

Devan (Boeger) Savner (B.S.E Mathematics, 2014)



It's 7:00am (some days it's even earlier) and Devan (Boeger) Savner enters her Blue Valley High School mathematics classroom ready to tackle another day of math lessons with her students. She arrives early so she can "help students learn: learn about life, about how to be a good person, about math, about everything," said Savner. "I enjoy seeing students learn to enjoy math, challenge their brains and find enjoyment when they finally 'get it.'"

That's not an easy task for high school mathematics teachers these days. The most challenging aspect of her job is to keep her algebra and calculus students motivated to work hard and do well in her classes. "Many students are okay with not doing their best and just accept a C, D or F. Levels of responsibility and ownership in learning seem to have changed, even in my four years of teaching," said Savner. That's why she comes in early and stays late after school to offer help to her students who want and need it. She is dedicated to helping them see mathematics the same way she does.

Her love of learning mathematics and helping others led her to pursue and obtain a secondary mathematics education degree at Emporia State University. "One of the ways that I felt that I could help others while participating in my passions of learning while potentially coaching was to be a teacher," she said. "I always loved mathematics, and felt I could help others learn math too."

She knew ESU was for her after researching colleges in Kansas for a High School class project. "I realized so many great things about ESU, and the Teacher's College of ESU sounded like the best possible place to be," said Savner. When her basketball career ended at Barton Community College, she knew ESU was where she wanted to finish her education.

The two years Savner spent at ESU majoring in mathematics education were short, but her list of good memories and beneficial classroom instruction are long. The Great Bend High School and Barton Community College graduate took advantage of the many activities ESU and the city of Emporia offered her. "I enjoyed exploring the trails, learning how to fish, going on runs through all the hilly neighborhoods and getting ice cream with my roommates. I attended spaghetti lunch every Friday at the local Christian Student Center, played rec basketball and just enjoyed all of the courses I took and the professors I met," said Savner.



Savner said all of her teachers at ESU were “phenomenal,” and said she particularly loved her mathematics teachers. Mathematics Education professor Dr. Connie Schrock was a teacher she especially enjoyed and impacted her. “Dr. Connie Schrock taught me so much about life, passions, teaching and mathematics. I am so thankful that she was the first person I met at ESU, offered me a job working for her and guided me throughout my growth in becoming a mathematics teacher. The experiences I gained in her Methods class were one of a kind,” said Savner. “I use everything that I learned in my Math Methods class and many things that I learned in my education courses almost every day. Things such as: questioning strategies, vocabulary, differentiation and grouping strategies, building relationships with students and so much more.” The two have maintained a relationship even after Savner’s graduation. Dr. Schrock attended Savner’s 2017 wedding.

The classes Savner took at Emporia State prepared her to succeed as a teacher in a high school classroom. “Much of the coursework is designed to make you work through or think through future teaching situations. They push you to do more than you would have thought you could, just as teaching does. Everyone was supportive and provided great feedback that allowed me to enhance my learning,” said Savner.

She has this to say to incoming ESU Mathematics Education students: “Work hard. Do your best. Find a study buddy or a study group and work together, talking through problems, teaching each other; and seeking help from another student or the teacher when you are unable to figure something out will help tremendously. Do not be afraid to ask for help; you will learn so much more and feel better about the material. Forming study groups will create new friendships and help make challenging courses and time more enjoyable, and you may build a resourceful relationship for the future.” It would be wise to follow her advice. Savner received the 2014 Outstanding Senior Award at ESU. “It was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had,” she said.

She has great memories of her time at ESU. “I greatly enjoyed meeting so many new people, making lots of friends in all different majors and from all different places and ultimately meeting and spending time with my now husband.”

Savner married her husband, Kyle, on September 23, 2017, and the couple recently bought a house in Overland Park, KS. They have two dogs: Hershey, a charcoal lab and Copper, a copper-colored lab mix. When she has time, Savner enjoys exercising, reading, cooking and spending time with family and friends. Her parents and younger sister still live in Great Bend so she doesn’t get to see them as much as she would like, but she now has two new families who help her fill the void. “My husband’s family all live in the Kansas City area. While I’m a small-town girl at heart, I moved to the Kansas City area for my husband and the amazing family and friends I made at Blue Valley High School.” We’re sure her students are glad she’s there too.

