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**MORGANTOWN WEATHER** **36°F**  
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37°F 32°F	41°F 32°F	32°F 23°F	28°F 18°F	43°F 21°F	43°F 37°F	41°F 39°F

EDUCATION, LATEST NEWS

## David Riggle: Connections key for the teacher, coach and honorary degree recipient

December 11, 2024 1:49 pm by Jim Bissett, The Dominion Post

**T**he look.  
Every teacher and coach knows the look.

Well, check that.

It's not so much a "look."

It's more like an expression, really.

Joy.

Relief.

Maybe even disbelief.

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**WVU Medicine Video**

You nailed that math test, even though you hate math.

You beat that guy on your route and walked right into the end zone.

“Didja see that? Look at what I did.”

And that’s because you can’t help sharing the moment with that teacher, or that coach, who got you there.

“Oh, yeah, I live for that,” David Riggle said.

“When they achieve, I get just as much out of it as they do.”

Riggle, who teaches world history and special education math at Tyler Consolidated Middle School in Sistersville, will have an achievement of his own to celebrate during WVU’s December Commencement two weeks from now.

He’ll receive an honorary degree during the 9 a.m., Dec. 21 ceremony at the WVU Coliseum.

Graduates will go forth from the College of Applied Human Sciences, the College of Creative Arts and Media, the College of Law and Eberly College of Arts and Sciences that day.

Riggle was a high school student in Cameron, Marshall County, when he started volunteering for Special Olympics.

He never stopped – and by the time he stepped on the campus of West Liberty University for his first day as a college freshman, he knew exactly what he wanted to do.

“I knew I was going to be a teacher and coach,” he said.

Riggle has taught a variety of subjects during his years as an educator in public schools in West Virginia.

He’s coached varsity basketball and track on top of heading positive behavioral interventions teams on top being elected president of the faculty senate.

Of course, there’s Marshall County Special Olympics and all the athletes he still checks in with regularly – “A lot of us are getting old,” he laughed.

The WVU recognition, he said, is “humbling” – even if he thought the initial email he received was a scam, at first.

“It popped up on my screen when I was in the middle of a PowerPoint,” he said. “I just kind of swiped it off to one side.”

He’s happy his students and the Special Olympians he’s coached over the years don’t do the same for him.

They stay in touch. They say hello and offer hugs and high-fives. They send pictures of their newborns and news of their job promotions.

“All you have to do is make a connection,” he said. “Make them realize that you’re invested, and you care.”

Tags: [coach](#), [commencement](#), [educator](#), [honorary degree](#), [special education](#), [teacher](#), [west virginia university](#), [wvu](#)



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