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Warrior Leaders Beyond Winona State

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WARRIOR LEADERS BEYOND WINONA STATE

Having a class such as LDRS 614- Change Leadership offers graduate students a platform to articulate new ideas, question old ones and create paths to the future. This class enables students to practice leadership skills, lead projects, build collaborative learning communities and develop leadership branding behaviors. In this learning community, we all bear witness to growth, disciplined thinking, conflict resolution, and challenges to long held belief systems. The “AHA” moments are visible and visceral and graduate students begin to reengineer old thoughts into new ones.

What was interesting in the spring 2018 class is that there were at least two cultural outsiders, who by their very presence, added a layer of discomfort to the traditional sense of belonging. All had to learn how to communicate across cultural borders and geographic differences. As we moved along, we discovered that the search for “sameness” was far more fun than the search for “differences”. Amid the Midwestern “bluffs”, the South carved out a niche and “y’all” just had to “go with the flow”.

And oh when we started talking about leaders being “conversation starters”, some were a little “late to the party”. However, as the conversation progressed, we got excited about exhibiting our “leadership confidence” and “reaching out to followers” and “empowering others” and being “others focused” and “creating value in the community”. We quickly discovered that we could make a “societal impact” by being “conversation starters”! Hallelujah, it is rocking up in here!

I have fun with every new class because I start instruction from a position of confidence, strength and purpose. My goal is for each of you to go forth and fulfill your personal promise, transform the world around you and remain in service to those who engage you. Lead without limits!



As part of an ongoing project in the Leadership Education Program at Winona State University, the students of the Change Leadership (LDRS-614) course have been tasked with presenting a “semester newsletter” for the education department. The spring of 2018 semester students have been asked to introduce themselves and answer two questions. What does leadership mean to you? And, where do you see yourself as a leader in the future OR where do you see your leadership education taking you in the future?

The following displays the student’s individual thoughts as they continue to form their view of leadership and what it means to them. Student’s formulated their thoughts from past experiences, our leadership text by Peter G. Northouse, group discussion, as well as the knowledge our esteemed presenters Chris Hahn, Eri Fujida and Denise McDowell so gratefully shared with us in this spring’s Change Leadership Class.



This is what Winona State's leaders had to say...

Dustin Anderson -

Leadership to me is a skill used by those who have influence over others to build working relationships toward common goals. The relationship that leaders build with their followers is backed by trust and mutual respect, as well as an understanding of what is expected of both parties. It must be focused on the necessity of follower development. When leadership is used correctly it has the capability to help followers reach potentials not reached before.

Through the Education Leadership graduate program, I have gained knowledge on effective leading that I plan to use in my career as a strength coach. With the information gathered I plan to start my career coaching at a division two school, working with as many athletic teams possible. My goal is to develop working relationships with the athletes I coach, pushing them to heightened capabilities of both physical and mental ability. I am looking forward to the opportunities in my future and I have strong confidence that the Education Leadership program has prepared me for them.

“Everyday leadership exists in every action that we engage in. It is about the moments we work one on one with people to alter the course of their day, year, or maybe even their life.”

Stephen Erlandson -

Leadership is something that evolves. It starts from an inner desire to reach a higher level and then having the dedication to achieve whatever that level may be. It involves having a strong set of values and the willingness to defend them when times are tough. Leadership is not something that solely comes from within but is learned through valuable experiences that shape the desire for that higher calling. It is important for leaders to recognize the traits and skills that they possess in order to effectively lead others towards an organizational goal. Those who can effectively gather each individual and create an environment where they all know they are a part of the greater overall mission are great leaders. The ability to do this over one's career can reap immeasurable benefits.

As I progress in this program and begin to shape what kind of leader I want to be, I see myself as a supporting leader. One who is able to work alongside my followers and be involved with what they are doing. I see leadership as a mentoring opportunity that should not be ignored. My ability to share my passion/s is what drives me to become a better leader. Down the road, I will work towards becoming a Sports Information Director who will positively promote athletics as well as teach aspiring students to continue to press into their passions as well.

“...leaders never stop growing.”

Carley Clinkscales -

Leadership to me is a relationship between the leader and followers that entails building an inspirational vision, setting a direction, and influencing change to achieve a common goal. With that, leaders also support and guide individuals to the right destination, while keeping the mission at the forefront in all that they do. When leaders and followers become a team and understand one another's responsibilities, success is possible.

The Leadership Education program has equipped me with knowledge and skills to best prepare me for the future leadership opportunities that lie ahead, potentially as a school principal. As a first-year teacher, I hope to spend several more years in the classroom in order to gain more experience and knowledge, prior to moving into an administration position.



Brad Hak -

My leadership role is an ongoing journey that will simply continue to develop over the course of my life. Though I am getting older, I still do not know where the majority of my leadership skills will be utilized. Currently, my mind is shifting between camp management, school administration, or pursuing a career as a college professor. Though I am not sure of the avenue, I know that I will always be working on the front lines, doing my best to positively influence people. I don't believe that my leadership qualities have to be utilized under one umbrella. I agree with Drew Dudley that everyday leadership is the most powerful leadership there is. Everyday leadership does not over glorify the leader. Its purpose is not to give a leader more power based on how many followers they have. Everyday leadership exists in every action that we engage in. It is about the moments we work one on one with people to alter the course of their day, year, or maybe even their life. This theory is based on the ability to be kind and generous to our fellow man while having faith that we are making a difference. The idea, though very ambitious, goes along with the old saying, "If every one of us would sweep their own doorstep, the whole world would be clean." If each of us can positively affect one person's day, the world would be a better place.

There is one place in my life where I constantly see my leadership role expanding exponentially; that is in raising my son William. Parenting, in my opinion, is positive leadership at its best. It relies on love over passion, and when you truly love something, nothing gets in the way of success. I plan on leading (along with my wife) my son to a life filled with positive experiences, morals, and values. I plan on leading that life through interaction and example. That is leadership.

Justin Hanson -

Leadership to me is a process in which a relationship is built between the leader and followers. From that relationship, achieving a common goal becomes a realistic possibility. A vision is created, roles and responsibilities are understood, values are intact, and mutual respect and trust are built between everyone involved. There is an emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development. Leadership inspires others, stimulates thinking, gives freedom to innovate and create, is supportive, and develops followers to their fullest potential.

The skills and knowledge that I have gained through the Education Leadership graduate program have enhanced the opportunities that I have as an educator. With these additional opportunities, I plan to continue teaching at a higher level for the next two years, move into an administration position for about five years, and eventually become a professor of education at the university level. I am excited about the path that lies ahead of me due to the learning and experiences I have enjoyed through the Education Leadership program.



Brittany Kinney -

To me, leadership is complicated and ever-changing. Leadership is definitely situational and should embrace the needs of followers. Though, there are a few key “learnable” characteristics that great leaders display. First, leaders create authentic relationships with followers. Through authentic relationships, a leader actively listens, uses effective communication skills, and is compassionate and empathetic toward followers. Good leaders are also innovative. It takes creativity, collaborative problem solving, and a “lens of equity” to meet the expectations of your followers. Lastly, leaders display passion. They are driven to fulfill their mission and have a vision for the future. This passion is shared and embraced by followers. Leadership takes endless effort and is not for the faint of heart, but when pursued correctly can create impact not only on the organizational level but in the heart and minds of followers.

I want to continue a career in education or community health. Issues I am most passionate about are gender equity, outdoor recreational access, experiential learning, food access, and youth development. My hope is that my growth in knowledge and skills through Organizational Leadership will allow me to enhance my effectiveness as a leader and manager. Currently, I serve in a lower management position within a non-profit in Colorado, but I would like to see myself grow to upper management, hopefully, CEO or Executive Director. This move does not have to happen within my current organization. In fact, I would prefer to move back to Minnesota to serve the community I am most passionate about. Overall, I want my passions to be the motivation behind my leadership, resulting in authentic relationships, collaborative decision-making, and improvement in the equity of education and community health.

“Leadership takes endless effort and is not for the faint of heart, but when pursued correctly can create impact not only on the organizational level but in the heart and minds of followers.”

Patrick Holt -

Leadership for me has many facets. Perhaps the greatest and the most important for me is authenticity. Walking ones’ talk equals authenticity in my book. A true leader stands out in front of his followers. He leads from the front, not from the rear. A leader is best seen and not heard. And, when he is heard, his actions match his words. His walk must match his talk. Some of the best examples of leaders that come to my mind that embody these qualities are Mohandas K. (Mahatma) Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King Jr.

It is my hope that upon graduating with my Master’s degree in Organizational Leadership that I may apply the principles and knowledge gained throughout the Graduate coursework and meld that with my real-world business experience and knowledge base, to help propel my own company/s toward success through authentic, charismatic leadership. The end goal is to leave the planet better than I have found it. To that end, it is my hope to become philanthropic and leave a legacy that empowers a future generation of leaders to also leave the planet better than they find it by inspiring and empowering yet more future leaders.

Chenxiao Li -

For me, leadership is a mixture of competence, quality, and social resources. It is a public relationship. Whether or not leadership is successful depends on whether it is possible to build a good relationship with followers and if it is possible to gain trust and recognition and respect. It is a force that allows people to come together and fight for common goals.

I hope that I can become a leader in the future, whether in terms of human resources or public relations, but I still have a long way to go. I think no one is a natural leader, or that we all were followers. So, we need to continuously improve our work ability, professional quality, and make our work skills more and more professional. We also need to communicate with others and exchange experiences to establish a good relationship with people. Overall, I think I have enough enthusiasm to be ready for my leadership path ahead.

Vanessa Richter -

Leadership is hard to define. In this Change Leadership course, we've learned about a number of different styles of leadership and how an individual's situation, traits, characteristics and followers all can impact the type of leadership that is present. For me, leadership is understanding all of these elements about one's self, surroundings and followers and being able to adapt, influence and guide individuals towards a common goal. This goal can be anything from helping team members grow and develop their skills, to achieving company profit margins. This is what I am hoping to continue to apply to my career.

I want to always remember that there isn't a default leadership style or process to follow to accomplish goals. My soundings and followers will always be in flux requiring me to adjust my leadership style in order to be a successful leader. I hope as I continue through the Professional Leadership program, that I become more in tune to my strengths as a leader and identify areas of improvement so that I'm best equipped for any environment I'm placed in.

“Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.”- Sheryl Sandberg

Jeffrey Thompson -

Leadership to me is the process in which a group of people are led by a vision or goal. Leadership is also a relationship between a leader and followers, but it is that relationship that dictates the attainability of organizational goals. A leader is someone who will work to gain the trust, and respect of their followers. Leadership is not something that comes by title but by influence. The amount of influence a leader has directly affects their ability to keep or gain more followers and delegate responsibility. The followers then should be a direct reflection of the leadership. After all, he who thinks he leads but has no followers is merely taking a walk.

Ideally, I believe that the leadership skills I have developed will be put to good use, albeit in strength and conditioning, or another opportunity in the future. At the end of my undergraduate, I thought I was capable of leading teams of athletes at a good capacity already. Now at the end of my graduate degree, I have the ability to look back and know that I was nowhere near able to lead people. I plan to stay in strength & conditioning and attempt to gain a position somewhere at the division I or II level. After this graduate program, I feel I'm confident enough for any position that I'm offered.

Marcus Teachout -

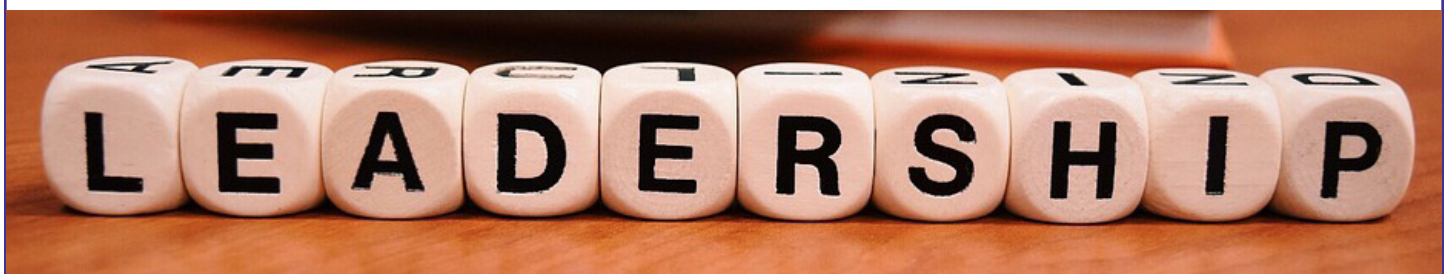
A leader is one who takes initiative in building relationships and is accountable for an organization while maintaining it for a period of time. A leader also establishes a direction by creating a vision and setting strategies for completing goals. Leaders motivate and inspire others by building teams and coalitions to produce change and movement to better serve an organization in the present and in the future.

As an Athletic Director, I will provide leadership by building and facilitating relationships with other administration, coaches, families, and students. I will establish a direction that influences others to have a mutual purpose of reaching goals that will satisfy our unmet needs.

Brittany York -

I view leaders as people who are born to lead. Being a prospective leader cannot be created out of nothing; there has to be a foundation to build upon. Anyone with a leadership foundation has the ability to grow and learn to be a successful leader with the proper resources. I feel I was born to lead. The confidence I have in myself has gotten me where I am today and plays a role as to where I will go in the future. My self-awareness sparks understanding that no matter how successful or great you are there is always room to improve. Being in graduate-level courses at Winona State University, with such talented classmates, triggers the realization that leaders never stop growing. The age difference and leadership ranges are so imperative to experience to understand how diverse leadership actually is.

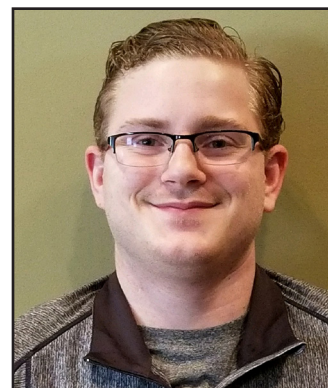
Knowing, what I do now, will push my growth as a leader in the future. What makes me excited about being a leader is knowing the impact leaders have had on me. With that, I see myself influencing others, especially young females, to be confident in who they are by giving them the ability to formulate their own opinions. I feel it is important to be able to formulate and articulate your opinions and being able to feel good about it. Too often are we molded into thinking a certain way because of social influences including parents, friends, educators, and social media. What we think then becomes us. Being able to lead others in their own direction/s, to a place of confidence with an absence of social influence is what is guiding me to my success. We are all individuals, with individual thoughts and opinions, and that makes this world irreplaceable.



Meet The Writers

Dustin Anderson

Dustin Anderson is a 1st-year graduate student studying Education Leadership and Sports Management. He completed his undergraduate program in exercise science during the summer of 2017 and has been using his degree to coach high school and college athletes in the weight room. During his free time, Dustin enjoys spending his time lifting and reading books written by the nation's top strength coaches. After he completes his master's program Dustin wants to work for a Division I College as their head strength and conditioning coach.



Carley Clinkscales

Carley Clinkscales is a graduate student, who is halfway through the Leadership Education program. She is a graduate of Winona State University, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Special Education (Learning Disabilities). Her occupation consists of educating sixteen five and six-year old's, as a first-year kindergarten teacher at St. Mary's Primary School in her hometown, Winona, MN. In her leisure, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, and shopping. She aspires to be a great teacher and leader and hopes to be a principal someday.

Stephen Erlandson

Stephen is a second-semester graduate student pursuing his masters in Leadership Education-Sport Management. He joined the Winona State Athletic Department as the Athletic Communications Graduate Assistant this past fall in pursuit of a deeper knowledge of the field of sports information. After the completion of his degree, Stephen intends to use his knowledge gained at Winona State to pursue a lifelong dream of working in professional baseball. While attending Bethel University, Stephen spent his senior year as the Sports Information and Marketing Intern for Bethel Athletics. He spent the majority of his time with the baseball team, covering all aspects of Royal Baseball and even getting the chance to travel with the team to Florida for spring training. Stephen is the quintessential "Minnesotan." He enjoys playing baseball, hockey, and other team sports, as well as hunting, fishing, and spending time at the cabin.



Brad Hak

Brad is currently teaching and coaching at Dover-Eyota High School, Brad is a graduate of Frostburg State University in Western Maryland. When school is not in session Brad resides in Maine with the rest of his family as an Associate Director of Camp Laurel South. Mr. Hak enjoys pursuing whitetails with a bow and catching any species of fish that he can find. Brad also still enjoys coaching and playing the game he grew up with, soccer. He shares all of these interests and passion with his loving and supportive family, wife Kari, and son William. Brad's future plans are still unknown. Once he completes his masters he will begin to further pursue either camp or school administration.

Meet The Writers

Justin Hanson

Justin R. Hanson is a graduate student working toward an MS in Education Leadership. At the conclusion of the current semester, he will have successfully completed 24 of the 33 required credits. As a second career, he is currently a third-year educator teaching 4th grade. At the beginning of the current school year, Justin became the vice president of his local teacher's union. He raises two children on his own and takes great pride in being a father. Justin enjoys the outdoors, live music, traveling, athletics, and being a positive influence on the lives of others.



Patrick Holt

Patrick Holt is a Rochester Minnesota born native. He is a non-traditional professional student who has been going to school since getting out of school. He graduated (again) in May of 2015 with a Baccalaureate in Political Science and Public Administration from Winona State University. He is finishing his Masters at WSU in the area of Organizational Leadership. Patrick has written, submitted and defended his capstone research project on "Judicial Immunity" and the "Common Good." Patrick has just a couple of courses left and should finish in August of this year (2018). Patrick is considering beginning a doctoral program, in the fall, in the field of Emergency and Disaster Management at North Dakota State University. During Patrick's tenure at WSU, he has served in a number of service capacities, including student senate and as the treasurer for the International Golden Key Honour Society. Patrick is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha, and the National Honor Society. Patrick's background has revolved around the military, law enforcement, and emergency medical service. Patrick has built a number of businesses over the years and has an extensive background in sales and marketing. Patrick is in the process of retooling an online sports apparel business and taking it to the national and international levels next.

Brittany Kinney

Brittany Kinney received her Bachelors of Science degree in Recreation, with a focus on environmental education. Brittany has a diverse range of experience including natural resource management, educational programming in public schools and state parks, leadership roles in summer camp management and development, as well as coordination and management of over 2,000 volunteers with the University of Minnesota. Through these experiences, Brittany has worked with people of all ages and ability levels. Between personal and professional experiences, Brittany found her passion in youth development and is dedicated to high quality, effective, and innovative programming. Brittany hopes through programs like Girl PowHER, youth will find passion, achieve higher levels of self-esteem, and overcome barriers to find success. Originally from Minnesota, Brittany now resides in the beautiful Rocky Mountains of Colorado.



Chenxiao Li

My name is Chenxiao Li, this semester is my second semester in the graduate program, and my major is professional leadership. I do not have a full-time job now, but I used to be an English teacher in a language school whose name is XY Education, in China, during last summer vacation and I have done the translation work on the construction drawings of the Thailand Railway Station. I've been learning the violin since I was 6, and I achieved the highest level of performance when I was 17. In my spare time, I like to do tea ceremony, photography and to work out in the gym. For my future goals, I wish I could get a job as a human resource professional in the United States.

Meet The Writers

Vanessa Richter

Vanessa Richter is roughly halfway through the Professional Leadership program and has been enjoying it. She is hoping to complete her master's degree over the next two years, as she has truly been completing the program one, or two, courses at a time in an effort to balance her full-time job and hobby of playing slow pitch softball. She has been enjoying the Professional Leadership program because it has allowed her to take the teaching/s of how to work collaboratively with others and how to think big picture, by considering all components and aspects of a situation. She applies this understanding to her day to day work as an Account Executive at a marketing agency in Downtown Minneapolis. Vanessa is excited to continue learning and applying the knowledge gained from this program to her life.

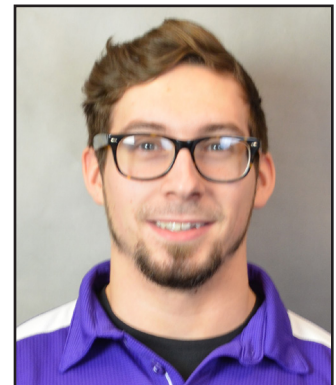


Marcus Teachout

Marcus Teachout obtained his Bachelor of Science Degree in Exercise Science from Winona State University in 2015. Marcus is currently employed at the Winona Senior High School as an Educational Assistant and a Football Coach. Marcus is currently studying to receive his Master's degree in Leadership Education specializing in Sports Management at Winona State University. He plans on obtaining his Master's degree in the Fall of 2018, with the intention of becoming an Athletic Director in the near future.

Jeffrey Thompson

Jeff Thompson is a second year graduate student studying Leadership Education with an emphasis in Sport Management. He currently assist in strength and conditioning here at Winona State University while also working as the head strength and conditioning coach at Cotter High School in town. Jeff is a highly competitive powerlifter and enjoys all things related to fitness. I also play the violin somewhat regularly. My future goals are probably not far from everyone else's, I would like to land a career at a Division I or II university in a strength and conditioning related field. Personally, I would like to compete on a national stage, and maybe break a couple powerlifting records along the way. I'm an only child of a family that has lived in Winona for over 50 years.



Brittany York

Brittany York is currently the graduate assistant women's softball coach here at Winona State University. She is working on finishing her last semester in the Leadership Education program and her last season with the softball program. Brittany is looking to graduate in May 2018 and pursue a coaching job at a university. She hopes to find a job around the Milwaukee area where she will be residing with her boyfriend, Steve Styza, who works as a commercial real estate broker in Milwaukee. Brittany is originally from Crystal Lake, Illinois and moved to Moorhead, Minnesota while attending undergraduate school at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She graduated in May of 2016 with a degree in Physical & Health Education while minoring in coaching. Brittany is excited to continue following her passion in mentoring and coaching young women to become strong, confident leaders like herself.



LDRS 614 - Spring 2018