

Wesleyan Wednesday

Brandon Cox '10

Our #WesleyanWednesday feature this week is Brandon Cox '10. Brandon is an Owensboro native who chose to attend Wesleyan because it was close to home and he didn't quite know what he wanted to be when he grew up... "Wesleyan offered me a wide array of options to explore and discover what I was passionate about," he remembered. "Not to mention, it was close to home and I was able to continue working at our local steakhouse to support myself while studying."

Brandon arrived on campus with the idea that he might eventually pursue a law degree, but he remembers that Dr. Conroy advised him against it, and ultimately set him on his path towards journalism. "Dr. Conroy doesn't know it, but I credit him with getting me into journalism," he laughed. "He told me he didn't think law was the path for me because I could never convincingly defend to a jury someone I knew to be guilty – but I could

write and should think about getting into journalism." Brandon eventually ended up switching his major to visual communications and it's a major that's seemed to fit him well.

Today, Brandon has worked in graphic design and journalism for 12 years and he is currently managing 8 newspapers, 4 magazines and a radio station.

We laughed when we asked Brandon what some of his special memories of being a student he had. We'll spare you the details, but we'll tell you that some of the memories include stealing orange parking cones, Post-It Notes and Saran Wrap. When asking Brandon what advice he'd give to incoming freshmen, he provided an answer that was one we were happy to share – "Come in with an open mind," he said. "you don't have to have the world figured out on Day 1. I changed my major three times before I found my place in the world. I'm still not entirely sure what I want to be when I grow up. Just focus on where you're at and what you're doing right now. Fretting over the future is pointless, because there is so much you simply cannot control. Make the best of your situation right now and feed that beast. Everything else has a funny way of working out."



Perhaps one of our favorite answers Brandon provided was his answer to his biggest career fail and what he learned from it. "I tried, and gloriously failed, to take over a monthly flea-market type event and leverage it as a marketing and engagement tool while working as publisher for the newspaper in Bay City, Texas," he recalled. "The local chamber had run the event for 20-something years, and as interest faded, the chamber's board of directors elected to retire the event and focus on other fundraising opportunities. I had the bright idea that my staff and I could advertise, promote, set up and run the monthly event. My staff was less enthused with the idea than I was, and a few short months in I found myself setting up, tearing down and trying to organize the entire thing on my own. It taught me that I simply cannot do it all, and it really humbled me. The big job had gone to my big head, and I eventually grasped that I am part of a team that's required to get things done – and without my team I simply cannot be successful."

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In closing, we asked Brandon if there was anything else he'd like to share and he was quick to answer. "The best advice I've ever received is, "you are not your business card." It took me a long, long time to understand that. I hope others learn it earlier in life than I did," he said. "Also, I'm living my best life now, with a beautiful lady I can't wait to marry in June, Charity, my two adoring kids, Alyssa and Marshall and our pups, Blondie and Millie."