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UA grads 'pursue the passion' in national tour

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A few months ago, four UA graduate students set out to discover what makes people passionate about their jobs.

Brett Farmiloe and the rest of the Pursue the Passion crew will be rolling onto campus today for the last stop of their four-month 2007 tour. They will be talking to students about what they learned from their journey.

"We're seeing where they were when they were our age, just coming out of school," Farmiloe said. "We're basically talking to them about their career journey and seeing if they have any insight for us."

The Pursue the Passion team has been cruising around the country, traveling 1,600 miles and interviewing 175 people in 38 states who have a "passion" for their careers.

Farmiloe started the trip when he was faced with making a career decision after graduation in May 2006.

"When I was about to walk across the McKale Center stage, I was going into an accounting job," he said. "I knew that I didn't want to be an accountant, so I started contacting people that have pretty cool jobs and I thought by talking to them I could get direction in my life."

The first person Farmiloe interviewed about his passion was UA men's basketball coach Lute Olson.

"I left a few messages, e-mailed him a couple times and lo and behold, I'm on his couch talking with him for about 45 minutes with two of my buddies," he said.

His interview with Olson gave him the confidence to embark on his first Pursue the Passion tour in 2006, when he and other two UA graduates went on the road and interviewed 75 people about how they found their passions.

For the 2007 tour, Farmiloe is joined by UA alum James Whiting and friends Zach Hubbell and Noah Pollock. The gang traveled in a 30-foot RV with all expenses paid for by their trip sponsor, [Jobbing.com](#).

Getting the trip sponsored was only the first step in Farmiloe's entrepreneurial plan.

He said he hopes to turn the story of his journey into a book and documentary, and also develop his Web site into a resource that people can actually turn to.

"This whole quest to find my passion has developed into a passion," Farmiloe said. "I'm trying to turn this into my career. I'm trying to be an entrepreneur for life."

Passion team members run www.pursuethepassion.com, where they keep a blog of their travels and post interviews for visitors to get career guidance and insight from.

"Nobody told me I was going to be very useful after graduation, and all of a sudden I'm useful," Pollock said.

Pollock put his creative writing degree to use by writing summaries of the interviews and creating other content for the site.

"People have interesting things to say if you just give them a chance to say it," he said. "If you're just barely willing to care about what other people do and what other people have to say, you'll find crazy opportunities lurking around every corner."

One of his favorite parts of the trip was talking to people at the top of their professions in fields ranging from theater to food to sports, he said.

"I'm not sure I've found my passion, but I am sure I've found the sheer multitude of possibilities," Pollock said.

The key to success is being willing to go out in the world and make a way for yourself, he added.

"I know a lot of people who have graduated with nothing more than a cocaine addiction and a communications degree," he said. "You realize being on a trip like this that anybody in the world will tell you, 'You can do anything you want to do,' but in the end, you really can do anything you want to do."

Farmiloe said that while he is on the UA campus he will be trying to close the gap between alumni and undergraduates by encouraging them to connect and help each other transition.

He is also hoping to spread the Pursue the Passion tour by offering UA students the opportunity to conduct their own interviews and maybe even go on another road trip he is planning for 2008.

"Maybe we'll drive around in the RV in the Homecoming parade," Farmiloe said.

"Who knows?"

On Friday, the team will attend a luncheon at the Eller College of Management and then talk with freshmen students.

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