

Pushing Himself to Higher Academic Levels

By: Atharva Modi

He's pushing his skills to a new level.

"I started this course about a week before this school year started," Matthew Sanders [28] said of his pursuits for learning advanced math. "I was inspired to take higher math classes at a young age since I was good with arithmetic. Ever since I've been taking advanced math classes until I got to this point. I use the Stanford Online High School Canvas system to access all the information for the class. I use Pearson MyMathLab to do some of the homework, and I use Adobe Connect for the live lectures."

Matthew's father, Reggie said that, "we try not to put any boundaries around our children's aspirations. We take a growth mindset approach in their development and in all areas of their lives, so they can become continuous lifelong learners as adults. Since Matthew has always been exceptionally gifted in math, this has required more outside-the-box thinking from us to make sure he stays on that continuous learning path."

Working with Cranbrook and the administration has made all the difference in providing a path for their son.

"We are so very appreciative of the Cranbrook administration's flexibility in trying a new, innovative approach to teaching up to the giftedness of our son in math," he said. "Based on the recommendation from his teachers, Matthew was considered ready to take Trigonometry and Precalculus. Most middle schools obviously do

not offer Trigonometry and Precalculus, particularly in the 7th Grade. However, Stanford OHS provides the flexibility for 7th Graders to take classes that match their ability (upon passing pre-requisite assessments). It was just a matter of whether or not Cranbrook would have the capability to allow Matthew to take the Stanford class. Cranbrook plays an instrumental role in Matthew's learning."

The trajectory toward his learning hasn't always been easy. During his current study of Stanford University's pre-calculus course, he said he's "experienced some challenges because the time of my classes sometimes conflict with my sports and music activities after school. [Their] Spring Break was different from Cranbrook's. I spent Spring Break in France and London, so I had to stay up very late that week to attend classes. Overall, it would have been much harder to manage the time without the support of both Cranbrook and Stanford."

In addition to challenging himself academically, Reggie said that, it "is important that Matthew has a balanced experience at Cranbrook. We want to make sure that he has time for the other activities that he loves to do, such as sports. Matthew does his homework and exams at school and takes his class two evenings per week when he would normally be doing homework. This customization of his schedule allows Matthew to participate in extracurricular activities and have the full benefit of the Cran-

brook experience. It was also important to us that the class did not compromise Matthew's free time outside of his Cranbrook-related activities and, with the administration's assistance, that has been achieved as well."

Keeping an open-mindset and staying motivated is what Matthew believes has helped him stay focused, but he knows that this experience is not for everyone. "I keep on engaging to learn more so that I can reach higher levels of math," he said. "It is hard for me to encourage other people to try this since it is not everyone's passion. However, I would encourage other people to do their best in math, because it is a universal language that is important no matter what you do in life."

Reggie added that he and his entire family "are proud of our children for being themselves and we make sure they know that our feelings for them are always unconditional. This includes supporting Matthew's love for learning, having fun, and his desire to continue to challenge himself by taking Trigonometry and Precalculus, which is a class neither one of us took until high school. Even if we had Matthew's rare ability, neither one of us grew up in an environment where this opportunity would have been possible. Therefore, it gives us additional pleasure that we can provide Matthew with an opportunity that we did not have as children."



What was it like transitioning to a new school mid year?

It's always difficult in the beginning because you're trying to understand how a place operates and works. You're trying to understand what are the values in a place. In a new school, you're trying to get a sense of who people are. I'm glad I taught for eleven years prior to this so that part was the part where I was like, ok, I got this.

What role does Michigan State play in your life?

A big role. I'm a third generation Spartan. My grandparents both went to Michigan State in the 1950s and that's where they met. My parents both went to Michigan State in the 70s and 80s and that's where they met and then I went to Michigan State, my sister also did. I got married there so we got married at the alumni Chapel that's at Michigan State. I met him there too so it's a really special place for us.

What inspired you to become a teacher and why teach history?

A lot of my family members were teachers so I was really inspired by them but also I had great teachers when I went to high school. One of my favorite teachers was super enthusiastic and just made learning super fun. She had a lot of passion and that was inspiring to me. I love teaching you. I love learning new things too. History started with like my grandparents. They used to take us to a lot of different museums and historic sites. We were always going somewhere and learning something new. I love the past. I think there's a lot to learn from it if we spent time really focusing on that we'd realize that there's so many similarities between what happens to us today and what happened to us then and history's kind of cyclical it always comes back so kind of being more aware of that I think is important in understanding kind of why things happen the way they do.

Why did you pick CKMSB?

Mrs. Rodriguez, had been my principal at a former school and she told me that there was an opportunity that was opening up here. I have always had a lot of respect for Cranbrook. I knew it was a great education institution and really prepared students for their next steps in life. I've just been wowed. There's so many cool things you guys do that is more than just school. You guys get to learn a lot about a lot of things that I don't think not every place gets that opportunity. So, that's what makes this place so special.

Second Annual Sixth-Grade STEM Field Trip Scores a Hole in One

By: Emerson Whitaker

Photo by Staff

"Just trying to get good people in the right place." This was Mike Mausolf's response to how he hosted the First Green field trip for Cranbrook MSB.

The First Green program is a group of people who host schools out to golf courses to show them behind the scenes. Mausolf is the Park Crew Chief of Lyon Oaks and has hosted this event multiple times. He said that "Even though this is a national program, we are one of two golf courses in Michigan to host this event."

In honor of Earth Day, he hosted our sixth graders for an exclusive behind the scenes field trip of the golf course which he said, "We have only had this twice and both times were last year."

During these field trips, students experienced how golf courses keep their water clean, how they calculate where to place the end of the hole, the green, and the difference between dirt and soil.

"The place where we got to look at and use the tools that are used on a golf course was my favorite because we got to learn how to make a new hole in the green," Timothy Delzer [29] said. "We also got to look at many tools that were all very different sizes which I thought was interesting."

Even though the sixth graders' day was full of rain they all shared that it was an enjoyable trip and they hope that next year's sixth graders will have just as fun as the experience they had.