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Leading the way: Post's first M.Ed. grad earning national recognition

[🕒 June 24, 2014](#) [📁 Student News](#)

When Joseph Vaughn began the M.Ed. program at Post University he was a 49-year-old working adult, that hadn't been to school in decades, and had never taken an online course.

Less than four years after [becoming Post's first ever M.Ed. graduate in December 2010](#), he is garnering national attention for his efforts in a leadership role within one of the largest school districts in Alabama.



*Joseph Vaughn was
Post's first M.Ed.*

"To tell you I was skeptical at first would be an understatement," said Vaughn. "I guess you can say I've really climbed the ladder."

Vaughn currently serves as the Director of Child Nutrition and Extended Day in the Huntsville, AL school system, where from April to May 2014 he [led an "At Risk Supper Program"](#), that provided over 40,000 hot meals to residents of the district.

"We're just trying to feed the hungry, one meal at a time," he said. "If there's a mouth to feed in our district we're going to do our best to help."

Vaughn discussed the overwhelmingly successful "At Risk Supper Program" in a [recent podcast with members of the Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#), the leading national nonprofit organization working to eradicate hunger and undernutrition in the United States.

graduate in 2010.

The Post alum credits his recent success and ability to lead an educational initiative like this to the guidance he got from his professors as well as the feedback and collaboration he had with his classmates during his graduate program.

“After almost four years, I can say the M.Ed. program definitely gave me all the tools I need to be successful,” he said. “I learned a wealth of information I could never even imagine before Post.”

Vaughn said his education has been able to keep him and his school system ahead of the curve as topics such as formative assessments begin to reach Alabama.

“They’re new topics to everyone else, but they’re old news to me, thanks to my time at Post,” he said.

Vaughn credits current Post Provost and former Dean of the School of Education, Dr. Jane Bailey, with providing the guidance that allowed him to overcome obstacles during his education and achieve what he has today.

“There were times when I got frustrated, I got down, but Jane was there every time to offer me words of encouragement and keep me in the right frame of mind,” he said. “I wouldn’t be where I am today without Dr. Bailey.”

When he looks back on his journey—from a doubting adult learner deciding to go back to school to a school administrator making a real difference in his community—Vaughn is proud to represent Post and call himself “the first”.

“It means the world to me, to be able to say I was the first M.Ed. graduate,” he said. “I realize how strong the program is and the types of students Post is putting out into the work force and it makes me proud. I often turn around in my office and look at that diploma on the wall, the first one Post ever gave out to an M.Ed. student, and I know I got where I am today because of Post University.”

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