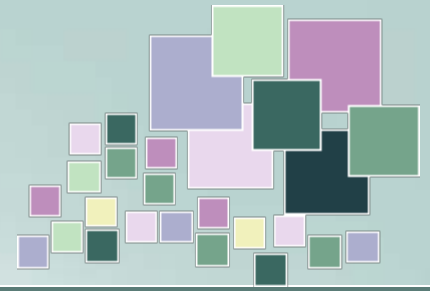


# Marin Beck



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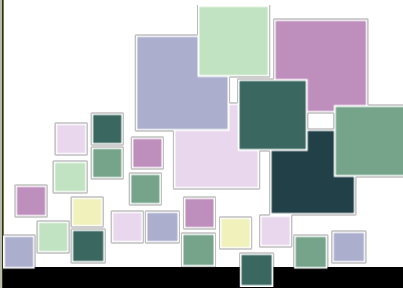
## Welcome!

Hello, and welcome!

My name is Marin Beck, and I am a senior at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am pursuing a degree in Elementary Education, and will be student teaching in the spring. I hope to teach abroad, to work as a primary grade teacher in the States, and to eventually start my own tutoring business.

I am enthusiastic and hard working, and fully intend on eagerly pursuing each learning opportunity that presents itself in the coming year. If you have any questions or comments for me, feel free to contact me at any time.

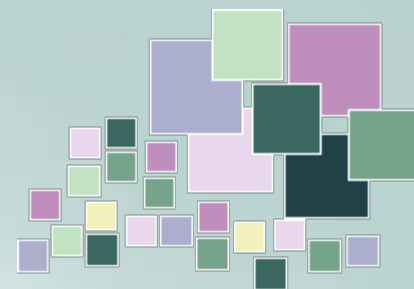
Thank you!



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## Mission Statement

It is my aim to strive toward excellence in all that I do. I value hard work, perseverance, and dedication in order to positively impact the community and people around me. I will use these traits along with my God-given talents to establish myself as and grow as a scholar, a leader, and a servant.

## Goals 2014-2015

- Attend Elementary Education Club throughout the fall semester
- Remain an active member of the Honors Program
- Serve as a leader and role model at Hosanna Highland Church
- Maintain a 4.0 GPA as I continue through Elementary Education's Block coursework
- Complete coursework to be STEM certified
- Complete independent research under Dr. Jessup
- Assist in drafting proposals for a College of Education renovation project under Dr. Karen Colum, a member of MSU's Education Department faculty
- Student teach for six weeks in Abu Dhabi
- Achieve MN licensure for Elementary Education, and find a full-time teaching position for the fall of 2015.

## Personal Biography

I was born of Rodney and Bryn Beck on September 6th, 1992, in Chaska, MN. I grew up with two sisters, one older (Karina) and one younger (Tove), with whom I am very close. When it came time to go to highschool, my parents and I decided on Southwest Christian High School, a private school located in Chaska.

Throughout highschool I kept extremely busy with all the activities I was involved in. I was a member of the choir, and enjoyed serving as the praiseband leader both at school and at my church. I served on student council, once as Class President, and again as the Hospitality Committee Chair. I participated in my school's production of *Around the World in 80 Days*, and was on the golf team four years, including serving one year as the team captain.

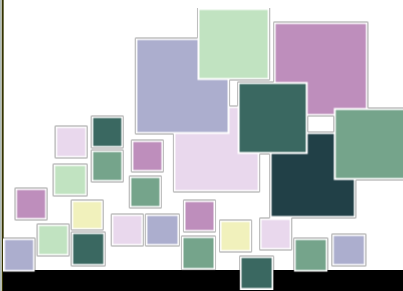
Despite these various activities, I enjoy spending time with my family, skiing, hunting with my dad, and traveling when I have the time.

I currently am an undergraduate student at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and a member of the Honors Program.

For more detailed biographical information, please read my "Cultural Autobiography" and "Personality Paper" essays below.

[Cultural Autobiography.docx](#)

[Personality Paper.docx](#)

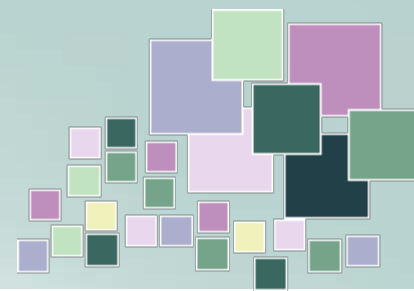


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## I was born to teach.

Since the time I began pursuing teaching as profession, I can see no other course for my life. Teaching encompasses several of my passions- passions which I never dreamed could be fulfilled in a single job. First and foremost among these is an enthusiasm for children. I have been caring for children since I was a child myself. The way they process information and react to given circumstances fascinates me, and I am drawn to their black-and-white way of viewing the world. I also have a sincere love of learning, not only for my students, but for myself. Teaching is not a stagnant field. It is ever changing and evolving, and requires educators to adapt alongside it. Knowing that I will continue to learn throughout my entire career by refining my teaching practices and developing as a professional holds a considerable appeal to me. Finally, helping and serving others is a passion of mine. There is no greater satisfaction than seeing a student's face light up when they finally discover or realize a concept with which they have been struggling. The face of achieved potential is truly thrilling, and it is something that I anticipate having the honor of experiencing every single day.

I have seen these same passions manifest themselves among educators during my field experiences in various schools and classrooms. My experience during my first placement was far better than anything I could have imagined for this reason. The school environment was positive and the administration was supportive of both the teaching staff and my Minnesota State University cohort of teaching candidates. Additionally, my highly effective cooperating teacher was able to combine excellent management techniques and engaging instruction to contribute to a well-balanced classroom. Her passion for teaching was both evident and contagious. I considered myself incredibly lucky to be placed in her classroom. One could imagine my surprise when I was blessed with yet another incredible placement for my second field experience, where grade level teams seamlessly operated as a whole and where students were allowed to freely discover and explore the concepts of study. Yet again, I could see the passion of educators having a direct impact on students' learning and lives.


I realized then that though I was blessed to have the placements that I did, such positive experiences were not at all uncommon. Members of my cohort felt the same way as I did about their own placements. It became clear to me why this is: educators, especially those who serve at the elementary level, are a unique breed of people. Dedication and passion are required to commit oneself in the way that the teaching profession requires. We have these passions in common because they are at the heart of teaching. Seeing these similarities between my own passions and those of my cooperating teachers reinforced to me that I belong within this professional community of educators. Wherever I teach, I want to make a measurable difference in my students' learning, and in their lives.

Though I have observed measurable growth in my students countless times, there is one situation that is particularly memorable for me. It occurred near the beginning of my very first field experience while I was working with a group of first grade students in mathematics. We were using math mountains to practice the count-on strategy of

addition. At the end of the lesson, there was one boy who was neither done with his work, nor satisfied with his shallow understanding of it. The classroom was moving on to the next subject, but I had the time to pull him aside for one-on-one support. Within three minutes, we identified his misconception, corrected his understanding, and finished the remaining problems with ease. I thought nothing of the situation until he approached me several hours later and very simply thanked me for helping him with his math. Before running off to recess, he triumphantly declared, "I got it now!" with the euphoric enthusiasm that first graders know so well.

It is possible that this memory strikes me because it was the first time I had seen conceptual understanding develop as a direct result of my instruction. Or perhaps I was moved by his sincere expression of thanks. I think, however, that in this moment I realized the significant impact that I can and have had on my students. Those few extra minutes made the difference between frustration at his inability to joy at his success, and all it required from me was that I took ownership for his learning. I am ready to take on such ownership, to commit to the life of a teacher, and to enjoy the responsibility because I know the huge difference I can make in student learning outcomes. I cannot wait to whole-heartedly invest in this profession which reaches beyond the immediate spread of my arms and has the potential to extend far beyond any classroom or school day.

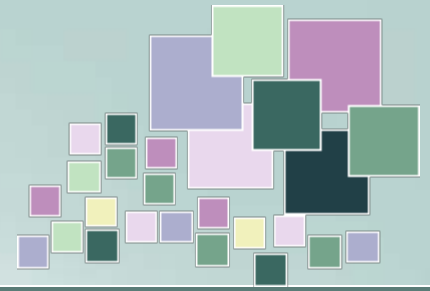
Please browse the rest of my career portfolio for artifacts of my teaching.



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## Minnesota State University, Mankato Honors Program

The Honors Program at MSU, Mankato provides an accelerated curriculum for high-ability students. It focuses on developing each student's abilities as a leader, a researcher, and a global citizen. In conjunction with additional coursework, the Honors Program creates a supportive network for these students, providing them with opportunities to thrive both academically and socially, as well as prepare them for their roles in the professional world.

Upon first entering the Honors Program, I was concerned about how to fulfill all these requirements and competencies of the program, all the while attending to the various requirements and classes in my major. I have discovered, however, that these fears were unfounded. The university just retired a campaign, which advocated "Big Ideas and Real-World Thinking," and I have seen first-hand teachers following this theme in their classrooms. Because of this, it has become a trend for me to see overlap between the things I am learning in my classes, and the values of the Honors Program.

This section of my portfolio will discuss the various activities and events I have participated in, as well as provide samplings of the coursework I have completed. It will also demonstrate the correlation between the subject matter and the Honor's Program competencies.

 [Honors Program](#)

## 2014-2015 Learning Outcomes

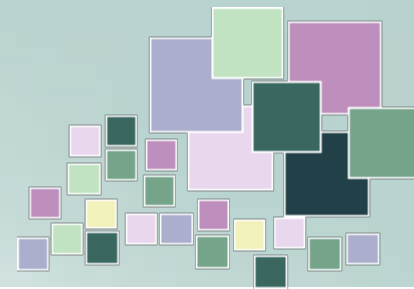
 [Learning Plan Essay.docx](#)

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  - [NCHC Conference](#)
  - [Developing Mentor Philosophy](#)
  - [Intensive English Language Institute](#)
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## Leadership



Since the beginning of my time at MSU, I have worked toward personifying the qualities of an effective leader. By practicing, failing, improving, and finally succeeding in my leadership experiences, I have learned to be authentic in my interactions, flexible in changing circumstances, and collaboratively minded while working on a team.

Authenticity is one of the most important qualities to effective leadership. As a leader, it is easy to feel

scrutinized by the public nature of the position. Leaders are looked to as role models, and their actions are constantly watched. While it is important to shield others from the harsh realities and decisions that a leader must face, this protection cannot overreach. As a student leader at [Hosanna Highland Community Church](#), I discovered this balance through failure. At times, I influenced the perceptions of the congregation by over-sharing, and in other instances my façade impeded my relationships. However, after several fail cycles, I struck a balance, which I found again while teaching in my various [field experience classrooms](#). I developed authentic relationships with my students, which inspired trust and allowed for better learning. By achieving authenticity in my interactions as a leader, I have grown to become more effective overall.

I also admire the ability of leaders to fluidly adapt to meet the needs of different situations or people. Flexibility broadens a leader's range of success. This is an area of immense personal growth for me. Upon arriving at MSU, I was unable to adapt my plans to unexpected situations. While I still prepare and plan, my experiences have allowed me to deviate from it when necessary. As a tutor for the [Intensive English Language Institute](#) and as an [Honors Mentor](#), I learned to listen to the needs of the people I was serving and to adjust my perception of time to fit theirs. As a [teacher candidate](#), I have also honed my ability to be flexible. A range of uncontrollable factors guarantee that a perfectly planned lesson must be adapted to a new context at the last minute. I am now able to let go of my plans, and embrace change.

A final quality that is important to effective leadership is the ability to capitalize on team collaboration. Both effective and ineffective leaders have weaknesses. The difference, however, is that effective leaders recognize their weaknesses and compensate for them through collaboration. As a student leader at [Hosanna Highland](#), I worked on a team to accomplish a common goal. Each team member held a distinct role that fit our respective abilities. As the [Secretary of the Honors Student Council](#), a majority of my work was done with a small team of individuals. In this role, I found that I gravitated toward my strengths, as did the other members on my team to their own. By capitalizing on one another's strengths, we were able to compensate for individual weaknesses to become overall more effective.

In my career, I will be authentic with my students to establish trust, will maintain flexible preparedness, and will capitalize on the strengths of individuals to benefit the whole. Leadership is not a goal, but a spectrum, and I will continue to progress as I encounter novel experiences in my profession.

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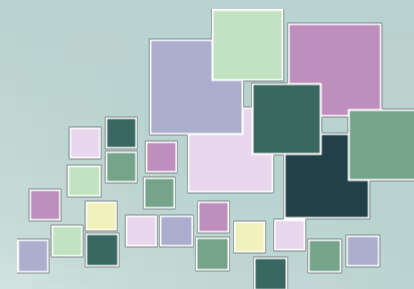
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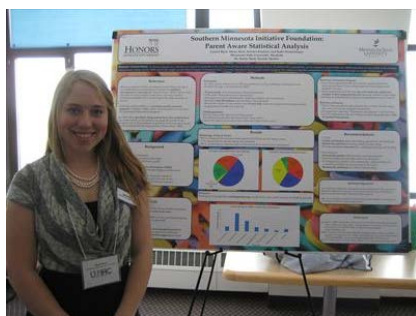


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## Research



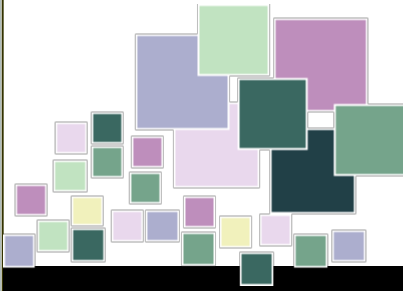
There are times in a person's life when one realizes how far they have come. I recently had such an experience, where I realized that I was capable of all of the skills that I deem vital to successful research. I attended a meeting of the iSALT fellows, a team of scholars who support one another in their individual research processes, and surprised myself with my depth of knowledge and ability to contribute. I believe a successful researcher is well-versed in the literature of her field, interprets and presents information in an

ethical manner, and conducts research and disseminates results to extend the practice of her discipline.

A researcher must be literate in finding and synthesizing information ethically. During my undergraduate career, various classes have helped me understand which sources of information are credible, determine the author's purpose, and compile multiple sources to form a cohesive argument. I have also learned the ethics of research by appropriately citing sources and by developing a point of view based on what the literature says instead of searching for sources that prove my point. For example, I compiled a [unit of study](#) on an artist of my choice in an art course. I was able to take relevant information from many different sources and translate it into kid-friendly language. Similarly, using the literature available to me, I compiled a [guide](#) to facilitating successful relationships during student teaching. Finally, developing a [research essay](#) about Maria Montessori's effective leadership practices stretched me to look past the initial prose of the literature, and instead seek out underlying currents that spoke her leadership style.

To find success in research, a person must demonstrate her ability to complete and disseminate original research, so that a discipline's body of knowledge can grow. Such projects can be intimidating, but repeated exposure to them has lent me confidence that will make future projects possible. One such project was my work on Dr. Stark's research team for the [Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation](#), during which I learned how to accurately collect data, analyze results, and compose a scholarly report. I disseminated the results of our research at multiple venues, with audiences ranging from the general public to honors students and faculty to experts in the field. I now understand the expectations of poster sessions and conferences, how to adapt my delivery to match the audience, and the real-life impact that research has. In my current [redesign project](#) with the College of Education, I am learning the university politics that affect efficacy, how to draft a large-scale proposal, how to construct a framework for assessment policies, and how to navigate the diverse opinions of collaborative teams. Though this experience is distinct from any I have had before, I have applied and adapted the skills I already have to be successful.

The skills I have developed in information literacy, information synthesis, and conducting and disseminating original research have given me confidence in my abilities. In all reality, my involvement with research after graduation will look entirely different than it did as an undergraduate student. However, by learning about the process of research, I will be able to apply what I know to entirely new contexts. As a classroom teacher, I may serve on any number of committees in the school, and may be asked to investigate a new theory of education, a certain curriculum, or a current trend in the education system. Developing an opinion on such topics and having the research to back my opinion could influence weighty decisions made by the schools and districts in which I work. On a more practical level, experience with research will influence the day to day teaching in my classroom. I now understand that research informs action. For this reason, every instructional choice I make in my classroom will either be a research-based practice, or will be used to determine the efficacy of my own practice. The literature will inform my teaching, and trial and error will refine it. Finally, my experience disseminating research will enable me to share my practice with other educators. Whether in informal settings such as PLC's, or more structured settings such as education conferences, I will feel confident in sharing the knowledge that time and experience fosters. Thus, I will continue to contribute to the growing body of knowledge that informs best practices in education.

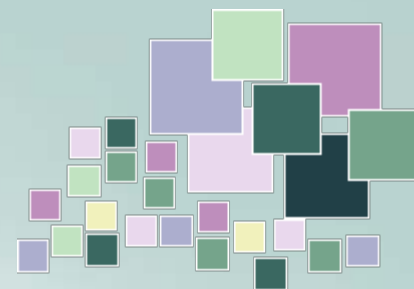


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  - [Shakopee Women's Prison](#)
  - [Study Abroad in Norway](#)
  - [Scandinavian Studies](#)
  - [Primrose Retirement Community](#)
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  - [Other Brief Engagements with Culture](#)

## Global Citizenship



I am on the verge of becoming an educator in the most undeniably interdependent world mankind has yet experienced. Living and educating in an increasingly connected global community does not allow for stagnant growth or thinking. It demands the continual pursuit of understanding about diverse people and cultures. Global citizenship is a continuum of growth, and is distinguished by considering differences among people not as deficits, but as advantages in learning and life.

Through various courses, engagements with sub-cultures in the community, and longer engaged interactions, I have developed inter-cultural skills and grown as a global citizen.

I developed foundational skills in understanding culture and learning a foreign language in my coursework at MSU. Education and [Sociology courses](#) provided various operational definitions of culture and subculture by which I could frame my thinking. More recently in [Block III](#), I have moved past simply understanding sub-cultures of students to learning strategies for adapting my teaching to suit the needs of diverse learners. Finally, my [Norwegian classes](#) grounded my knowledge of basic vocabulary and grammar structures, and prepared me for more involved interactions. These venues of learning did not provide direct interactions with culture, but were necessary prerequisites to more in-depth learning experiences to come.

My short-term interactions with sub-cultures were instrumental in developing an appreciation for the beauty of diversity, and learning how to navigate cultural differences. Tutoring through the [Intensive English Language Institute](#) awakened me to distinctive communication styles and perceptions of time between cultural groups. I was faced with conflict as a result of differences, and learned how to navigate such situations with consideration and grace. At [Primrose Retirement Community](#), I noticed generational differences in perspectives about the world, and grew to cherish the advice of the women there. Finally, my class at the [Shakopee Women's Correctional Facility](#) identified and challenged the stereotypes I had developed about incarcerated people. Through these experiences, my perspective of the world matured, and I grew to understand the diverse sub-cultures in my immediate community.

Finally, my long-term engaged interaction in Norway validated my perspective of the culture and elicited adaption to cultural norms. My study abroad experience in [Bergen](#) was an immersive course in language and culture. I made significant progress in all areas of language, and quickly developed the ability to negotiate meaning in unknown vocabulary from environmental and contextual clues. I also had daily opportunities to live Norwegian culture. Instead of simply identifying cultural norms, I was able to come to an understanding of the way Norwegians live and think. By the end of the experience, I felt

that I had become a surrogate Norwegian, and that I had adapted to their way of life.

I have a framework for understanding cultures and sub-cultures, an understanding and appreciation for cultural differences in the community, and an ability to adapt to cultural norms in engaged interactions. In essence, I have learned how to learn about unfamiliar people and places. I do not have an understanding of all cultures, but I do have a perspective that seeks out understanding, and intercultural skills through which I can pursue it.

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