PACIFIC PORTRAITS

The People Behind the Scenes at Pacific University

VOLUME THREE
Our treasure lies in the beehive of our knowledge. We are perpetually on the way thither, being by nature [...] honey gatherers of the mind.

Friedrich Nietzsche

The “Bee Tree”, an iconic ivy-covered tree that stood on the Pacific University campus for many years, was already old and hollow when pioneer Tabitha Brown arrived in Oregon in 1846. Mrs. Brown started a home for orphans that would grow into Pacific University. According to the Forest Grove News-Times, the tree was “said to have housed a swarm of bees who furnished the little old lady with honey which she sold to buy provisions for her orphan children.”
Sometimes life is all about connections, and no one takes this more to heart than Brian O’Driscoll. Brian is the Director of the Career Center at Pacific University. His main focus is helping students answer the “what’s next” question that comes after graduation. Pacific pride runs strong in his family. He, his father, and his siblings all attended Pacific, and he has high hopes for his oldest son to attend next fall. He graduated Pacific as a Literature and Philosophy major, so how did he find his way to Chapman Hall? Brian O’Driscoll wanted to do meaningful work and to help himself and others validate their Liberal Arts Education. He interacts with alumni on a daily basis to connect students with graduates working in the professional world, it’s one of his favorite parts of the job. “It’s a great joy to have students who have gone on to graduate and still be able to rekindle a conversation with them,” he says.

What you might not know about this soft spoken man in Chapman Hall is that he is a theatre fan, although he insists that he only watches. His favorite place on campus is the Tom Miles Theatre, which he swears hasn’t changed since he was a student. Brian says it’s “magic to see students acting or dancing and they are so put together and professional.” He strives to help students implement that confidence into their upcoming careers.

Outside of campus, you can find Brian running his family’s blueberry farm. “The farm is the dog that wags the tail in our lives,” he says. Farming is something that runs in the O’Driscoll family. Following in his parents footsteps, he now runs a farm of his own after growing up on one his entire life. It’s easy to see that Brian has a real passion for farming. His eyes light up as he tells me the ins and outs of blueberry season, chuckling when he points out how any birthdays or anniver-
saries that happen during that time are put on the back burner. “My parents gave me the best of what the farm had to offer. I chose to go back to it and it frequently kicks my butt.” The farm is another way to create connections within his own community. Brian talks lovingly about showing people around the farm and helping people with all of their berry needs. He’s all about helping people find opportunities, on campus and on the farm. He shakes his head in amusement, and huffs as he tells me about the local high school and middle school students who help on the farm during the year. “There’s nothing like knowing you have orders that need to get out the door and on the freeway up to Portland and you’re watching kids in the field throwing blueberries at each other.”

Brian’s work doesn’t end with graduation or with blueberry season, not by a longshot. Brian has high hopes for the Career Center in the future to strengthen its bond with Pacific alumni. He possesses a passion for working with alumni, not only to help make connections with the students, but to help them with the next steps in their professional careers. “I have witnessed many alumni who definitely could benefit
from a little bit of career conversation,” he says. Boxer Pride is an important part of Brian O’Driscoll’s life, and he wants it to be known that it doesn’t stop after graduation. Pacific continues to be a source for guidance, counseling, and just a shoulder to lean on. All you have to do is dial Chapman Hall for an earful of knowledge, and if you’re lucky, a handful of blueberries.

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