

The Road Less Traveled...

by Pearl Alimo. Michigan State University

I have always loved to learn and to grow as a person. This desire affected my choice of career. I knew that a career in the educational field would expose me to knowledge and give me the opportunity to transform the world as I teach and lead others. To succeed, I was confident that I had to continue learning and improving on my knowledge, skills and abilities. This was one of the reasons why I decided to pursue a Master's Degree program in Education. Though these are the final moments in my Master of Arts in Education (MAED) program, I see it as the opening door to many learning opportunities now and in the future.

Through my MAED program, I had the opportunity to engage in readings, assignments, projects that helped me unearth some hidden talents. I also learned to become an innovative thinker and designer in education. Researching, sharing and communicating ideas as well as keeping up with the challenge of online education has helped me develop positive attitude in life such as thinking as a winner at all times, finding creative ways to surmount challenges and solving problems. New knowledge, skills, abilities learned and attitude cultivated in this program is challenging me to be a better person every day, inspiring me start a business, motivating me to design and publish websites and encouraging me to make improvements at work. For example, I am designing new classrooms with creative lenses and creating training and professional development programs to help my staff succeed in their daily work as a supervisor.

My priority at the moment is putting new knowledge and skills learned in my Master's program into practice as a way of polishing and sharpening my abilities. Continuing mastery of new technologies learned in my Master's Degree program such as web design and publishing tools, new technological learning platforms to help support my students, teachers and improve teaching and learning programs and projects in the classroom through practice is my goal. For example, I plan on passing my new learnt skills and knowledge on showcasing students work online with my teachers and students. We are planning on a classroom project showcase on line by creating a classroom website.

But how do I keep learning and growing as an educator in this era of rapid technological change and globalization?

To continue to succeed daily in every aspect of my life I know I have to keep improving myself, continue learning and growing. To do this I know I need to keep up with news, updates and current research findings in my field. To practice this effectively, I am currently following professionals in the education field such as teachers, instructors and students on my MAED program on Twitter. Also reading educational [websites](#) is one key way of being on top of the game.

My short term plan is to continue learning through reading books, use online resources such as short online courses, webinars in line with my professional goals and career life. Also participating in face-face workshop trainings, summits and conferences for example is another gateway to continue growth and development. Again, I plan to share my own work and experiences with others through showcases and online publications.

My long term plan however is to pursue a PhD program in Child Development or Educational Technology. I have already started writing out a plan and researching for admission criteria and looking for scholarship opportunities for my PhD program. So for me my journey as a lifelong learner has just begun and it is an exciting feeling!