



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## A LIFETIME OF LESSONS: SIOUX EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

BY RON HOFFMAN

### *Liesa (Swenson) Hanson*

"I enjoy talking with students, and sometimes they just need to know that someone cares about what is happening in their life." As Liesa (Swenson) Hanson raced through the track and field and education programs at the University of North Dakota, she did not forget some of the valuable lessons that were taught. As a matter of fact, she took them so much to heart that she herself has become a mentor to a whole new generation of eager young pupils. Today, Liesa is the Social Studies instructor at Central Middle School in East Grand Forks, Minn. and the head girls track and field coach at East Grand Forks Senior High. "I learned at UND and in (teaching) high school how much you can influence someone else. Just a smile or asking someone how their day is going can just make their day."

Hanson enjoys teaching lessons to her students as well as her athletes and never misses an opportunity to relate back to her experiences as a student athlete at the University of North Dakota in her teachings. "Many are surprised and interested in your life experiences, especially when you are barely 5'4" and received an athletic scholarship to run at the University of North Dakota." Fighting Sioux Head Coach Dick Clay remembers an athlete who was every inch a competitor. "She was a great competitor. She returned to the track after taking three years off after high school graduation, and it was as if she'd never missed a step."

Liesa finished her shorter than usual, but successful career at the University of North Dakota as one of the best Fighting Sioux short sprinters ever, leaving an indelible mark on UND track history, as well as her name in the record books. "The most positive experiences I had at UND are related to track," recalls Hanson. The practices, trips to meets, and the coaches made my experiences there so enjoyable." Being a good competitor certainly enhanced those experiences. Liesa was a two-time NCAA Division II National meet qualifier for the Fighting Sioux in the 400 meter intermediate hurdles, an event in which she also set and still holds the UND record. Clay believes this is one of her most impressive records. "She was extremely fast between the hurdles. Her pure speed made her fun to watch."

As good as she was on the track; Hanson became just as successful off the track. "College life was very busy, especially as a student athlete." Hanson recalls the many hours she spent juggling her schedule between classes, homework, projects and practices. Through all of this Liesa credits her education for giving her the skills she needs in coping with the ever-demanding stresses of her career. "As a teacher, some days you are doing a thousand things at one time. My organizational skills help me survive each day." Clay remembers her as a person who managed her student life the same as managed her competitive career as a Fighting Sioux athlete; as a hard worker. "People like Liesa, who have so much activity packed into their lives and still find time to get it all done; you just have to have respect for them."

Liesa has applied her lessons learned at UND to real-life scenarios. She has spent more than a decade in the school systems of East Grand Forks as a teacher and coach. But her life is not totally consumed by her career in education. Together, she and her husband, Roger, make quality time for their three daughters (Emily, 9, Tessa, 5 and Tiffany, 4). "Needless to say, teaching, coaching and taking care of our family keeps us busy."

But don't think for a second that just because she has tasted success that she is going to slow down. Liesa has found herself back in school again, completing her master's degree in education. As for the near future Hanson says "I love teaching at the middle school level and coaching track. I can't see myself doing anything else at this time." As a matter of fact, she still emails Clay for coaching ideas. "She is a very good high school coach," said Clay of Hanson. "She herself was such a great competitor, but she is able to find the right mixture of competition and excitement. Her athletes do well and they have fun in her program."

UND has since paved the way for Liesa Hanson to pursue her love of education of today's youth. She credits a top-notch education at UND complemented by a great track and field program as her reasons for success. "UND was a super experience for me, and I wouldn't trade those memories for anything. Go Sioux!"

### *Sara (Dupslaff) Young*

Sara (Dupslaff) Young is proof positive that even though a person travels a bumpy road, that doesn't mean that the road will not end up at a desirable destination. "For the last two years as a student athlete at UND, I was a single mother on a track scholarship," recalls Sara. So often we read the traditional "after my college degree, I did this..." story that we forget how hard it is for a lot of student athletes to juggle a schedule of classes, homework and practices and compete at the high level that they do. Now add to this the component of being a single parent. This certainly puts things into perspective. It's here where life's true lessons began for Sara (Dupslaff) Young. But the lessons she'd taken from her experiences as a student athlete at the University of North Dakota made her strong enough to overcome a wealth of obstacles, including a battle with breast cancer in 1998.

Being a single parent and a student athlete is no small task, but Sara recalls what she learned from her experiences. "It taught me to be independent. I worked two work study jobs and took out several loans to support us. It also taught me that I could be a mother, a student, an athlete, and work at the same time."

"It certainly wasn't easy for her," recalls Head Coach Dick Clay. "Through all of this, she was able to not only compete, but come back stronger than ever. It was truly a remarkable story and I was so happy that it turned out well for her."

Besides being a good person, Clay remembers her also as a gifted athlete. "Sara had a lot of athletic ability and she used it to develop her talents as a jumper." After the birth of her daughter Lisa in 1990, Sara came back to the Fighting Sioux Track and Field team for two more years. At the North Central Conference Indoor track meet in 1992, Sara broke UND records in the long jump and the triple jump and qualified for the NCAA championships. Clay recalled her excellent performances. "Sara became such a great jumper for us because she was such a quick learner." Sara credits her experiences at UND for her successes as a member of the Sioux and in the end is grateful for the support she received. "Being a student athlete (at UND) gave me focus on the priorities in my life."

Despite all of Sara's success at the University of North Dakota, a degree from UND was not in the cards for her. In 1992, Sara was united in marriage to Lisa's father, Jeffrey Young, upon his graduation from the Air Force Academy. From UND, she and Jeff moved to Minnesota, where Jeff was accepted to medical school at the University of Minnesota. From here she worked full-time at Norwest Mortgage, Inc. for two years before working as activities director for the University of Minnesota's Como Student Community Cooperative. It was at this point where her son, Paul, was born.

In the fall of 1998, Young faced one of her biggest ordeals yet when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. After surgery in October, she began chemotherapy in November, and after five months had thoroughly beaten an opponent tougher than any she had ever seen on the track. Again Sara gave credit to the experiences she had as a single parent and student athlete at UND that she says helps her deal with this trial. "It taught me that I can handle any challenge thrown my way."

With the cancer completely gone, she and her family relocated in July of 1999 to Colorado Springs. It was here that she finally received her college degree in communications from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs in 2001. With degree in hand, she substitute taught and even went back to school with the hopes of fulfilling her life long dream of becoming a teacher, all the while coaching boys soccer for the YMCA.

Her road toward her teaching license has however taken another detour, this one through the Yukon. With her husband re-assigned to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska in the spring of 2003, Sara was unable to attend the teaching program at UC-Colorado Springs. Undeterred however, Sara Young still stays connected with her dream to one day teach by working as a kindergarten teacher's assistant at Ptarmigan Elementary in Anchorage. "I still have plans to return to school and attain my teacher's license, but for now I am thoroughly enjoying myself with the kindergarten class."

Sara (Dupslaff) Young has traveled a winding road, full of bumps, twists and turns. Where she is at on the road is anyone's question. One thing's for certain, this life's journey began as a student athlete at the University of North Dakota, and for that she is grateful.

Jackass "Where Are They Now? The stars of MTV's hit prank show haven't been standing still. By Abby Robinson. 20/11/2019. The Matrix: Where are they all now? Including Tank, Dozer, Switch and more. What have the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar been up to in the last 20 years? The Vampire Diaries cast: Where are they now? What have the cast been up to since they left Mystic Falls? By David Opie. 21/05/2019. Gossip Girl: Where are they now? XOXO. By Katie Byrne. Lyrics "Strangeways - Where are they now". They said they would give all they had to give They offered their hand with the will to live The word of the white man, words they wouldn't never understand It wouldn't take long before 'til they realized The promise of peace was about to die They'd fight for their honor, fight for the freedom of the land Over and over, I've asked myself whats going on, We can't hide in silence for too long So tell me Where are they now, why should it be this way Where are they now, I only feel the shame, Where are they now, their time Where are they now? (HEY! Hit me! Where are they noooooow?) ("HIT MEH!!") [Nas] See I remember them forever The original Spinderella Lakim Shabazz, 9 MM Fu-Schnickens, Buckshot, Finesse, and Sequence ..Who was a (Rappin' Duke?) Da-ha! Silk tie and leather was cute Body and soul was Dee from Pump It Up's group Oaktown 357, J.J. Fad too had pop hits and gold ropes Where my man Young MC and Tone Loc? Funky Four Plus One, Force M.D.'s Miss Melody, I hope she packin' a bankroll As well as educated rap for ice and Kangol Shante, she from around my way yo EPMD, K-Solo, where are they now? (HEY!! Where are, where are they noooooow, huuuhhhhoohhhh HEY!) Where are they now? (HEY! Hit me! "Where Are They Now" is a song recorded by English Oi!/punk rock band Cock Sparrer in 1982, from their album Shock Troops. The lyrics comment on the previous six years of the punk subculture. The song portrays the early years of the punk movement in a negative light, bemoaning the lack of follow-through by the leading figures. It also comments on the band members' own naivete, exhorting listeners to not make the same idealistic mistakes. Its lyrics mention several punk legends. In an interview with