



BRING TRACK BACK

Accomplishments

- Graduated Cum Laude in 1989
- PhD In Molecular Genetics
- Founder of graduate school in West Africa that provides PhD level training to young African scientists
- Current – Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology @ Weill



Kirk W. Deitsch, PhD

Experience

I chose to attend CMU (1984-1989) largely due to its tradition of training outstanding track and field athletes. This proved to be a transformative decision that greatly influenced the future direction of my life.

Upon arriving in Mt. Pleasant to begin my freshman year, I was immediately included in a close knit, highly supportive social network via the track and cross-country community. This community included both men and women, as well as people from all ethnic groups who came from all over Michigan and other parts of the country.

The life lessons I learned as an athlete at CMU have continued to influence me well beyond my collegiate career. The devotion to discipline and hard work helped carry me through the completion of a PhD in Molecular Genetics, a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health and to my current position as a tenured, Full Professor at an Ivy League Medical School.

In my current position as a research scientist and educator, I continue to draw on my experiences at CMU. Unlike many sports that tend to be dominated by a single ethnic group or by individuals from particular socioeconomic



classes, track and field displays a remarkable degree of diversity.

In addition, men and women typically travel and compete together, adding another level of social interactions and contributing to the goal of gender equality. These lessons affected me deeply and have instilled in me a desire to replicate my undergraduate experiences throughout my career. Over the last decade, I helped to found a graduate school in West Africa that provides PhD level training to young African scientists.

Track and Field brings together individuals from virtually every aspect of American life and teaches them discipline, hard work, perseverance and overall excellence, all while working together as a team. This experience can be transformative, as it was for me. I sincerely hope that future student athletes will have similar opportunities at CMU.