

Alumni Focus: Alma (Sproul) Mattocks, Class of 2000

Seneca Elementary School and Grant Union High School

I was born and raised in Grant County. My parents are Jim and Jo Sproul, and I am the youngest of six children: Ben Brandt, Bill Sproul, Andrea (Brandt) Combs, Jamie (Sproul) Thomas, and Wendy (Sproul) Ballou. I grew up in Bear Valley for most of my childhood, but moved to Canyon City while I was in high school. Growing up in Bear Valley, we all attended Seneca Elementary School until the eighth grade and then went on to attend Grant Union High School.

There are so many teachers throughout my elementary and high school years who I absolutely loved and taught me so much. Every single teacher and staff member at Seneca Elementary played a vital role in my education and my growth as a person; some of my favorites included Mrs. Zick and Mrs. Beal (who was also at Grant Union when I was there!). Mr. Olson was my piano teacher for years, and he was instrumental in teaching me to always strive to do better. In high school, I absolutely loved Mr. Ediger. His inquisitive spirit and zest for life were something I truly admired.

Some of my favorite memories from school came from the activities I was involved in. I remember in high school getting opportunities for field trips and travel, and I was able to see what life was like outside of Grant County. I think those initial trips piqued my curiosity to want to travel and learn more about the world. I will also never forget being crowned Homecoming Queen my senior year and getting to ride around the track on the back of a convertible. As a young girl, I remember going to Homecoming football games and seeing the girls who were on the homecoming court and wishing that it would be me someday. I will never forget the day my childhood dream came true.

I tried to stay involved in lots of activities throughout middle school and high school. I started with volleyball and basketball, but switched to cheerleading halfway through high school. 4-H was another big part of my life, and I was a member of the Izee Livestock group. I was also involved in student government, serving as the Student Body President my senior year.

Although sometimes graduation does not feel like it was that long ago, so much has happened in my life since that time. After graduation, I went on to get my bachelor's degree in Athletic Training at Linfield College. I then took a year off and worked before I realized that if I wanted to get to my goal of working as an Athletic Trainer in a collegiate setting, I would need to get my master's degree. I went to Oregon State University for my master's degree, and that is where I really started to flourish in my personal and professional life. I fell in love with running as a hobby and met my future husband.

After graduating from Oregon State University, I became an Athletic Trainer at Pacific University. My husband and I lived in the Hillsboro area for almost seven years, during which time I started running more and completed several marathons, enjoying all the Pacific Northwest has to offer. My husband worked in professional baseball, requiring an extensive amount of travel, so eventually we moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where I could be closer to him year-round. After moving to Louisville, I found my way into higher education, helping to start a Master of Science in Athletic Training program at Spalding University.

Just as I was getting settled into that role, my husband received a promotion, our son was born, and we moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. At that point, I realized I wanted to continue my career in higher education, and I knew that meant getting a doctorate. One of my greatest achievements in life was completing my PhD at Bellarmine University while working full-time with a young child at home and a husband who traveled often for work. I have also completed 11 marathons and one ultra-marathon since high school, and coming from someone who never thought of herself as a runner, I know that is a huge accomplishment.

My son is now 9, and we have shifted to following my career. I currently serve as the Division Chairperson for the Division of Athletic Training at West Virginia University. When I was graduating from High School, I

