MARC BLOOMQUIST – THE PERSON

EDUCATION / EMPLOYMENT

Marc Gerald Bloomquist graduated from Bemidji State University with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice in May 1996. In August 2006, he obtained his master's degree from St. Cloud State University in Public Safety Executive Leadership.

Marc began his career as a probation officer with Kandiyohi County Community Corrections in September 1996 before being hired as a probation officer with the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) in March 1997. Marc had a number of promotions throughout his time with DOC. He was promoted to senior corrections agent and later to career corrections agent. His last promotion within the DOC was to district supervisor in December 2008 where, over the course of this position, he managed offices in Mahnomen, MN, Park Rapids, MN, Thief River Falls, MN, and Roseau, MN and served as an interim supervisor for a short time in Bemidji, MN.

Marc's passion for his work led him to begin adjunct teaching at Bemidji State University in 2007, which continued into 2021. Marc enjoyed the students and especially those who were excited and eager to learn. He also had a way of drawing out the very best in his students. He taught his classes by bringing in real world experiences as well as speakers from the field to share information. He was diligent and worked hard to connect students with internship experiences and later employment opportunities as well.

In 2017, Marc and his wife, Jen, purchased Cedar Rapids Lodge located in Tenstrike, MN. In addition to his full-time job with DOC and his adjunct teaching, he became a resort owner with all the time and tasks that entails. This resort is a family-run business and allowed Marc to spend time working and engaging with his kids as well as engaging in conversations with patrons. Marc's outgoing, extroverted personality was a great fit for this line of work.

Throughout his career with DOC, Marc served on many committees and workgroups both in his local jurisdictions and statewide. The following committees were particularly noteworthy. Marc was a member of a small committee that developed statewide standards for DOC in the supervision and management of a specialized sexual offender caseload. During his time as an enhanced sex offender supervision agent, he never lost sight of the victims, held the clients accountable for their behavior, and offered opportunities for change in an effort to make our communities safer. He was also a fierce advocate for staff and worked hard to ensure access to trauma-based services for staff. Marc served on the DOC's critical incident stress management (CISM) team for many years and reached out to staff members who experienced stress and/or trauma through the course of their day-to-day work. He delivered numerous trainings to staff on "Fatigue to Fulfillment," in hopes of developing staff who were able to take care of themselves and were mindful of the toll probation work can take on our lives. Most recently, Marc served on the newly-created statewide committee entitled, "Servant Leadership." Marc believed it was his job to empower, encourage and support staff to be at their best.

In addition to the committee work, Marc's heart and passion came from the development and implementation of innovative and creative ideas that were evidence-based and rooted in research regarding changing client behavior. Marc became a motivational interviewing (MI) trainer and led many trainings for staff in the use of MI. He was one of the first District Supervisors for DOC to implement virtual cognitive skills groups for clients in an effort to reach those who lived in rural Minnesota, who didn't have a vehicle, or had other barriers that prevented them from getting to a group in person.

Sadly, Marc died at his home unexpectedly on December 8, 2021, leaving behind his wife and three children. Marc's sudden passing was felt across the state, but particularly impacted DOC staff, community partners, area stakeholders, and numerous criminal justice agencies in the northwest portion of the state. Marc's death has been incredibly difficult for so many of us and especially for Marc's family and others who knew him well. Marc had a big presence and if you ever met him, you certainly did not forget him. Marc gave of his time and abilities unselfishly to his community. Marc was a huge presence at the table of many community justice meetings and continually pushed for public and victim safety, client accountability, and opportunities for client change. He will forever be remembered for his ability to engage others in community projects, his compassion and willingness to help others, and for his positive, outgoing personality. Marc always put staff needs first and especially those staff who were struggling with difficult situations whether at home or at work. He truly wanted healthy, happy staff who treated each other well and worked together to support each other when necessary.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Marc was an active volunteer in the communities he served. He invested a significant amount of time to youth sports. He coached, ran the clock and was an announcer for many sporting activities for the Blackduck High School. He also coached youth football, basketball and baseball in Bemidji as well as served on the Bemidji Youth Baseball Board. He often volunteered to officiate youth sporting tournaments in an effort to save the tournament host the additional expense. Marc engaged in leadership with youth sports in the spirit of his hero, the late Coach John Wooden. Marc wasn't about winning at all costs, but rather developing character and integrity in the players he coached. One of his favorite Coach Wooden quotes was, "Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are." He most recently served as president of the Blackduck School Booster Club, working hard to raise money for all school activities in the Blackduck School District.

Marc was a man of great faith and was a committed member of the Evangelical Covenant Church in Bemidji. He faithfully ushered every Sunday morning, happily visiting with all who came to worship. He led youth group for several years with a cohort of teenage boys seeing them through until their graduation from high school. Marc also developed a program called

"Kingdom Builders," which he later implemented and established a committee to oversee this project. The Kingdom Builders Project collected donations from members of the church and community and then used these funds to assist and/or help community members who were in need, without having to go through all the red tape, applications, employment verifications, etc.… of many other programs in the community. Marc wanted to be able to help those in need as quickly as possible but never wanted to draw any attention to himself. Marc volunteered for "Servants of Shelter" which is a program offered by a group of area churches to offer space and meals in the winter for those who were homeless. He enjoyed visiting with those who sought shelter and would offer assistance in getting people connected with programs/services that would help them get back on their feet. He often volunteered for Meals on Wheels as well and loved greeting people with his booming voice and gregarious smile. He could talk with anyone for hours on end. Quietly improving the circumstances of someone needing a hand was likely one of Marc's great joys. I specifically recall one Christmas when Marc walked through the Paul Bunyan Mall handing out cash anonymously in hopes of brightening someone else's Christmas that year.

Marc and his wife, Jen, purchased Cedar Rapids Lodge from Jen's parents in 2017. Marc and Jen joined the Community of Minnesota Resorts organization shortly thereafter. As with everything in his life, he jumped in with both feet. He served as a board member for the Community of Minnesota Resorts and attended monthly meetings. He was also heavily involved in planning and speaking at the annual Community of Minnesota Resorts Conference.

In summary, Marc Bloomquist was a dedicated husband, father, brother, and son. His family members graciously shared Marc with the community, his church, youth sports, and his demanding work as a probation officer and later district supervisor with the DOC. Marc consistently put the needs of others before his own. Marc was truly one of a kind and will be missed dearly by all who knew him.

- Submitted by Trish Hansen