

Celebrating the Success of Manson Graduates

January 2016

Raygan Baker: Ordained Minister, Bethel United Church of Christ

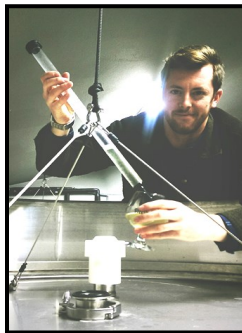
Upon graduation from Manson in 2007, Raygan attended Seattle Pacific University where he pursued a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Christian Theology. He then earned his Master of Divinity from Duke University and completed a one-year ordination program with a mentor. He is now ordained in the United Church of Christ and has pursued the ordination pathways and requirements set forth by the denomination. When he was thinking about this career path in college, he started by talking to other pastors and getting their advice. "Once I got into the ordination program and seminary, I met with committees at the church and conference levels to share why I wanted to be a pastor with them and did internships in churches to gain



experience and develop relationships with other pastors." Raygan is currently a Minister of Children, Youth and Young Adults at the Bethel United Church of Christ in Evansville, Indiana. "It's a big, crazy job, where I do anything from cast the visions for these programs, to recruit and train volunteers, write and lead worship services for children and youth, co-lead Sunday worship with the entire congregation, plan and lead local and long-distance service trips, plan special events throughout the year and a multitude of other activities that arise with these programs. It's a job that pushes me to be creative, passionate and as focused as I can be." Raygan reflects that while he was in high school at Manson, becoming a minister would have been the last career path he'd ever expect himself to follow. "I rely on being creative every day, so I was served very well by all the teachers that pushed me to think in ways and subjects that I wouldn't have been able to do on my own. Mrs. Kami Kronbauer pushed me to think of really abstract and confusing concepts in math classes. I learned to think of language in a different way in Spanish class with Mrs. Heather Teague. I rely on being able to write well every day and Mrs. Sue Neff and Mrs. Jennifer Koth encouraged my writing in high school and that support has served me well." Raygan advises, "all you have to do is work hard and take advantage of every opportunity you get. Students from Manson can go on and do anything. Manson is a unique place with unique opportunities and embracing that will make you stand out to future colleges and employers. You can go across the state or across the country with the resources made available to you in Manson, but you'll have to work for it. Leaving Manson can be daunting and people from other places will have had their own opportunities and advantages, but if you're willing to work harder, you really can go anywhere and find opportunities you don't even know exist yet."

Ben Barnes: Owner, Steelhead Cider

A Manson grad in 2007, Ben furthered his education at Washington State University where he took an Introduction to Wine Making class but ultimately fell into other areas of study including history, anthropology and sociology for his degree. Upon graduation from WSU in 2001 with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences, Ben went down several paths to get where he is today. First, he traveled to New Zealand where he discovered "true" hard cider (which is cider made with rare heirloom and vintage apple varieties in the same process that wine is made). Ben wondered why the Chelan/Manson Valley didn't have true hard cider being the Apple Capitol of the World. He started making home-brew batches for his personal consumption, but it wasn't until 2013 while working as a river raft guide that he decided to turn his hobby into a career. He then started the arduous process of securing permits and licenses and in 2015 Ben became a certified cider maker through the Cider and Perry Academy and the Northwest Agriculture Business Center. "At Steelhead Cider, we press apples and ferment their juices into hard cider. Cultured yeasts are introduced to convert the natural sugars into alcohol. My job is to guide this process by providing a healthy environment for them to work in by inhibiting spoilage organisms and by maintaining proper temperature and pH levels. Then I blend, bottle and sell the final product." Ben wants to thank Kevin Amsden and Ron McClure, two Manson teachers who inspired and encouraged him to seek out a future in a field that suited him. "They taught me that nothing is fulfilling if you set the bar low." Science teachers, Ken Nelson, Suzi Bennett and Kelly Bell taught him how to apply the sciences to real life. "Where I thought I would never use it, I now use basic and advanced chemistry and biology on a daily basis." Although Ben didn't put his college degree to direct use, he believes furthering one's education and expanding knowledge is never a waste.



Yesenia Escoto: Community Day School Association (CDSA) & Pre-School Teacher at Leschi Elementary School

After graduating from Manson in 2010, Yesenia attended Central Washington University where she earned her Bachelor's in Sociology and double-minored in Criminal Justice and Spanish. Yesenia is currently employed with the Community Day School Association in Seattle which is a non-profit organization that provides before and after school care and preschool for students attending Seattle Elementary Public School. The CDSA is branched out into nine Seattle schools, one being Leschi Elementary where Yesenia is permanently stationed as a full-time preschool teacher. Part of her training with the CDSA included training in the HighScope curriculum which is based on active, participatory learning. HighScope encourages children to explore and develop their learning through their own interests. Teachers focus on small group activities based on the children's interests and are able to meet them at their individual developmental levels. At Leschi, Yesenia's preschool has twenty students who come from a mix of socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. There are three full-time teachers who serve these children. As she reflected on her education at Manson, Yesenia said, "All of my teachers at Manson were wonderful and fostered my growth and development. However, there were two staff members that stood out, Mrs. Kami Kronbauer and Mrs. Dawn Vaughn. Mrs. Kronbauer was instrumental in convincing me to push farther than I ever thought I could. She was an excellent accountability partner who made sure I stayed on track and accomplished my goals. Mrs. Vaughn was my cheerleader, inspiration and a huge part of my support system along my journey. Without these two women, I would not be where I am today." Yesenia advises current and future Manson students stating,



"When you encounter obstacles and feel overwhelmed, don't give up or feel defeated. Take a moment to look at things in a new way or ask for help, but continue persevering. Learning to navigate through challenges will help you in every aspect of your life."

Tara (Kalian) Agostinelli: Marketing & Event Planner for the Seattle Home Show

After graduating from Manson High in 1992, Tara attended two quarters at Seattle Pacific University while she considered becoming a teacher. She then transferred to the University of Washington. "I wanted to be a teacher for the wrong reason, summers off! After two quarters of education classes, I knew it wasn't for me. When my Dad expressed needing another sales person at The Seattle Home Show, it felt like what I was supposed to do but had been running from the whole time. Sometimes what we want or need is right in front of our face!" Tara soon found herself accepting a job with her father at their family business. Tara is the 4th generation of Seattle Home Show owners. "It seemed like perfect timing and after discovering my other options, I knew this was the way to go; after all, I had spent a lifetime training for this job. Now Tara has been with the Seattle Home Show since 1996 and she wears many hats. Tara is in charge of social media, space sales, ad design, marketing and overall event planning. While attending Manson High School, Mr. Mark Marney was Tara's computer science teacher. While this was a time when computers were fairly new in the workplace, she was inspired to switch the family office from typewriters to computers! Mr. Bob Johnson was Tara's history teacher who inspired her to take many history classes in college. "Mr. Marney really made history fun!" Tara also said, "Mr. Joe Teague was my counselor and I was his TA. He really let me be me and I felt rewarded in working for him. That was when I discovered I could excel in an office environment." Tara advises Manson students to attend a college or tech school. "Get some kind of higher education or training. It's hard to be an adult! Harder than I ever thought, so don't rush into working for a living right out of high school because you do it FOREVER. Although you may not know what you want to do and maybe you won't even use your degree, but the experience and maturity you gain in those years is irreplaceable. Not to mention, college was the most fun I have ever had in life!" She also said, "You will never regret the time you invest in yourself before "real life" starts. And it's okay to leave Manson. You can always come back, but it's good to expand your views and face some potential fears. Manson will be here when you come home."



Jacquelyn Hernandez: Wenatchee Valley College Education Planning and Student Development

Jacque graduated from Manson in 2010 and attended Wenatchee Valley College her freshman year. She graduated from WVC in August 2011 with an Associate of Arts and Science Degree which grants a direct transfer degree to any four year institution giving the student Junior status. Thanks to all the Advanced Placement (AP) and College in the High School courses Jacque took she was able to graduate in just one year. She then transferred to the University of Washington in the fall of 2011. In June of 2014, she graduated with a B.A. in Spanish Literature and Culture and a minor in Law, Society and Justice (a degree specific to the UW). Throughout her college career, she obtained numerous internships and volunteer hours in the law, foreign language and education fields. "With these opportunities, I gained new knowledge and experiences which led to my previous employment and present position," says Jacque. She is currently employed at Wenatchee Valley College in the Educational Planning and Testing Center with the Department of Student Services. She assists former, current and incoming students with the admission process. She also assists special populations, which she says has been an epiphany. "This job has reassured me the education field is where I'm meant to be," says Jacque. With regards to her education in Manson, Jacque says, "My Spanish teacher throughout high school, Mr. Dean Morehead, was one of the best instructors I've had in my educational career. He inspired me to pursue the Spanish language path. Mr. Morehead made learning enjoyable; it was clear he genuinely enjoyed teaching and helping his students. When I taught first graders Spanish, I remembered some of his games to learn grammar and made it fun for the students. Thanks to Mr. Morehead for inspiring me to teach; I'll be returning to college in the next couple of years to earn my Master's Degree in Socio-linguistics and teach at the college level." Jacque goes on to share that, "Manson is a great community; however, there is so much more to learn and explore beyond the lake. My advice is that if you ever get the opportunity to travel and study abroad, do so! It's a life-changing experience that will enhance your college years and beyond. I studied abroad twice in Europe and learned so much...not just educationally but personally as well." Quoting Saint Augustine, Jacque adds, "The world is a book and those who don't travel read only one page."



Aaron England: Owner, England Chiropractic



Aaron attended Rick's College and Brigham Young University in Idaho earning his Bachelor of Science in Biology after graduating from Manson High School in 1999. He then attended Palmer College of Chiropractic where he became a doctor of chiropractic. Aaron completed two internships, one in Rogue River, Oregon and the second in

Renton, Washington. "As a chiropractor, I focus on the musculo-skeletal system of the body to help people heal and function better." With regards to his educational experience at Manson, Aaron says, "I feel very blessed to have grown up in Manson and was supported by everyone. The teachers I had in elementary school still remember and check up on me. The middle and high school teachers set me up to succeed in college and beyond. I brought my family back to the valley because this community was the reason for my success. I wanted to provide that support in some way for others as well as give my kids the same environment I had..." He continues, "The beauty of Manson is that you can participate in as many sports, clubs or events as you choose. I encourage today's students to serve and participate as much as possible, learn that there is more about yourself than just you. Don't narrow your dreams and goals while there is still so much to see and do in the world. I love what I do, but it wasn't what I thought I wanted in high school. My experience at Manson allowed me to capitalize on the opportunities that were presented to me and find something that was a great professional fit for me."

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