

Alumni Profiles

Charles “Charlie” Nelson (’85)

1) Briefly tell us about your current job.

Since 2006, I have been a marketing executive at Grace Hill Media, the leading Faith and Family marketing company serving the entertainment industry. The Faith and Family market is a vast, complex and relatively untapped community when it comes to broad, mainstream entertainment. We bridge that gap by meeting the needs of Hollywood while remaining sensitive to the values of Religious Americans.

2) Briefly tell us about your career path.

Chicago born and raised, I completed a semester long NY internship my senior year. From that experience, I moved to NY immediately after graduation and found work as a waiter (I wasn't very good) and as a production assistant at a small television production company. Several years later, and probably as the oldest intern on the books, I began an 18 year career with a summer internship in New York at Walt Disney Pictures in the marketing department, eventually working my way up and heading the film publicity department.

3) What were some of your activities at DePauw?

DePauw allowed me to expand the great educational opportunities with activities on campus and within my fraternity. I was active in Little 5 eventually becoming co-chair my senior year, filled in occasionally on-air at WGRE, was pledge trainer and secretary in my fraternity and was on the tennis team my first year at school.

4) How has DePauw influenced your career (and perhaps, life)?

DePauw helped me to see the whole picture – from identifying the “Big Picture” to creating the strategy and finding the tools to execute the plan for the Big Picture. This generality has helped me both professionally and personally accomplish what I have set out to do. Still, it hasn't worked so well on winning the Lottery! Such is life.

5) What is the best career advice you would give students today?

It's simple and old school – “Work Hard, Play Hard!” Work hard at what you love best because it will be the most fulfilling and rewarding experience. And it's not really that hard if you love doing it! It actually becomes a growing process that might eventually lead you on a different, equally rewarding path. You never want to look back with the “Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda” mentality. Conversely, you need to play hard as well. The old adage, “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!” holds true in so many ways. Whether it be sports, video games, family time, these help you grow and become a more well-rounded person. It took me about 18 years to learn that.

6) What city and state do you call home?

Sherman Oaks, CA (A suburb of Los Angeles)

7) What do you do in your free time?

I love spending time with my family, golf, horseback riding, skiing, and have found a new love for tennis.

8) Where have you traveled in the past 5 years?

I have a young family, so the Zoo is the destination of choice these days. But for pleasure, we have been to Hawaii, Disney World, Arizona, Wyoming, Chicago, and New York. On the business side, Chicago, New York, Bahamas, London, and Paris have been some highlights.