

# MAHTOMEDI HOCKEY



## Aaron J. Freer

MYHA Board Applicant



**Mahtomedi Resident:** 2017 - Current

**Family:** Kate (m.2008) | Nash (Class of 2030)

Mila (Class of 2031) | Knox (Class of 2034)

**Current Occupation:** Realtor®

**Alma Mater:** Stillwater High School (1999)

Bethel University (2004)

## STRENGTHS FINDER: TOP 5

Strategic | Relator | Communication | Empathy | Developer |

## MY BACKGROUND

I grew up in Lake Elmo, but I've made the full transition to bleeding Navy and Sport Gold. Sports have been part of my life from a young age. I was a 2 year letterwinner at Stillwater in hockey and a 4 year letterwinner in tennis. I also played traveling soccer and baseball until I was 15 before focusing on hockey and tennis more exclusively. I can vividly remember belly sliding through the falling snow at a St. Mary's Point outdoor PeeWee practice, and my senior year was the first year the St. Croix Rec Center was open as our home rink. I still skate with friends in a league and on the pond (when we have an actual winter). After my freshman year of college in Denver I hung up the skates and focused on tennis. At Bethel I was a 4 year tennis letterwinner, 2 year captain and team MVP in 2002-2003.

## WHAT'S YOUR WHY

Youth sports can be a beautiful experience and they can also be hellish if we are brave enough to be honest. Our kids today face more pressure than most of us ever imagined would be possible growing up. My why comes down to the culture we have the opportunity to uphold and create at Mahtomedi Hockey. The memories both we as parents and our athletes will carry are largely influenced by the culture we create; inside the locker room, in the stands, at the hotels, during the car rides, when we are together and even when we are apart. I am a deeply competitive person in all I do. One area I am convinced we must continue to compete for is the culture of the organization along with the culture of every single locker room; no matter the designated level of a team. The best coaches and leaders know how to read a room and how to motivate and inspire people. They can gather all sorts of

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personalities and past experiences and make sure they each have a valuable place to contribute. The best leaders and coaches bring people on a journey every season from who we are to who we will become. This isn't easy work; it takes effort, creativity, discipline and at times a willingness to press into difficult conversations. Being passionate about and fighting for culture is always worthwhile. I couldn't tell you my exact record of games won and lost in youth hockey, but I could give you detailed stories of which teams I loved being part of and which teams I struggled to find the joy that every kid deserves to be playing with. All of us contribute to and create culture both by our actions and our inactions.

## COACHING EXPERIENCE

I have experience coaching multiple youth sports; hockey, baseball and tennis. For the past 6 seasons I've been the Varsity Boys Coach of Mahtomedi Tennis where we have both elite athletes in the top 1% of all of MN and middle school athletes trying tennis for the very first time. I also was the Girls Varsity Coach before I resigned after 5 seasons in order to reclaim some of my time. In addition to helping coach my kids in hockey I was also the Goaltending Coach for the Hudson Havoc in 2022-23; a Tier III junior team helping athletes continue their hockey journey in hopes of finding an NCAA D3 or ACHA club hockey roster spot.

## EDUCATION

BA: Double Major | Bethel University  
Economics & Finance (2004)

## OCCUPATIONAL INSIGHTS

Before becoming a Realtor® I was a pastor for almost 15 years. Both professions give me insight into the human psyche, how we are wired, and how we best connect with one another. In our desire to create a first class youth hockey organization it will take people who can

remember we are both human and hockey players/parents. It will take an awareness that life and most situations are far more complex than they appear at the surface. It will take camaraderie even in the midst of competing for the same roster spots. I am confident that if our main filter is the experience of our athletes and the culture we are creating we will no doubt experience all of the other successes from such a committed hockey community.

