Department Spotlight: Brooke Roden

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"Every student deserves the same opportunities no matter their background or upbringing." - Brooke Roden

Brooke Roden is a graduate from the USU Psychology Department’s Professional School Counseling Program with a master’s degree in education in psychology. Roden says she started her journey to become a school counselor after working as a teacher at an alternative high school for at-risk youth. That experience taught her that every student deserves to have someone believe in them.

Why did you choose USU?

I chose USU for a couple of reasons, the first reason being that it was the best fit for my life at the time. I am a wife and mom and was a middle school teacher when I entered into the program, so going to school one night a week was very practical.

The second reason I chose USU was seeing the amazing counselors that have come out of the program. I have had the opportunity to work with a handful of USU school counseling graduates and have always been impressed with their knowledge and ability to connect with kids.

What were your future goals when you started the program?

When I started the program, I told myself to do my very best and put forth my full effort, not necessarily for my benefit, but for the benefit of my students. I felt I would be cheating them if I didn’t do my absolute best.

What is the most important thing you learned in the professional school counseling program?

The most important thing that I learned in the professional school counseling program is that being a counselor is more than just making sure kids have good grades and have a plan after high school. They need to know that someone cares about them as an individual without judgment. It is amazing to watch a student evolve and grow as they begin to feel safe in expressing who they are.

What advice do you have for other students in the professional school counseling program or for those considering applying?

To those in the professional school counseling program, make connections with your cohorts. I have made some lifelong friendships, and I know I have a solid foundation of counselors to lean on for guidance and support.

To those considering applying, if it’s a good fit, do it! I was honestly so scared to go back to school, especially while being a mom to two young kids. I contemplated for months then finally decided to just do it. There were many tears, late nights, and caffeinated drinks, but there has not been one single moment during or after the program that I have felt regret. It will be some of the hardest, yet most rewarding years of your life.