

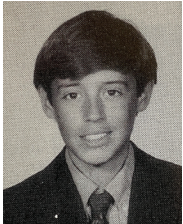
Portrait of a Graduate



John Adrian '98

Senior Director for Business Operations,
The University of Mississippi
Co-owner, Oxford's Circle & Square Brewing Co.
(Opening Summer 2023)

- Harvard Extension School: Graduate Certificate in Organizational Behavior Studies '21
- University of Mississippi: Master of Accountancy '07; B.S. Accounting and Business/Management '06, cum laude
- Certified Public Accountant (passed all four tests the first time!)
- Memphis University School '02



8th Grade, GSL

If you told me early in my career that I would have spent most of it thus far in the education industry, I would not have believed it. I had no idea there was a whole world out there on the business side of education.

My degree and the early experience in Big Four accounting opened up doors to other opportunities. But after getting burned out in the audit practice and trying out a role in the financial services industry, I found myself a little lost. I called it my “quarter-life” crisis! I still enjoyed accounting and finance, but I needed more purpose, so I started looking for ways to use my education and experience to support an organization that served a greater good. It just so happened that in 2010, GSL was looking for a Director of Finance and Operations, and I couldn't think of a better

place to match up my skills with my desire to serve. Former Head of School Tom Beazley took a chance on a young accountant, and I held that role for six years.

It's hard to quantify the impact GSL has had on me! The Christian foundation provided a strong sense of service and higher purpose. The sports teams instilled a work ethic and team-focused discipline. Serving on the Honor Council reinforced truth and integrity as extremely valuable principles in my life. The academic rigor set me up for success in high school, college, and beyond. I am especially grateful for the emphasis on reading, comprehension, and writing that provided a platform for success. While you might not think those are important skills for an accountant, the ability to problem solve and communicate clearly is a key differentiator in the business world. My GSL education polished my creative thinking and problem solving skills, regardless of the subject.

Mr. Wallace, who taught 7th and 8th grade history, was very influential to me. He made history fun, but we also had a quiz every day, which taught me the value of preparation. So many other teachers also lit up my brain, and made me feel known and loved: Mrs. Prewitt in 1st grade, Mrs. McAtee in 2nd grade, Mrs. Stevens in 3rd grade, Mrs. Glueck in art, Mrs. Gault in science and math, and many others.

There are many ways to have a fulfilling career using your gifts and following your passions. Each endeavor will lead you to discover more about yourself. Think about what you want to accomplish down the road and build habits that position you to reach those long-term goals. You also have to connect yourself to a purpose. One of my favorite quotes is from Teddy Roosevelt: “Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” There is a lot of work out there worth doing, so find something that fits your abilities and passions and work hard!

GRACE-ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL
Memphis, Tennessee