

MY STORY

THE STORIES OF WILLIAM JESSUP UNIVERSITY

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ISSUE 5 | UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT



BUILDING THE SPACE TO WORK UNTO THE LORD

Bob and Kathy Reeve

Sitting down with donors Bob and Kathy Reeve, one can't help but notice a couple steeped in humility. Spending over 30 years building Reeve-Knight Construction, Inc., with co-founder Joe Knight, the first-rate company has a reputation for providing a level of service rarely found in the industry and is committed to trusting relationships built on a foundation of honesty, integrity and dependability.

Reeve-Knight Construction Inc.'s introduction to Jessup began when Bob Reeve met former President Bryce Jessup through Adventure Christian Church. Before the property was purchased, Bryce invited Bob Reeve and Joe Knight to tour what would eventually become the Jessup campus. Reeve-Knight Construction, Inc. would later partner with Jessup and work closely with Russ Taylor, architect for the challenging project that transformed the Herman Miller furniture factory into the award-winning Jessup campus.

Although Bob has retired now, he knows firsthand how critical hiring the right person can be. "One of the reasons I support Christian higher education is because I appreciate the way Jessup helps to develop Christ-centered young people to go out into the workplace to make an impact on our community," Reeve said. "Having been an employer, when I see someone with a strong work ethic and good morals, that's the person I want to hire. Colossians 3:23-24

tells us that whatever we do, we are to work at it with all our heart, as working for the Lord. I think that's what Jessup students are taught to do while they are getting their education."

As an artist, Kathy was able to visualize Taylor's architectural plans for the University and encouraged Bob that building out the Jessup campus would be exceptional. She has also had the opportunity to teach an art class at Jessup and fully supports the growing university's mission. "A young person's faith can be assaulted on college campuses these days," Kathy said. "The idea that students are graduating from high school and able to come to a place like Jessup is extraordinary," she said. "Young people don't always get a true understanding of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. To me, having that is what is important. Jessup is helping students make a life centered in Christ."

It has been said time and again that once people step foot on the Jessup campus, they recognize it is a unique place. "I pray that Jessup continues to grow and help to bring more of Christ to our region," Bob said. "And I hope that my grandkids attend Jessup because it is staying true to its mission."

Kathy put it this way, "As long as the University continues to uncompromisingly preach Christ, I see Jessup as an anchor to grow the Christian community."

ANSWERING THE CALL WHEREVER IT MAY LEAD

Derek Zahnd

Little did Derek Zahnd know, when he partnered to build up and minister to a church in Mexico, it would be the start of his journey to support young adults who are passionate about Christ. "After planting and pastoring a church in Mexico, I began serving a Sacramento-area church as its mission pastor. Then, a Jessup professor invited me to build and teach a Jessup course on Local Church and Mission." That opened the door to teaching the next generation of church leaders the skills they need for their unique calling.

Zahnd serves in the School of Christian Leadership. He is the Lead Faculty for the Master of Arts in Leadership (MAL) program, which is fully online and now serves students from four countries. He also teaches undergraduate courses on campus and online. However, before he began leading students at Jessup, he had extensive experience in pastoring and leading which helped equip him to guide his students.

Zahnd spent his career in ministry, pursuing his calling to bring others into a relationship with God. From being a Mission and Educational Pastor at Creekside Christian Church in Elk Grove to becoming the Senior Pastor at Sunrise Community Church in Fair Oaks, he knew God was calling him to something more. "After 30 years of involvement in church

leadership, I jumped at the chance to educate transformational leader's for God's glory, in partnership with the church."

When he was asked to join the Jessup community, he knew this is where God was calling him to be. He saw the work for God's kingdom being multiplied through the hearts of Jessup students.

Asked about his passion for developing transformational leaders at Jessup, Zahnd says, "I love Jessup's heartbeat for the local church and for rigorous, academic preparation in addition to working with undergraduate and graduate students who are already leading in local churches. I enjoy being part of a community that builds healthy and hopeful transformational leaders."

When Zahnd isn't preparing for lectures or ministering to his students, you can find him spending time with his wife and three sons. He loves to hike, bike, run and garden, taking in the glory of God's creation. In this particularly divisive and challenging time, Dr. Zahnd will soon release a new book to encourage the church entitled *Hope for Unity and Diversity* which will be available for purchase on Amazon.



"After 30 years of involvement in pastoral leadership, I jumped at the chance to educate transformational leader's for God's glory, in partnership with the church."



NAVIGATING COLLEGE

AMID THE FRIENDLY SKIES

Gavin Alder

Many students around the world experienced the disappointment of putting their academic plans on the back burner as the pandemic continued into another calendar year last January. Study abroad, internship and in-person programs had, in many instances, come to a screeching halt. But for Jessup sophomore Gavin Alder, his education stayed right on track.

As an aviation major at William Jessup University, the 20-year-old continued to complete his courses while satisfying his flight requirements to obtain his pilot's license. Now in his fifth semester at Jessup, Alder is completing his flight hours with Mach 5 Aviation Inc. located at the Auburn Airport. The flight training is helping him master the fundamentals of airmanship, navigation and communication. "I love working with my instructors," Alder said. "Not only are they good teachers but they have a lot of flying experience."

One of those professors is Jessup's Basic Aircraft Systems instructor Anthony Pollizzi who said, "I'm very passionate about aviation and ensuring WJU builds safe, knowledgeable, professional pilots. A good understanding of the various systems on an aircraft is an important part of that goal."

Jessup's aviation program equips students with a solid foundation by integrating biblical principles into their coursework.

Alder enjoys learning about various systems and plans when it comes to air traffic safety in addition to working toward mastering all the necessary preparations before take-off including emergency protocols and using the radio correctly.

Alder also serves as a reservist in the United States Coast Guard. He has spent summers completing Coast Guard basic training and completed a 10-week course to become a Maritime Enforcement Specialist. In this role he protects America's ports, waterways, and interests at home and abroad. Alder is enjoying his six-year stint with the Coast Guard explaining, "I could see myself staying in the reserves full-time, there is a lot of comradery that makes it seem family oriented."

Upon graduation Alder hopes to find work for commercial airlines or perhaps fly for FedEx. Either way, Jessup is preparing him for a successful career in the sky.



KEEPING CAMPUS SAFE 24/7

Paul Ybarra

We are familiar with the old sentiment “safety first,” but when it comes to campus security, those words speak truth. As Director of Campus Safety, Paul Ybarra is laser-focused on securing Jessup’s 128-acre campus 24/7. “Awareness is key,” Ybarra said. “One of the most basic things to ensure your safety is to hone in on your surroundings.” That might be tougher than most people realize especially because we live in an era when students walk around campus looking down at their phones with their earbuds in place - basically disconnecting two of their major senses. “I tell students, ‘if you have to check your phone while you are walking, at least hold it up to eye level so your prereferral vision can help you be better aware of what’s happening around you.’”

Overseeing Campus Safety for the past five years, Ybarra and his security team monitor those coming and going from the bustling Rocklin campus. “If necessary, we have the capability to lock down campus immediately,” Ybarra shared. Campus safety also provides students with escorts to their cars or

other locations around campus if they don’t feel comfortable walking alone.

Scenario-based training is also provided for Jessup’s resident assistants at the beginning of each academic year. “We share tips to help our RAs learn what they should be looking for within their living environments,” Ybarra said. He also serves as a member of the student care team and speaks at various campus events and orientations to inform the Jessup community of what it takes to be safe.

A familiar and friendly face on campus, Ybarra can usually be found building relationships and making the rounds across campus, checking in to ensure circumstances are in order. Prior to his career at Jessup, Ybarra worked in public safety at University of California, Santa Cruz for nine years. He was recently accepted to Jessup’s Masters of Leadership program where he will pursue a concentration in executive leadership.



SHARING CHRIST THROUGH THE ARTS

Jack and Katie Olson

Meet Jack and Katie Olson. Husband and wife, Jessup alumni, musician or artist are a few adjectives to describe a couple that sees themselves as visionaries who are ultimately refiners. Jack put it this way, "It's in our skill set to take something that works and make it better."

Last April the couple had an opportunity to do just that when they purchased The Music Institute of Roseville, an all-inclusive shop that provides music lessons and fosters growth, knowledge and excellence with students of all kinds in their creative practices and pursuits. The duo plan to expand their offerings eventually providing a creative hub that showcases student's performance abilities as well as their art.

Picture a coffee shop atmosphere where creatives gather to take art classes, do improv, recitals, poetry, small theatre acts or open mic nights. These are just a few ideas up for consideration in their long-term plans, but first and foremost the pair are focused on refining the space to make it more of an experience. "We want people to enjoy being there, even if they aren't doing anything," Katie said. "We also want to equip our teachers and students to be the best they can while they enjoy tapping into their creative selves."

While at Jessup, Katie obtained her bachelor's in visual and fine art. Singing and creating art most of her life, she has a strong appreciation for the creative arts. Katie has worked in a professional art studio creating

sculptures for theme parks, coordinated numerous art shows and assisted the head of the art department at WJU. "It was helpful to be a student worker for Jessup's art dept," she said. "It taught me about advocating for students and teachers, something I do a lot of in my new role."

For Jack, music came naturally. His grandma taught him how to play the piano when he was only three. Jack earned his bachelors in music and also served as a student worker and intern in Jessup's music department, led tech teams, was a section leader in choir and a member of Crossroads, one of Jessup's touring musical performance groups. "The faculty at Jessup want to pour into everyone. Katie and I were the type of students that responded to that. We both believe in Christ-centered excellence and when we see a need, we respond," Jack said. "We also learned that you don't have to be a pastor or staff member of a church to share a Christ-like perspective. You can transform people's lives in whatever industry you are in."

A lot has transpired for Jack and Katie since they graduated from Jessup. They are newlyweds, small business owners and joyfully pursuing God's call in their lives. The couple equate their newfound experience with scripture as Ecclesiastes 2:24 resonates with them as they are called to praise God, enjoy their work and do it well.



SPARKING INSPIRATION ABROAD AND TO THE HEART OF TECH

Karli Wessale

Coming to Jessup as a transfer student, alum Karli Wessale had the specific goal of studying abroad from day one. "I always knew Study Abroad was something I was going to pursue (no matter where I went to college) so, the idea that Jessup had a program sealed the deal for me." Getting selected to the Scholars' Semester at Oxford fall semester of her senior year required the English major to spend most of her time studying to maintain her 4.0 average. She also received ministry as well as academic scholarships as a result of her hard work. "The scholarships helped position me for success in continuing my focus on academics at a private university," she said.

The semester at Oxford had Wessale immersed in tutorials, lectures and seminars equivalent to upper-division courses where students engage in a vibrant research culture performing advanced-level work. Living in an area rich in architecture ranging from Gothic spires to Baroque porticoes where nearly every street or building has a tie to a great thinker, theologian or artist did not disappoint. The semester proved to be just as amazing as she had always dreamed. "It really was one of the favorite times in my life because it was such an enriching experience," Wessale remembered. Later that academic year, Wessale went on to graduate from Jessup but it wasn't long before she found herself overseas again. This time, she headed to the University of Edinburgh where she earned her master's degree in Modern Literature.

Wessale described her English courses at Jessup as "high caliber" and recalled that, "Jessup was the place I learned to do my best work. I felt confident because I was able to experiment and be creative and I got out of my comfort zone which helped expand my thinking."

After returning from graduate school in the UK, the Rocklin native landed a tech job inspiring 400 million monthly users the inspiration to create a life they love while working at Pinterest. Wessale secured a position in Pinterest's "people team" (otherwise known as human resources) as a people experience coordinator. In this position, she develops processes to ensure employees are supported and fosters employee growth within the burgeoning company. "I'm very supportive of the culture at Pinterest because it matches who I am. I love being part of a team that creates a culture supporting people to be the best they can be," she added.

While at Jessup, Wessale noted her professors had a big impact on her time as a student and continues to be in touch with some of them to this day. Her writing courses taught her the value of writing to target audiences, a skill she uses daily in her current role. "Jessup's English department had an incredibly positive impact on my studies and shaped my ability to be successful at Oxford and postgraduation," she said.



PARTNERING TO IMPROVE HIGHER EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Tiffany Loeffler

When it comes to former foster youth, very few experience academic success. According to the National Foster Youth Initiative, only half of youth raised in foster care finish high school and less than three percent graduate from a four year college. This fall, WJU and a nonprofit called The Alliance: Defending the Cause are partnering to deliver a new program aimed at changing that statistic. The new College Success Program provides mentoring, resources, and a full-ride scholarship to qualified former foster youth.

For the past three years, Jessup has sought to develop innovative ways to obliterate barriers standing in the way of success for former foster youth. Jessup's welcoming atmosphere, invested teaching staff, and spiritually rich community make it an ideal environment to see these students succeed academically.

Earlier this year, Jessup began conversations with Tiffany Loeffler, founder of The Alliance, which is a nonprofit network of agencies, other nonprofits, community members, businesses and churches working together to protect kids and strengthen families.

Since childhood, Loeffler was encouraged to dream big, explore new things, and embrace her God-given talents. Her parents were devoted to helping her develop strong morals, healthy relationships, and a secure identity. Over the years, she had many other loving adults that poured into her life including coaches, Bible study leaders, and teachers. "There

was never a time where I didn't feel fully loved, supported and encouraged to reach my highest potential," Loeffler said.

Loeffler went on to earn an undergraduate degree followed by a doctorate in physical therapy. As a young adult, she sensed a deep call to "bind up the brokenhearted and defend the cause of the fatherless." She was also motivated by the struggles she witnessed amongst peers who were suffering due to childhood trauma, divorced or dysfunctional parents, or those with no home to return to on school holidays.

Additionally, she and her husband, Matt felt adoption was 'God's Plan A' for them and after a mission trip to Haiti in 2010, they fell in love with the country and began the international adoption process. "Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, loving family and everyone can do something to make that a reality," Loeffler said.

In 2012, Loeffler started serving at-risk youth and families in the Greater Sacramento Area. She and Matt launched a foster care and adoption ministry at their church and later began equipping other churches to do the same. In 2016, Loeffler founded The Alliance: Defending the Cause.

With the help of generous donors and a team of dedicated people, Loeffler is looking forward to seeing former foster youth not only graduate from Jessup, but thrive on campus and in the workplace to the glory of God.

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