



## CONGRATULATIONS BYRON!

Troops to Teachers just got a little smarter. Spring graduation 2009 at Montana State University in Bozeman counted among its ranks our very own Lewis and Clark Region Recruiter/Advisor Byron McKinney. Byron received his Masters in Education in Education Administration with a K-12 Principal endorsement, a degree he worked on for two years through the Education Leadership Program at MSU. Byron says he got the notion to pursue a Master's degree while teaching in Willow Creek, Montana, when he noticed the disparity between teacher and principal salaries.

Byron fell in love with teaching in the Army as a Master Gunnery instructor at Ft. Benning, Georgia. From there, he turned his other love, history, into a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education with a Social Studies Broadfield endorsement and minor in History. Byron says he appreciated this latest degree for bridging his different backgrounds. In the military, a decision was made at the top and followed down to the bottom. His Education Administration curriculum emphasized cooperative leadership and the importance of "buy-in" from the different stakeholders at a school, especially the staff. The biggest thing he took away were techniques to use the various sources of experience and knowledge in a school community to work towards a shared vision.

In addition to the personal development and professional accomplishment Byron has achieved with this degree, he also sees the impact on his work for Troops to Teachers. He said that adding the background in administration to his existing experience in the military and as a teacher helps him put everything together for clients and better advise them from every perspective, including how to best impress and work with administrators. Byron joked that with this degree he is like the spokesperson for Hair Club For Men, in that "not only is he an advisor, he's also a client!" Sharing that enthusiasm, those of us at Troops to Teachers applaud this outstanding achievement – Congratulations Byron!