

Makenzie Banning

12

Renaissance High School

Idaho

What Drives You?

While there are many things that motivate me, one in particular drives me: the kids I have the privilege to teach. Over the past three years, I have had the opportunity to volunteer coach a dance team at Lowell Scott Middle School. This same team that started my love for dance when I was eleven years old sparked my love for coaching years later. When I was offered the opportunity, I knew I would love the chance to choreograph but I had no idea how much I would love the teaching aspect of the job. Ever since then, I have loved every second I've spent with the team. In fact, it has even progressed to becoming my paid job. I work at a dance studio as a head competition coach as well as a recreational instructor for various styles of dance. The leadership and impact I have there is not lost on me; I know I am young for my field and strive to learn and improve every day that I am lucky enough to do what I love. My hope is to develop a program that can grow with me every season.

There are two main aspects of athletics that I've become more involved with through coaching. First, I've seen how much having an invested mentor can change these kids' lives. Whether they are wanting to show me a new skill, tell me about an exciting event, or

even admit they're scared of a performance, showing that I genuinely care about them changes the way they view that very same thing. I can help give them the confidence that middle schoolers sorely need. Secondly, I've realized the pain and stress that high-level athletics puts on the body. The dancers are practicing with patellar tendonitis, ingrown toenails, or while recovering from stress fractures. Seeing how the love of dance and the physical limits of the body intertwine has driven me to pursue the career and degree I am.

In the fall, I will be attending Boise State University majoring in Kinesiology. I will have an emphasis on Rehabilitation Science, with the goal of entering medical school to pursue a career as an athletic trainer or physical therapist. I want to work with young athletes who have pushed their bodies for the sport they love and help them recover. I also want to continue coaching; I have so much passion for that field that I can't imagine giving it up. Having a career that allows me to stay with athletics and dance while helping younger kids would be such an incredible dream come true, and this scholarship would be a huge step in that direction. It won't be an easy career or venture to build that life, but without a doubt it will be worth it.