

From Technology Student to Technology Leader By Danielle Alexander

As I sit on my sunny deck in shorts and slowly sip my coffee, I cannot help but laugh at my pale, tired middle-of-the-school-year self that stars in the clip above. I was probably exhausted after another long day of "teaching". I am placing "teaching" in quotations since not only was I only a second-year teacher with brand new preps, but also, more importantly, I now realize that I was implementing technology just for the sake of implementing it. In other words, I had put no pedagogical thought behind it. Listening to the goals I originally had for applying to the MAET program, I am pleased to say that I accomplished all three; however, I am beyond ecstatic to say that I became a technology leader in the process.

Prior to applying, Leigh Graves-Wolf asked me to meet her for coffee in order to tell me about the program. As an undergrad at MSU, I am sad to say that less than five professors knew me personally. With that said, not only did Leigh's invitation mean a lot to me, but, at that point in my schooling, I had never met a professor so passionate about what they do. Over the course of my classes in the MAET program, however, I was blown away with the passion in all of my teachers/professors, particularly Janet Swenson and Dawn Reed who co-direct the [Red Cedar Writing Project](#) Summer Institute. I now feel as though I have realized and developed my own passion for educational technology, and I look forward bringing the excitement to both my classroom, as well as PLT (Professional Learning Team) and department meetings.

During my undergraduate years, studying abroad was out of the question due to my financial situation, as well as fear. When I graduated in 2010, however, my largest regret was not going overseas. When Leigh shared with me that studying abroad was an option for completing some of the MAET courses, I knew I had no choice but to go. In June 2013, I boarded a plane and spent one month in Galway, Ireland. Not only did I learn a lot about technology, but the overseas experience really shaped me into the educator and leader I am today.

My last goal in wanting to be a part of the MAET program was being able to apply what I learn to careers both in and out of the teaching profession. Although I love what I do, I could see myself in another career in the future. Whether that is higher education, writing about education, or some other education-related career, I wanted my Master's to be applicable. The world is becoming digital, and I have no doubt that the skills and knowledge I have developed in the MAET program will assist me in any path I end up

deciding to pursue.

I used to require a certain number of slides in PowerPoint presentations, have students write blogs without blogging, and only ask questions that can be found in a search engine ([Hicks and Turner](#)). Through the MAET program, however, I have learned that this is not an effective form of teaching. Every day I better my own practice and strive to help colleagues improve theirs.