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# FERRIS MAGAZINE



## Successful launches

By Marc Sheehan  
Communications Officer

*From his very first Ferris commencement in December 2003, Ferris President David Eisler has made it a practice to tell the story of at least one graduate at each ceremony who has taken a remarkable path to a degree. Sometimes that path required overcoming adversity; sometimes it meant engaging in community service; sometimes it involved achieving outstanding things academically. We visit with three of those who were highlighted and discover not if, but how, they achieved the careers they saw for themselves.*

### Joe Viviano

In noting Viviano's achievement as a student during commencement remarks in 2009, President Eisler mentioned that Viviano was the first in his family to attend college and that he excelled in his studies after an initial year of struggle. Viviano became President of the Student Government Association as well as an award-winning debater and organized the inaugural Barbeque and Blues event, which raised money for student scholarships.

Viviano has continued on the upward trajectory that began at Ferris. After earning his law degree at Michigan State University summa cum laude and passing the state bar exam, he joined Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C., as a member of its Trusts and Estates practice group in the firm's Lansing office. Today, Viviano is a fourth-year associate attorney specializing in tax and estate planning, probate litigation, and the administration of estates and private foundations.



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*What experiences at Ferris prepared you for your current position?*

“At Ferris I enrolled in the Business and Legal Studies program. It was really interesting because I learned from actual lawyers. For someone like me, who grew up in a rural area with blue collar parents, it was the first time I’d ever met a lawyer. The law professors and administrators at Ferris helped prepare me to take the LSAT and evaluate my options for law school. Aside from the law professors and administration, I’m very thankful for Professor Mark Brandly’s instruction on economic theory, which has significantly helped my work with my business clients.

*What goals do you still have?*

“I’m still figuring that out, to be honest. Goals are very clear when you’re in your late teens and early 20s: finish college, finish graduate school, get a good job. Goals become less clear after that. In the big picture I think there’s a lot of opportunity to make the legal profession more efficient and provide better service to clients through the use of technology. It’s something I’m very interested in exploring further.”

*What would you say to Ferris students?*

“First, I would say get involved in student organizations. The communication and collaborative skills you will learn will serve you well in every profession. Second, you can do anything you want. The greatest advantage of Ferris, at least in my experience, is the people running the school. The first step toward success is to define a goal you want to achieve and then work backwards to find out how to get there. I would tell all Ferris students to seek out staff and professors at Ferris in your field of interest. They can help you develop a plan to take you where you want to go.”

### Nichole (Wheelock) Dilloway

At her May 2008 commencement, President Eisler said, “This young woman discovered that her passion was helping others.” He noted her involvement with Ferris’ Make a Wish Foundation, the campus Take Back the Night March against domestic and sexual abuse, the United Way, of which she was student coordinator, and the Homecoming Committee, which she chaired.

Today, Dilloway says, “By the end of my freshman year I officially changed my major from Pre-Pharmacy to Social Work, and that’s

where I blossomed as a person and a leader. I got involved, and that was the key.”

After graduation she continued her involvement through a 10-month stint with AmeriCorps. She spent that time on community-based projects, which included disaster relief in South Texas after Hurricane Ike, a beautification project in Greensboro, Alabama, that helped bring the community back together, and promoting community service to inner-city 14-17 year olds in Denver, Colorado.

After earning a master’s in social work from the University of Michigan, Dilloway then moved back to her hometown of Traverse City and, in September of 2010, landed a counseling position with Third Level Crisis Center. “I work with homeless and runaway youths that are not in the judicial or court system. They’re the kids that fall between the cracks,” Dilloway explains.

Third Level Crisis Center merged with Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan in January 2014, and Dilloway was promoted. “I supervise workers in 14 counties,” she says. “When I did my undergraduate field placement with Arbor Circle in Grand Rapids, I had no idea the internship would be exactly the same type of program I’d supervise later. I would not have foreseen that supervision piece of my job, but seeing myself grow into the position has been really cool.”

Dilloway has returned to Ferris to speak at a Torchbearers student achievement event and at another event focused on service-learning. “Those really bridged the gap between what I learned at Ferris and how I applied that learning in the outside world,” she says.

Asked what comes next in terms of her career, Dilloway says she wants to continue challenging



herself while balancing that with a family that includes husband Shane, also a Traverse City native, and son Bennett Thomas, who was born in September, 2014. “Although I had so much on my plate at Ferris, it was like I still needed to add another thing to go a step further. That was how I made it through college, and that’s what I still want to do.”

### Carlvin Dorvilier

*This graduate’s life changed on October 31, 2007 when his mother passed away. With a father absent from his life, he had to take charge of his future. During high school he worked three jobs, living alone through the remainder of high school. At this time he started running, finding this to be a way to deal with his personal challenges.*

*Living in North Carolina, he wanted to move away to college where no one would know him. He put the names of all the states in a hat and pulled out Michigan. He went to Google and typed in “Michigan,” “advertising,” and “cross country.” The first school that popped up was Ferris State University.*

– From President Eisler’s May 11, 2012 College of Business commencement remarks

For the past two and a half years, Dorvilier has worked for Rodale publishing, the world’s leading healthy lifestyle company. Rodale represents brands such as *Runners World*, *Men’s Health*, *Women’s Health* and *Prevention*. Dorvilier serves as a Corporate Digital Sales Planner, which represents all of Rodale’s digital properties.

Despite his somewhat random way of selecting Ferris, Dorvilier was much more systematic about his job search. After a junior-year advertising internship in New York City, he knew that was where he wanted to work. “Then I found this race in Chicago called the Men’s Health Urbanathlon, and I knew that was my gateway to the fitness industry and my career at Rodale, a company that I knew I would love,” he says. He followed up on his fourth-place finish by contacting the recruiter at *Runners World* (while he was still at Ferris), which ultimately led to his current position.

Dorvilier walks the walk on fitness — or, rather, runs it. His usual routine is to wake up at 4 a.m. and go the gym to work out and help



others with their fitness routines. And he continues to run races (including other urbanathalons with such obstacles as jumping over cars), which has led to him being on Fox News as one of the models at the New York City Marathon Fashion Show, as well as being featured in Men’s Health 21-day Metashred metabolic training series and in the popular website Humans of New York. He will also be attending the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as a volunteer to help with track and field events.

What would he, himself, say at commencement?

“Continue to challenge yourself every single day. If you can run one mile today, tell yourself that tomorrow you’re going to run one mile and 100 meters. Even though it’s baby steps, each of those steps get you to another flight, and pretty soon you’re at the penthouse,” says Dorvilier. “Know that everything you do has a higher purpose.”

*Editor’s note: Just before publication, Dorvilier began a new position as an account manager at Tumblr.*