



**Derrick
Fitton**

EHS Class of 1995

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ELKHORN ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Elkhorn High School Class of 1995 graduate Derrick Fitton uses his expertise in the trade industry to give back to the Elkhorn Public Schools District.

Describe your position at Drake-Williams Steel (DWS):

I am currently our Director of Operations for our Structural and Coatings Divisions. I oversee our engineering, purchasing, production, safety, and quality operations for both divisions. The DWS Structural division supplies structural and miscellaneous fabricated steel while the DWS Coatings division provides high-performance finishes/coatings for customer products.

What lead you to choose your career path?

I honestly had no idea what I wanted to do after high school. When I graduated in 1995, computer programming seemed to be an up-and-coming career, so I went to University of Nebraska-Lincoln to study computer engineering. Unfortunately, after two and a half years I came to the realization that I didn't like it, so switched to Civil Engineering. I ended up graduating with a Civil Engineering degree and worked for a couple different consulting engineering companies before I transitioned to Drake-Williams Steel as our Engineering Manager. I have been with DWS for almost 17 years.

Did any classes in high school lead you to choose your career path?

I always seemed to be good at math, so figured whatever I did might be heavy on math. I also really enjoyed the drafting classes I took at Elkhorn, since it was detail-oriented, and you had something to show for your efforts.

How did you get connected back with teacher Joe Moylan and the Industrial Tech Program at Elkhorn North?

Joe got my contact info from an industry partner and reached out to me to discuss the new Elkhorn North High School welding lab. He asked if DWS would be interested in helping out with any aspects of the project. It was an easy decision to get involved.

Can you describe what role you played in designing the ENHS facility:

Joe and I worked together to design the welding/grinding booths for the new welding lab and DWS fabricated/painted the finished product.

How did it feel returning to Elkhorn Public Schools as a guest speaker for the industrial tech students?

I was very excited to have the opportunity to support Joe, Elkhorn students, and EPS efforts to promote trade programs. I know Joe and his team have worked very hard to build and grow a program that requires the great facilities they now have. I am a huge advocate of promoting trades to all the local area high school students, so when you combine that opportunity with my '95 Antler Pride, I couldn't pass it up. I hope this opportunity will be something we can put on the calendar every year.

What made you decide to raise your family in Elkhorn?

I had a great experience growing up and attending school in Elkhorn. While the city has grown exponentially since I graduated, the same sense of small town/community pride is still there, and I often run into old classmates or teachers. In addition to that, the District is continuously rated as one of the top in the state. My wife, Jessica, and I have been blessed to raise our three children in the Elkhorn community for the last 12 years, and look forward to having them all graduate from Elkhorn South... even though I will always be an Antler at heart.



Elkhorn Public Schools

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