.

The teacher must teach and the student must learn, but *both* must dig for knowledge *together*. In short, I believe that teachers are not above their students and students are not above their teachers.

I also believe that compassion, safety, respect, cooperation, and responsibility are essential in teaching and learning. These are not just buzzwords. These are integral principles for maintaining safe and productive classrooms.

Learning is more than preparation for the endeavors of life: learning is enrichment and discovery.