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Road trip translates into career for two disgruntled accountants

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Last summer, four recent college grads took a road trip. Typical, right?

Wrong. These guys enticed sponsors to pay for a 29-foot RV, then hit the road with the intent to answer a simple question: What makes people passionate about their jobs?



More than 16,000 miles and 175 interviews later, two of them have turned that road trip into full-time work. They're also creating a career development program for high school students, writing a book and producing a documentary.

Brett Farmiloe, 23, and Zach Hubbell, 25, graduated from the **University of Arizona** nearly two years ago and took entry-level accounting jobs they hated.

Today, they're part of Pursue the Passion, a program of the Phoenix-based **Jobing Foundation**.

Farmiloe started the Pursue the Passion tour in 2006 on a quest to find a job he could love. Last summer, sponsors including **Jobing.com**, **Allied Insurance** and Nestlé paid the expenses so he and his friends could make the trip again -- this time, with a greater purpose.

When they returned in October 2007, Jobing.com decided to offer them the chance to build their program under the company's nonprofit arm.

"We sponsored them on their tour and didn't really know where it would go," said Jobing.com founder and CEO Aaron Matos. "We knew they had a passion for what they did, and we figured something good would come of it."

Under the Jobing Foundation's wing, Pursue the Passion will help his company reach young people through career development programs, Matos said. The foundation's goal is to build work force skills and help job candidates navigate the search process.

300 hours of interviews

Farmiloe and Hubbell's first task is to take what they learned on their 2007 road trip and create a similarly structured high school program.

During the tour, the duo filmed more than 300 hours of interviews with "passionate people" and blogged about their adventures on their Web site. It was a life-changing experience, they said, to meet so many people happy in their jobs.

"I feel like I grew more in the last four months than I did in the last four years," Farmiloe said.

Now, they're piloting a program involving 40 students at **GateWay Early College High School**, a charter school that's part of GateWay Community College.

As part of their Pursue the Passion senior project, students are required to set up and conduct an interview with a local professional in a field of their interest. The students will film and edit their interviews and post their reflections on a blog.

It's a way not only to learn about a career, but also to build written and verbal communication skills in a

professional setting, Hubbell said.

"There are job shadow programs, but they're not as effective because they don't put the responsibility on the student. A professional hosts a student for a day and is basically responsible for entertaining them," he said.

"In our program, the student shows up, drives the conversation and is challenged to conduct adult dialogue in a professional situation," he said. "High school kids don't usually get that experience."

It's for that reason Principal Yvonne Watterson said her school jumped at the opportunity to participate. The high school will continue to offer job shadowing, she said, but will combine those with Pursue the Passion and Junior Achievement programs.

Farmiloe and Hubbell said their goal is to replace most job shadow programs. They hope to expand Pursue the Passion to other Valley schools this fall, and to other Jobing.com markets in 2009.

In the meantime, they are compiling their road trip interviews and adventures into a book and a documentary.

"Passion is a means, it's not an end," Hubbell said.

Get Connected

Pursue the Passion program: **www.pursuethepassion.com**

Jobing Foundation: **www.jobingfoundation.org**

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