

Working in education wasn't just a career for Clifton Anderson, it was his passion. For 40 years he gave of himself to better the lives of the youth in New Ulm through his time, his talents and most of all his unending encouragement.

Cliff was raised in the small northwestern Minnesota town of Warren; he went on to Concordia College in Moorhead where participated in football, wrestling and threw shot put on the track and field team. He graduated in 1959 with a degree in physical education and health. After graduation Cliff got his first educator position as a social studies teacher at New Ulm High School; he also became assistant football coach and the head wrestling coach. This was the start of a long career in education that was filled with unwavering dedication to educating, coaching and mentoring students. From 1959 to 1979 Cliff was instrumental in the creation of many vital programs in the school district from early bird physical education, outdoor physical education and the charring of a peer mentor and drug education program. He was the school's first athletic trainer and equipment supervisor. He was also a driver's education and motorcycle training instructor.

In 1979, Cliff was named athletic director and director of community education. He held those positions until his retirement in 1999. Cliff worked tirelessly to schedule games and activities as well as attend those events to show his support for the kids and coaches. He believed that everyone should have the opportunity to participate in sports. He worked diligently to promote gender equality in athletics as outlined in the Title IX program. Though change was constant in the 20 years that Cliff was in those positions, one thing that never changed was his commitment to always do what was best for the kids. In example, if there was a need for athletic supplies or equipment that was not budgeted for, Cliff found a way to secure funding because it would benefit the kids.

Cliff's enthusiasm in school, out on the field or in one of his many volunteer positions was infectious. He gave of himself without hesitation to the organizations that were close to his heart. He was the Boy Scout director for troops 46 and 51 for three decades; he also served on Our Savior's Lutheran Church board and became church president twice. He was a volunteer with the Special Olympics, the United Way, was a member of Community and Seniors Together and the Wanda Gag board.

In addition to his career and volunteer experiences, Cliff was first and foremost a family man. He and his wife, Jean enjoyed 54 years of marriage. He was a role model father to his children, Steve, Sue and Scott as well as a joyful grandparent.

Cliff died in 2015 but his legacy will live on in the love and dedication that this "gentle giant" showed to the students which he proudly served and the community he cared so deeply about.