“My entire college career has had a great influence on my life, but my experience as a student-athlete was the most powerful for me,” Delano Robinson.

His enthusiasm is evident by the impassioned way he talks about his work and about the company he represents. Alumnus Delano Robinson ’09 began working for Rolls-Royce two years ago as a change manager, a role with a regional focus. Today, he is a global information technology sector service manager and guides the relationships between two business units and IT.

His latest position with Rolls-Royce engages his leadership abilities, and he finds himself managing at a higher level. It’s a place Robinson has always belonged.

He came to the University of Minnesota Crookston to play basketball and to work on a degree in information technology management. His experience as a Golden Eagle was significant for Robinson, and it wasn’t about winning games but about working together.

“My entire college career has had a great influence on my life, but my experience as a student-athlete was the most powerful for me,” Robinson states. “While we didn’t have the best record, athletics taught me a great deal about how to handle adversity and knowing what it takes to push through it. All around me were people who supported me, and when things didn’t go well, we functioned as a team and helped one another. Those lessons are still with me today.”

University life helped him determine what worked best for him and to sort out his own priorities—important discoveries for someone as driven as Robinson.

After he graduated, he went to work for Eli Lilly, the global pharmaceutical company, working in information technology. He says it was an “entry level position working on smaller processes, but it was a foot in the door for me and for my career.”

Robinson works with the Defense and Energy business units. “Not everyone understands exactly what Rolls-Royce is and what we do,” he explains. “Our mission is to create power solutions. We design, manufacture, and service engines for defense and civil aerospace. We also develop solutions for the energy markets including equipment, monitoring, and servicing solutions. Safety is paramount for us because, each and every day, we have the opportunity to impact people’s lives.”

He takes his role with the company seriously, and this fall, he traveled to England to the company’s headquarters and will also be heading to visit offices of the businesses he supports in Brazil. Robinson is a self-described introvert.

While that idea seems hard to believe for those who know him now, he says he had to learn to “become a bit of an extrovert.” He developed those skills as a student at the U of M Crookston.

“I have always enjoyed people, but in order to ask for help or to provide help, you need to build relationships and that requires talking,” Robinson smiles. “I currently mentor newer employees and I always challenge them to build relationships where they not only receive value, but contribute value as well. It takes engagement to build solid relationships, but they are more than worth the time and effort.”

Indianapolis, Ind., has been Robinson’s home since he left Crookston, and he loves what the city offers. However, he is ready to go wherever his job leads. That openness is what drives Robinson forward and keeps him excited about the future. He embraces the pressures of his job knowing he has a work team ready to support him, much like he did as a student-athlete. He understands the value of working together and is ready to build the kind of relationships that will make him successful on the job and in life.
Delano Robinson ’09 played basketball for the Golden Eagles. Today, he works for Rolls-Royce as a global information technology sector service manager.