

Leading a purposeful life

At JMU, students learn by doing in every discipline. The result is transformative and lasting. *Madison* magazine regularly receives word from our alumni who tell us of the ways they are pursuing an engaged life, a life that brings meaning to themselves and others.

After graduation, **Nick Pence ('10)**, a JMU geology major, served in AmeriCorps in Arcata, California, for a program focused on water quality and the salmon populations of Northern California. In 2011, he and his roommate, Dan Opalacz, launched their idea of minimalist adventure sandals through a Kickstarter project called Bedrock Sandals. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and over the years Bedrock has continued to grow, change and improve the product. The company is a member of the global movement One Percent for the Planet. bedrocksandals.com

(Below): Nick Pence ('10) on an overnight mountain bike trip. (Inset): Co-founder of Bedrock Sandals, Pence currently runs operations at the company's headquarters in Richmond, California.



After serving in the Peace Corps as a teacher trainer in Malawi, **Ashley Wolter ('04)** decided to stay in the country and follow her passion of animal welfare, which became even stronger after witnessing the atrocities of animal abuse in a developing country. Today, Wolter is director of All Creatures Animal Welfare Trust, one of only two animal welfare organizations in Malawi, and the only one with comprehensive programs such as education outreach, animal shelters, livestock

(Above): Ashley Wolter ('04) and the staff of All Creatures Animal Welfare Trust at their new office in Mzuzu, Malawi. (Right): Wolter with her two Peace Corps dogs, Chili and Cash.



health and a concern for all animals, including wildlife. She invites students and alumni who are interested in animal or veterinary science, education (especially elementary), communications or fundraising to share their skills and ideas with the organization. allcreaturestrust.org

What happens to a family when their home goes up in smoke and they don't have insurance to cover the repairs? What if they have no place to live? Seeing the destruction caused by fires and the devastation of families left homeless, firefighter **Jesse Baust ('08)** was inspired to create a nonprofit called Fighting More Than Fire. This organization rallies firefighters to repair the fire damage to homes of families in need in the Richmond, Virginia, area. fightingmorethanfire.org

(L-R): Fighting More Than Fire volunteers Shaun Whiteley, Jesse Baust ('08) and Chris Mack.



A L U M N I N E W S

Chris Campbell ('96) has been a CPA in the Richmond, Virginia, area since graduation. When he steps outside of the corporate world, this father of two is a busy children's entertainer. Campbell aims to promote family values through music, and his ventriloquism talents add to the fun. You can find him working with children in hospitals and entertaining in underserved communities. "Music brings peace, hope and understanding," says Campbell. chriscampbellmusic.org



(Right): Chris Campbell ('96) sings and entertains a group of grade-school children. **(Inset):** Campbell performs his fun brand of ventriloquism.



Adam Armiger ('07), Laura Carpenter ('00), Megan Setzer ('99) and SheRae Hunter ('08) would never have met had congenital heart defects/disease not entered their lives. Armiger's newborn sister died

(Left, L-R): Sean Wainwright ('06), vice president and co-founder of Hope Marietta Foundation; Laura Carpenter ('00), president and founder of the Pediatric Congenital Heart Association, Virginia chapter; and Adam Armiger ('07) president and founder of Hope Marietta Foundation at the 8th Annual Hope for Hearts Casino Night in Washington, D.C.

from a complex heart defect. Carpenter's daughter, born with the heart defect Truncus Arteriosus, died when she was 2 months old. Setzer has a child with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. Hunter, after meeting several families with children with congenital heart defects, decided to use her photography talents to promote CHD awareness and launched the Zipper Strong Project. Through a bit of serendipity, these alumni are now working together to raise awareness, support families and advocate for research for CHD. conqueringchd.org/Virginia and zipperstrong.org

Three JMU alumni work for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society on the Team In Training campaign. While at JMU, **Katie Freind McByrne ('05), Ryan Hatcher ('07) and Natalie Beiro ('12)** learned the importance of giving back, having a sense of purpose in one's work and fellowship. Today, they work to raise funds and awareness for those battling blood cancers. Team In Training is the top fundraising program for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. They all remain active in the JMU community. McByrne currently serves as the president of the Philly Dukers chapter. teamintraining.org

(Right): Katie Freind McByrne ('05). **(Insets, L-R):** Natalie Beiro ('12) and Ryan Hatcher ('07).

