

IT graduate makes switch for fresh view

Working it out

IQ follows graduates into the workplace

Name: David Greiner.

Job: Founder of Freshview and Switch IT. I started Switch IT (www.switchit.com), a web-design consulting firm in 1999 in the last year of my degree and grew it to a team of six with more than 80 clients around the country. I also started a second company called Freshview (www.freshview.com), which is a software-development company with tens of thousands of customers in more than 65 countries. We create easy-to-use web-based email newsletter software.

Age: 28.

Graduated from: University of Wollongong.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Information Technology (honours) in 2000.

Hours: 50-60 hours a week.

Best part of your job: Seeing our company expand into more than 65 countries around the world and international recognition for our products.

Worst part: I love my job, can't really pick anything I hate about it.

Scariest part: Ensuring our software remains available 24 hours a day seven days a week in every country.

Worst experience: Server crashes at 3am.

Best experience: Travelling to New York and San Francisco recently for an award, and receiving the NSW Young Exporter of the year award last month.

What did you want to be when you were a kid?

A professional soccer player.

Are you doing what you really want now?

Absolutely. I love it!

What do you want to be doing in five years?

I'm looking forward to growing Freshview into the premier Australian software-development company. We've got big plans.

How did you land your job? I started the company with my best mate, Ben Richardson, in the last year of our degree back in 1999.

Advice for young students: Don't be afraid to try and go it on your own. If you've got a passion that you think you can make work, have a go. Plenty of people will tell you it's a bad idea, but if you believe in what you're doing, then don't give up.

Do you need a particular kind of personality to succeed? You certainly need to be motivated and prepared to put in the hard work, but I think the key is finding something you're passionate about. A lot of it will then come naturally.



David Greiner, IT graduate and founder of Freshview. Picture: KARAH TARRAN-WILSON

Leader program a gem



Mitchell Broom, front centre, at the four-day Leadership, Faith and Values conference in Canberra.



Melinda McAlpine, front centre, has found the Black Opal leadership program inspiring.

Leadership is not a position. It's a way of life.

This was a lesson University of Wollongong student Melinda McAlpine learnt at a recent conference at Canberra's Parliament House.

UOW students Mitchell Broom and Melinda attended the four-day Leadership, Faith and Values Conference which attracted 200 people. They attended as part of UOW's Black Opal leadership program.

Mitchell and Melinda both said they saw the human side of politicians and came home, inspired to help other people in their own communities.

"I met one politician who makes himself available 24 hours a day to his constituents if they need his help," Mitchell said.

That politician helped constituents with legal troubles and even went to talk to a person who was suicidal, Mitchell said.

"The conference showed me the human side of politicians rather than what we see through the media.

"They're just normal people doing their job. They have the same considerations and

issues with their families as we do.

"I'm in the Sutherland Shire and am looking to start a youth outreach project through my church," he said. "In Canberra, we worked in small groups and one of the guys was doing this. It was something I never considered doing before."

Mitchell, who is studying for a double degree in commerce and law, had never considered a career in politics before this conference but said now it could be on his agenda.

And the Black Opal program has exceeded his expectations.

"To be honest, I joined because I thought it would look good on my resume," he said.

"But it's given me a good network of friends throughout all the faculties."

Melinda has completed her first year of an arts degree, majoring in psychology.

"The conference at Parliament House was one of the highlights in my year; to see the human side of politicians," she said.

"(Member for Kingsford Smith) Peter Garrett chatted with us and that was really nice, hearing about his journey.

"(World Vision chief executive) Tim Costello was a real butt-kick for me. I really learnt how big the problems were - but there is so much that even an individual can do, otherwise it can be overwhelming. He said, 'Start small and finish big'.

"Faith and values is about how your values shape your action. It's often a side of leadership that's not spoken about," Melinda said.

Melinda joined Black Opal earlier this year after a year as a Rotary exchange student in Austria.

"It was encouraging to see uni had a leadership program to empower people and help people to grow personally.

"I found the Black Opal program so inspiring. It helps you to think about your future and it has a positive influence - and it's fun."

The IMB has provided the Black Opal Leadership Program with \$50,000 over three years. IMB chairman Russell Fredericks says the program is an investment in the region and its youth.

Noticeboard

FREEBIES

Tomorrow

Free half-day seminar for students starting Year 12 history extension course, UOW, 9.30am. Inquiries, bookings: Amanda Smithers, 4221 3332

CHEAP THRILLS

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Happy hour, UniBar, 5-6pm.

Thursday

Helensburgh Community Preschool art exhibition, 7pm, Helensburgh Community Centre, to raise money for the South Coast School for Children with Autism. Gold-coin donation, 4294 2313.

EXHIBITIONS

Until November 19

Headspace 7 at the National Portrait Gallery, Commonwealth Place, Canberra, includes works by Illawarra high school students on the theme Me and My Place.

November 15-December 3

Avant-Garden by graduating TAFE fine-art students, Project Contemporary Artspace, 255 Keira St, Wollongong. 0413 897 434.

Until February 25

The Illawarra Credit Union People's Choice, personal favourites from Wollongong City Gallery's collection selected by members of the community.

November 17-December 1

Who is Mark? Works by 90 graduating UOW visual arts and graphic design students, Faculty of Creative Arts. Opening Friday, 7pm.

MOVIES

Today, tomorrow

Sketches of Frank Gehry, 12.50pm, 4.40pm, 8.30pm, Gala Warrawong.

Noticeboard deadline is Friday: education @illawarramercury.com.au.



Auguste Blackman is one of the artists featured in the TAFE graduating students' exhibition *Avant-Garden* at Project Contemporary Artspace from tomorrow.