

From Jump Shots to Reading Instruction:  
Mastery is Never a Time to Quit  
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At this point in my life I have put in 22 years in schooling to better myself as a person and a teacher. 68% of my life I have been enrolled in classes to change my life and to help impact those that I come in contact with. The crazy thing about that percentage is that all of that time that I have put in, the work that I have done is only a door mat to the house of knowledge that I want to build for myself. My goal in life is not to stop my learning once I have gained a piece of paper that says I have “mastered” something, but rather my goal is to keep on learning and be a life-long learner. I always look at the scope of things as not a start and finish but rather as a start and continue. If you look at the most successful people in the world, you never see a person who is at the top of their game and then give up and never try to master anything else.

Look at the example of my favorite athlete of all time, Michael Jordan. When you hear that name your mind connects it with words such as: master, dominate, success, leader, achiever, the best. The reason that you connect Michael Jordan with those words is because he is a life long learner and uses his new found knowledge to better himself and those around him. Michael Jordan dominated the game of basketball in all areas. He didn't try to be the best just on offense, he wanted to be the best at defense as well. He won his first title and had the drive to win many more. He saw that he was at the top of his game and instead of being stagnant there he decided to try new things and tried to be the best at those new things as well. He tried to play professional baseball and even

though he never became an all star in the game he tried hard and put in all of the time that he could to be the greatest at that as well. That is what I want to be; the Michael Jordan of education. I want to strive for the rest of my life to be the best teacher for all of my students. I want to put in the time and try to be on the top of my game. If I master an area such as teaching Reading then I like Michael Jordan will try something new to master such as teaching Math. Even if I try to master something new and strike out trying, at least I am doing just that; trying!

My years in education have taught me so much but the greatest thing that I have learned in those 22 years is that I don't know everything! No one does, if you stop becoming a learner you never can reach your fullest potential. In my current course I am using technology to display what I have learned in my time at Michigan State. Even though this reflection on past learning's has shown me that I have gained so much, this course has also shown me that I have a weakness in incorporating technology in my teaching and how if I did my students could gain so much more. This goes right along with what I said earlier, I don't know everything. Truthfully I don't know much compared to what is out there for me to learn. If an explorer knew there was an island out in the ocean full of great treasure would they just leave it because it might be hard to find? Of course not; they would search for years to hopefully find that treasure. That applies to all of our lives in the area of knowledge and education. There are so many islands out there full of knowledge that we can discover and make ourselves better with. The majority of the world never finds them because they do not feel the need to. Knowledge is the greatest treasure and it is right there at our finger tips and all we have to

do is grab it. That is what I am going to do! I am going to grab as much knowledge as I can and it starts with the next chapter in my journey of knowledge.

When I graduate from Michigan State in May of 2013, I will then begin a leadership program that is given through my home district. The Gailieo program is a program that helps train teachers to be better leaders inside and out of the classroom. I was going to take some time off and just relax for a couple of years but once I was asked to be apart of this program my heart just told me to go for it. I don't know where I get this drive from? There is just something inside of me that says to keep going and don't ever stop. I have strived to be the best in my field and I have many accolades to show the great things that I have done, but awards and certificates won't make me greater. The only true thing that can make me greater is knowledge and if I want to achieve and do greater things then I need knowledge! Graduating from Michigan State is not the end to my story but only a preface. I can not tell you at this time exactly what my future holds for me and what I will be doing in the future but I can say without any doubt that it will revolve around my becoming better through my life long learning.