



# The *LONG* Journey

Long time teacher and coach Lowell Long says goodbye to East



Page editor/ J.Martinez-Aviles  
Photography provided by Long Family  
Story/ J.Martinez-Aviles

As he nears his final days at the school he has taught at for 30 years, he prepares to say goodbye to the students he has taught and the athletes he has coached. His name is Lowell Long. Teaching requires many skills and tactics to deal with the responsibility of educating a generation of future leaders. Many give up in the process, but Long decided to pursue his teaching career whilst directing many sports and activities such as being Science Bound Advisor, Fellowship of Christian Athletes Advisor, Head Girls Golf Coach, and Assistant Activities Director. Throughout Long's teaching career at East High, he has taught biology, zoology, earth science, general science, anatomy, physiology, botany, and forensic science. However, all good things must come to an end; Long will be retiring after the 2020-2021 school year.

Long's legacy will make an impact on East High School for years to come. When Long is asked what his most memorable moment in all his years at East has been, he lists the highlights.

*"It doesn't matter what color we are or what ethnicity we are. We are East Siders."*

"When my kids graduated, that was very special. The senior nights with my kids. And when they called me and told me that I was being put in the East Alumni Hall of Fame," Long said.

Long has always had his East side pride, so there was never a doubt in his mind as to where his children would be attending for their education.

"My wife is a Roosevelt grad, but when it came right to it, we wanted our kids to go to East, so

both of my children went to East," Long said.

Long's son, Brandon Long graduated with class of 2012. He had many letters for basketball, football and track. 27-year-old Brandon Long is now an IT staffer for Insight Global. Brandon Long shares his view on his father's educational career.

"I actually grew up going to East High school ever since I was a little kid. My dad would take me to East and we would go to his classroom... It was something that was just extremely important to him," Brandon Long said.

Brandon Long is now able to recognize the true potential that his father's East-side pride had on his life.

"He was always Mr. East High, so I just always wanted to be as imbedded to that community as I possibly could... He did a good job of bestowing that in me," Brandon Long said.

Just as every good father does with their children, Long made sure to prepare his son and daughter for a fun, adventurous high school journey.

"It wasn't as scary starting in high school because my dad was always there... That was always something special and unique... He was able to paint the pathway for my sister and I to have a good opportunity at East," Brandon Long said.

Even though Long will soon leave East High, his children will always hold the loud and proud Lowell Long in their hearts.

"He is an unsung hero. He is always there. He is always willing to help out and do anything he can for the community and the East High student body. He definitely believes in red and black," Brandon Long said.

Brandon Long explains his hopes for the future student body at East High regardless of Long's farewell to the East High community.

"I know he is retiring, but there is

going to be a part of him that is always going to live at East, and he takes so much pride in that. I hope the kids and high schoolers and the next generations to come take pride in East high school," Brandon Long said.

If you are a student at East High and have had Mr. Long as a teacher, you would know that he speaks very highly of his daughter, which is well deserved. Maggie Long, whose new last name is Wieser, was the Valedictorian of East High Class of 2014. Her legacy also includes highlights such as being involved in softball, volleyball, track, and golf whilst getting many letters. 25-year-old Wieser is now in medical school at the University of Missouri. Wieser's experience at East High is connected to the legacy her father was already leaving at the school.

"I grew up in Des Moines, and my dad was always a teacher at East High. Some of my first memories as a child were at East High in my dad's biology class. My mom would always bring my brother and I to see dad at school," Wieser said.

Wieser shares her earliest memories of her father's teaching career and her own encounters with East High school.

"I remember we would talk to the class... I would tell his class poems and other random things... Those were some of my first memories of East... I think it was the most fun thing as a child," Wieser said.

Growing up in a world where East side pride is strong, especially with your father, teacher, and coach at your side is very impactful, according to Wieser.

"I grew up loving East High. Having my dad be a teacher, it's just kind of in your blood at that point... The school fight



song was the first song that I learned as a child because that is what my dad sang to us... It was really fun going to East and playing sports there," Wieser said.

Long's East-side passion is explained by Wieser. "A big part of East was part of the family. My dad and all of his siblings grew up and went to East and were all very proud of that. They love the East side of Des Moines, which I think is a big reason why he also then wanted to end u teaching at East and being a coach at East. He has fond memories and really values the school," Wieser said.

When asked about her father's characteristics and personality, Wieser does not fail in mentioning the amazing individual that Long is and continues to be.

"My dad is a very charismatic, funny, talkative and caring individual. I think he's definitely a person who will go out of his way for anyone, whether it is someone he has known for a day or for someone he has known for his entire life, and I think that is one thing that makes him very special; that makes him great teacher and makes him a great coach. He cares about individuals and will always put that on display and make people feel special," Wieser said.

Wieser closes with a special remark as to what Long offered to East High, which is what made his journey at East exemplary.

"He definitely has a passion for teaching and coaching. He just always wants to make sure that he is doing everything he can for his students and players on his team," Wieser said.

Just like Wieser years ago, many athletes today that Long has coached throughout the years also feel the need to recognize Long's efforts and impact on their lives. Senior Baylee Brafford speaks on her relationship with Long.

"Long and I have a good friendship with each other. You can always rely on him to hype you up if you're one of his golfers. Long is a very goofy, good, spirited person who is always making jokes," Brafford said.

Long has always been known for his passion in teaching and coaching, especially by those close to him. Brafford, like many others, acknowledge and admire the hard work that Long has dedicated into his career.

"I am very happy and excited for long to retire, he deserves it. Senior golfers told Long about two

years ago that he could not retire until we graduate. He told us he would not, and he stuck to his word. I hope Long gets better at golfing in his retired years. He needs a little more work," Brafford said.

Despite Long's teaching journey at East coming to an end, he knows that he has been able to understand many things throughout the process.

"One thing I've learned is that kids are kids; people are people... It doesn't matter what color we are or what ethnicity we are. We are East Siders," Long said.

Long has been at East long enough to know that times change, but the home of East side remains the same.

"I have learned a lot from the kids... It's a whole different dynamic then when I started here 30 years ago, or even when I went to school here 45 to 46 years ago. But be proud of where you came from.

My kids went to East, I went to East, my brothers and sisters went to East, my nieces and nephews came to East. I want to be proud of East," Long said.

One thing that Long is well aware of is the negative stereotype and public perception that DSM locals have about East High school and the East side in general.

However, he knows not to back down when it comes to defending his own.

"We get 'Hey, you go to East? Isn't that a rough school?' And I'm like 'No, It's not a rough school. We have good teachers; we have good kids.' It's just silly that we judge things that way," Long said.

Regardless of his departure, Long aspires to seek openings in the door of success and well-being. He is currently applying to different jobs, as he is not yet sure where he will go next.

"I am going to work for another year... I hope for new opportunities," Long said.



As Long awaits the school year to end, he contemplates on the future of his classroom on the third-floor science wing.

"Just don't mess up my room when I leave. I want to come back and have my classroom be just like it is," Long said humorously.

Just as East High has made an impact in the Long family, it can be said that the Long family has also had an impact on East High staff, athletes and students. Where one road ends, there is a new path that is born which leads to the next destination.

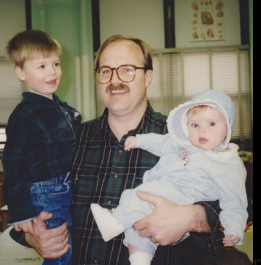
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The *LONG* Timeline

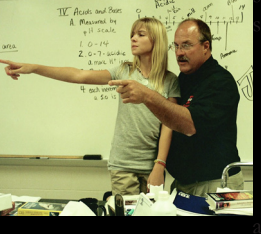



*Long's 2nd grade school photo 1964-65 school year*

- 1971-1972 : Long's freshman year
- 1972-1973 : Long's sophomore year
- 1973-1974 : Long's junior year
- 1974-1975 : Long's senior year
- Taught technology for 9 years after college
- Became a salesman; went well but he didn't love it
- Got a call to teach bio and got certified to teach all sciences
- Started at East High in the 1991-1992 school year and has been at East High since.



*Long carries his children, Brandon and Maggie at East High school*



*Long in his classroom with Maggie*

*When asked about her father's*