

40. Robert Brooks and Brad Deal: Embrace the Pursuit

Gavin Kelly

Hey everybody, you're listening to beyond 1894. I'm Gavin Kelly from the Office of University Communications. And today we are joined by from our School of Design, Mr. Brad deal and Mr. Robert Brooks. How are you guys doing today? Good again.

Robert Brooks

Hey, Gavin doing great.

Gavin Kelly

Great. All right. So, first of all, so our listeners can get to know you guys a little better. How about you talk a little bit about what you do here, your role here, your actual title, and how long you've been here, that sort of thing?

Brad Deal

Sure. Um, I'll go first, my name is Brad deal. I'm an associate professor of architecture. In school design. I am also alumni of Louisiana Tech. I graduated in the architecture program in 2003. And went off and worked in Los Angeles and Houston, went to graduate school in Austin worked there for a few years. And through a number of coincidences found the opportunity to come back home and teach. And been here since 2012.

Robert Brooks

And hi, I'm, my name is Robert Brooks. And I'm also an Associate Professor of Architecture over at Hale Hall on this beautiful campus. I got I came here from the Cranbrook Academy of Art where I did my graduate work. And my undergraduate degree is from Auburn. I've been working with Brad now since 2013. And, and how I kind of got to tech is an interesting story. Maybe like some other folks, I was going to come to tech and get a few years teaching under my belt, and then move on to greener pastures or so I thought. And then a funny thing happened along the way. I fell in love with this university. And I fell in love with this town. And I've been here this is now my 16th year.

Gavin Kelly

Awesome. Well, I know the architecture department is better for having both y'all stick around. So thanks for being here today. Thanks for being a part of the university course. So you mentioned, you know that you guys have been working together for a while. So we're going to get into in a little bit about the specifics of what that means. But talk a little bit about how you guys sort of came to work together in in the capacity that you are now. Sure.

Brad Deal

Well, when I took the position here, it was under the auspices of taking over the design build program within architecture. So explain what that is for a minute. So architecture as a discipline is a little bit different from many other many other majors where we have to, we put our students in professional situations that have got to, it's like they're their own boss, they get to get projects, and they have to design them as if they are in charge. So we're not we're not teaching them the pieces of the puzzle, but but they've got to sort of run run the whole project on their own. And so in design build, as the name suggests, they've got to design a project and then go out into the community and construct the thing and kind of understand the the mission of design build is to understand the consequences of design decisions by seeing them all the way through construction. So I'm a product of that program. Our our director, Carl Polyak was my professor. When I was student here. He started the design build program and not the 99 2000 school year, and I got the chance to participate that in in that in 2003 is a capstone experience to my undergraduate program and I was heavily influenced by it it led me to pursue employment at a design build firm in Houston. And and that that was heavily influential on my what my pursuit of a master's in sustainable design and unity Texas at Austin. And then when the opportunity to come come back and teach came up, it was it was to take over this program that had a pretty big influence on my career. I was I was really excited to do it. Now the first year I came back, it was it was also interesting in that the program needed to reboot. Actually, Robert had been helping out with a few studios. It was at the moment in the hands of one of our other faculty, Kevin saying we're working with Habitat, Habitat for Humanity. And that that partnership and that set of projects for a variety of reasons I won't get into them had run its course it was wonderful relationship and everything was good, but it was time to do something different mostly because the same thing of it done over and over and over again to the point that it needed to be refreshed. And so I was tasked with finding the new direction for it. The first year. I was here we did a parks project for parks and recreation for city Press. and that was wonderful. But but in searching for that one, it was just sort of ready to go. But in searching for that a lot of opportunities came up. And one of them was to was an opportunity to partner with med camps of Louisiana, which I'm sure we'll talk about them in a minute, because it's been a really positive relationship. But it was at that point, it was the second year of my time here and, and the opportunity where we decided that wow, this opportunity med cams was really exciting. Carl partnered, Robert and I together to for the design build studio and said, You know, I think you guys are gonna, you're gonna do all right, you'll help each other out. And he was absolutely right. In that regard. And the story that first project, this is in 2000, the spring of 2014, it was our first quarter to teach together and work together. And we really did not know each other that well at that point. But it ended up being a serendipitous and hugely successful relationship, just on a personal level on a professional level. And, and on a, you know, organizational level between Edcamps Louisiana Tech, school design and our classes. So we, we jumped in together. One of the other challenges, I guess it's worth saying is, is to design and to build something in one quarter, you know, about 10 weeks of class time, is a monumental effort. And that was the operation at that time is really a challenge to it, I guess I'll step back and set the frame of reference, a lot of our students in a normal Design Studio will work, they'll work 40 to 50 plus hours a week. And in the 10 weeks of a quarter, they will go from doing research to proposing a few designs, I'll have a kind of midterm review, I get a lot of feedback, and then pour themselves into a bunch of edits and reworkings of things, to have a kind of final project at the end of the quarter. And it will be a beautiful set of images and drawings, that you could never build anything from it. So we've got to get it beyond that point that they usually get to do what we do this but you know, leveraging teamwork and everyone working together on the same thing they get beyond where they normally get

in the finals to construction documents, which is dimensioned drawings that's call out precise materials, and every nook and cranny of the whole thing is figured out. We, we started would get all that done in about two and a half to three weeks, and then have about a week or so to draw the thing construction documents and then six weeks or so to get it all constructed. And it was a sprint right because it was originally just spring quarter, right? Originally just spring quarter. Luckily, in recent years, we've been able to expand that to winter and spring and it's allowed us a lot of you know, opportunities to be healthier, safer, and just engage a number of opportunities that we didn't have time for otherwise. And so back in 2014 first time Robert and I got got to teach together around the run the studio together and and the first iteration of it, which there was a partnership with med camps and a lot of good things happen that year that has kept us all coming back to the wealth.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, super strong. Shout out to carpool yacht for having the foresight to pair it all up. Because Robert, you mentioned that that you guys work, really you have a dynamic, a very interesting dynamic together. Oh, we

Robert Brooks

really do. Um, Brad, we call him the mathematician in the studio. And he honestly, he's the reason that the projects are finished on time and on budget. And I'm still trying to figure out my role. I think it's somewhere between comedic relief and just a guy that can lift heavy things. But it is that dynamic that that together, we form a pretty, pretty impressive team. It is a lot of fun working with Brad. And and it's a lot of fun working with Brad with our students. It has been a remarkable and personally transformative relationship to be able to do what we do where we do it with Brad and of course, our clients.

Gavin Kelly

Right. So clients, in this case in design build, because this is a relationship that's been going on for a long time. And it works really well. And that's why, like you said, you keep coming back to this. So med camps is probably one of the most important partnerships in the architecture program and in this design build endeavor that you take on every year. Talk a little bit about the projects that have been going on at Med camps over the last few years. Maybe talk about the one that's going on this year. Speak to the efforts that have been going on over there.

Robert Brooks

Well, it is it is to hear you say that it's been going on a long time. It's still flabbergasted flabbergasting to me, because it just seems like yesterday when Brad was talking about we started the first project in 2013 It feels like yesterday, we have. The great thing about our client is that he gives us challenges or gives us challenges that seem at first insurmountable. And sometimes I just like to tell Brad that we're just too dumb to know we can't do it. But over that period of time, we've we've designed

Brad Deal

random numbers guy, nine projects. At this point, we've designed

Robert Brooks

nine projects and Bill eight. And it is a wide variety. Their very, very first project was an outdoor open air pavilion. We did we've done an archery range and paintball range, we, we have built a boat launch and a canoe launch for the campers, we've built in my favorite sort of personal story involves the zip line, where we can take kids that don't have the opportunity to go to summer camp, usually. And we give we because of what we do and our partnership with Caleb, we give them the opportunity opportunities to be like all the normal kids that are getting to do the same thing. And we built a 400 foot long bridge across a pond in 10 weeks. I mean, I'm sure I'm leaving something out. But it is just the wide variety. But for me the most enjoyable fulfilling, like we Brad and I both been in private practice. We still have a private practice. But and we do that for various reasons, either friends or family or maybe financial reasons or whatever. But the reason we do work at camp and we enjoy it so much is that our number one priority number one priority prerogative, is it rather than increasing somebody's bottom line or giving their business a new image or helping sell more cars? It is to provide nothing more than fun, enjoy. And if that's my goal as an architect, it's a pretty good fit. Yeah,

Brad Deal

maybe it's maybe it's we're saying just humid campuses for a minute for sure. Right. Right. So So med camps of Louisiana is a nonprofit. They are based there the property is in Shreveport, Louisiana, at Camp Alabama, actually part of the Alabama press charity, the pines. They are a nonprofit that provides summer camp experiences for children with chronic illnesses and disabilities. And they provide a free of charge. And it's it's an amazing place on its own merits and amazing organizations, an amazing group of people. Caleb Seanie, and Casey Hobson. Now, Casey Whipple is she just got married. She and Caleb are amazing at what they do, they take this place in the middle of the woods nowhere and bring kids together from all over the state and out and outside of the state. They basically take anyone that reaches out and kind of applies. And they run, they run hundreds of kids through there every summer. And those kids get to step out of their kind of minority sidelines role and be around kids that are like them, and they get to just be themselves. Without without feeling ostracized, or, or different from everyone else. It's just, it's an amazing and pivotal, confidence building thing. And we Robert and I and the students that they get to go out there and build projects, we get to be the icing on the cake we get we get to build facilities and design experiences for them, that that just empower and embolden the things that they get to do out there. And so we're incredibly lucky to get to work with them. And and it's it's highly motivational, not only to us, but to the students. And we all get excited about it every year just because there's there's very few opportunities, I think, to where you're, well in this case, the students don't have a lot of choice. But they, they they get to work for someone that they can feel really good about working towards. And it's not it's not like Robert said, it's not about the money. It's not about I've got to do this or I won't have a paycheck. It's not it's not about prestige, it's it's just about doing something good for someone that has a need that they can fulfill themselves and we get to step in and play that role for them. So that's that's it's really wonderful.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, you get to do that every year. It's pretty cool. And it's you can see the immediate impact of it to the kids are absolutely instantly just improved their experience at the campus.

Brad Deal

Every every summer. We run these projects in the spring, the spring quarter class, is when we're doing our construction. And every summer. A few students are able to stick around the local ones or the ones that get internships around here. We'll always make a trip out there in the summer and at a minimum, take a handful of pictures and put them where where everyone gets to see just the fruits of their labor. Because, again, the students love to make things. They love the building of the architecture, they love, experience, they got making the thing, but it, it doesn't all quite come together until you see some smiles and, and and some laughter here some laughter

Gavin Kelly

It's real. Yeah, it's

Brad Deal

very, very real. Yeah. Real. And I think that's fundamentally what, what makes it so different from most of the other classes that we teach the architecture program, most of the other classes at most universities anywhere is that it's not nothing, it's not hypothetical. You've got to, you got to go through figuring out literally all the nuts and bolts of this thing, right? To get to a place where it's done. And it's real. And you've seen it all the way through, you've committed your decisions. If you use, it's happened, and now it's affecting someone's love life in a positive way. And that's, you can't you can't get that many places. It's certainly not so directly, as we get to set up in this in this partnership, this these classes.

Gavin Kelly

So when you're working on this year? Oh,

Robert Brooks

to tell to answer that question. We have to back up go ahead a year in 2020. Yep. We Caleb and med camps asked us to take an existing cabin that was no longer used, and converted into a new art maker art and maker space, because it is one of the most therapeutic and empowering, but social building activities that happen at camp and the current in their current location. It was just it's basically a big screened in porch. You can't do it in the rain. It's sweltering hot. So we sat out in 2020, with a group of students, and we made it all the way through schematic design, we were ready to go get our permits, we actually broke ground. And

Brad Deal

about a weekend of the process a week,

Robert Brooks

a week into the process. I was just returning back from Cuba, our flight. I mean, our trip was shortened by three days, I had to come back early. By the time my feet were on the ground here. Brad's texted me saying they've just shut the university. Now, what does that mean for design build. So in a matter of 24 hours, he and I came up with another scenario that allowed us to move forward safely, and still do the project. We got approval from the administration and leadership. We worked on that for three days. And then it was entirely shut down. And we had to pivot to making a real thing to finding out a way of delivering the content of that class in a virtual format. We managed to do that with and Brad was largely responsible for making that transition from the real to the digital. But the project was shuttered. Last

year, we were invited to do a different project and leave the art cabin in its current halfway demolish stage. And we did what was called the hero's origin, a brand new entrance in a new face to camp. And we can talk about that, and the successes of that one later. Looks amazing. Thank you. It was that was we've done some crazy things, and that's one of them. But then when the conversation rolled back around this year, and we engaged Caleb and Casey and Landon and talked about what they wanted, and what we could do to help them the art cabin came back up. Unfinished business, unfinished business. That's right. And so we've taken it on head on. In a normal contractor architect type role, we would have just unrolled the plans from two years ago, and we would have just gotten started. But the joy, the learning, and all of that that happens doesn't happen just in swinging a hammer. It happens in the from the conceptual to the realization, so we scrapped those plans. And with Brad and I and our students in the in the last 10 weeks to come to schematic design, design development. We've gotten approval from all the board members and Caleb and we are ready to break ground the first day of this coming quarter for brand new art and maker space called the mosaic where all the little pieces come together to form one beautiful thing.

Brad Deal

Absolutely, yeah, the 2020 shuttering of the project was heartbreaking. It It's easy. And it really underscored the value of the experience that we get, we get to have and to deliver to the students because we were, well, like many people in the spring of 2020, we were really crushed by the missed opportunity. And when you when we pull out the interpersonal interaction and the, the physical being together and the making

Gavin Kelly

something that's fundamental to the whole thing, yeah, yeah, I

Brad Deal

mean, we, you know, modeled every bolt and screw and two by four in the computer, and they understood how the project needed to go together, every plumbing fitting, the toilets, the faucets, everything was was, you know, put together the computer and the information was delivered, but it was just empty. But it wasn't Harrison, no, no, the, the smiles of the campers using the thing, the satisfaction of seeing it all come together, the sweat equity, of all the Blood, Sweat Tears that goes into these things. It was just, it was taken from that group of students. And it was heartbreaking for us, but less on a selfish level, because we genuinely enjoy doing it. But also, really, it was primarily with heartbreaking not to be able to live to deliver that to them. And we're finally it's not the same group of students. But we're getting to make good on a project that we had to leave, you know, only at step one,

Gavin Kelly

right? Because, you know, something like that when it's when it's done every year, and it impacts the students that you're teaching the kids at Med camps. The two of you personally, the flip side of that is when it when something like 2020 happens, and it goes south for a little while it also impacts everyone in the other direction. So

Robert Brooks

and we recognize that we're not special, that there's an entire university 12 floors below us that suffered many of the same way. Right? Absolutely.

Gavin Kelly

Right. And it was difficult for everyone to pivot. And that being said, it's not to say that it's not difficult to do it normally. Because you think about an architecture student somebody in architecture program, it's already complicated major. That's not very tiring. Yeah, it's very demanding. I mean, a lot of majors here are but there's, I mean, any major with a studio and just time demands that are unlike a lot of the other ones here. So a student who is already putting in full time job hours worth of schoolwork every week, and then they come around to their junior year, and they come around to a design build project. I mean, how does that impact a student who's pushing themselves already in their schoolwork? And then they have a challenge like this and a task like this in their class?

Robert Brooks

And and I want us both to answer that, because this is where those opposite ends of our Gotcha. Okay, so I'll let Brad go first, if you will,

Brad Deal

yeah, so having this class in the, in the junior year is a pretty special moment, like it, if whether you're, you're listening to this and under 21 or older than 21, I imagine most people are going to be older. But if you can think back to that moment, in your life, when you're around 2021 It's just a massive amount of change that's going on with you at that point. And I feel like we inherit the students as children, and we and we, and we get we, you know, send them on their way kind of as adults, because it's the amount of work and we talk about, actually, when we do the you're going to segue for a second year we did the zip line, we learned a thing that we were practicing that we didn't even realize as a principal and kind of ropes course training, and talk about your comfort zone, just beyond that as your stretch zone and then beyond that of the panic zone. And you you've got to operate in that stretch zone if you're going to effect any kind of change on yourself. And so the amount of work that we ask of students puts them in that stretch zone sometimes it pushes out the panic and they have let's step away and calm down and get back to working but but they are well out of their comfort zone they do not know what what you know how to operate a circular saw or welder or many of the tools were introduced into and just and how to just put in a lot of work and be accountable for that work being done well and showing up when you're supposed to be there. It's it's it's like a real job and I think that that that crucible of hard work and and accountability and communication and all the all the things it takes to be a good functioning team. Just everyone grows up a good bit and it's really satisfying to see as a teacher and a mentor. But but the students come out of come out of this experience and they feel accomplished. They feel empowered, and they're ready to take on anything that comes After that, and so that's that's the thing that I think is is, you know, set satisfying to me. And I think if you ask most of them, I think that's what they would have in common, like I learned how to be an adult class, because it was hard. And I did some things I'm really proud of, I think I think that would be pretty, maybe some of the most common themes you'd hear from students there.

Robert Brooks

And I think that I Well, I agree with everything that Brad says, I'm more of a visual thinker. And so I need all of our listeners to imagine trying to fit a washing machine through a knothole in offense. How did the students dig deep? And how do they find that motivation? How do they get the washing machine through the knothole. And I think the first step is that if you think back to when you were their age, what you really needed the most with somebody to believe in you, Brad and I completely believe in our students. And we believe in our students enough, that we reject the leadership from the back style of teaching, we lead from the front, there's no better way and Mote no matter no better motivator than to be able to say, we are going to do this. And let us show you how. Right and I can't do it by yourself. But if you help us, we can all do it together. The very first couple of weeks are hard, because they're they're believing us they trust us, they just haven't seen the fruits of their

Gavin Kelly

labor yet. It's daunting, it's still very daunting it is,

Robert Brooks

but then there are in Brad's identified them as so I think you call them magic moments, or special moments or something like that. And it's when there's a whole bunch of work that's been happening. And the day the concrete truck shows up, and we pour a slab, or the day the first wall goes up, or the day that there's a 700 foot long zip line in the air. And those moments are just absolutely and fundamentally crucial. Because the students then they believed us, now there's proof of it clicks, and after that click, Brad and I, to some extent, can back off a little bit because they are empowered, they might not know how to do it. But what they do know is they can do it. I think that's where it comes from. Those also can run and do run on fumes sometimes, because we demand a lot. That's where the campers, and Caleb, and a reminder that what they're doing is so much greater and larger than any grade. And it will live well beyond the end of this class, that all of those external motivators are, by and large, the thing that moat that get our students to find down really, really deep, the courage, the motivation, and just a will to keep going. It's a pretty it's a pretty beautiful process. Yeah,

Gavin Kelly

it's deeper than a schooling, it's deeper than just a class. It's it, it runs to the core of who these students are as people, and it will affect them forever.

Brad Deal

Absolutely. Oh, on that, in that theme, things that come out of the class that are lasting. One of the things that we lay out from day one is, is we talked a good bit in the class about the value of relationships. And one of the things that comes out of this class are our bonds, that that stick these students together for the for the rest of their lives. They're going to remember that spring, how

Gavin Kelly

they were spending sleepless nights out on site together. And yeah, well,

Brad Deal

I mean, they've got sleepless nights, almost everyone has that experience. Right. But But I think that there's something about just just working and sweating and learning together about this. I mean, it's it's

got a lot of correlations to athletics. It's when when you go through something that is so visceral and difficult and challenging and rewarding at the end, like you're bonded with the people that you're around, that you're figuring it out with and those relationships. And it's not just our class, but it's I think it's all the relationships that any students gain in college. Those are not to undercut any of the technical knowledge that we gained in our classes that we deliver on class. But those relationships are some of the absolutely most important things that come out of your time in college. I think that's why in person colleges are never going to be replaced by online things. It's the relationships you build as you're going through these things that create opportunities for your future. And so if you don't, you can have all the technical knowledge in the world about your profession, your industry, if you don't know someone that's going to give you the opportunity to deploy that knowledge. That's what good is it doing? So it's I think, putting these students through those experiences, having to build really with one another is kind of a, just giving them the formula for building relationships that allow them to use their technical knowledge in the future, and those those relationships are going to build a professional network in the not too distant future. And those networks are going to create all the opportunities in the world. And we, we talked pretty openly about that sometimes I think we're giving it away too easy, or it's like when when the answers sort of shown to you right up front, but I mean, that that is genuinely the, the formula for future success is like, is just getting to know the people around you showing that you're dependable showing that you can deliver on the things you say you're going to do. And if you if you're not sure how you're gonna figure it out. So just just problem solving together going those relationships. It's, it's the formula we try to deliver through the class to those students, and it's, it's rewarding every single time.

Robert Brooks

Well, and I wouldn't say to follow up with that. Although Brad sort of came up with the words I'm going to take credit for because I'm saying that students are often intimidated by the work that we do. We we teach them to weld, we teach them to be carpenters, we teach them to be masons, we teach them to do foundation work, things that mitten 90% of our students, or maybe even more, have never done. And they they come to us worried am I going to be able to do this? Am I strong enough, these machines are scary, and those sorts of things. And we tell them without fail. The guaranteed formula for success in this class requires two components, effort, and attitude. And if you can come with those two things intact, we can teach you everything else. And we can lead you lead from the front with you to guarantee your success. Have we had near misses? Sure, have we had things we've had to redo? Sure. But that's all part of the learning process, too. You come with the right attitude, you come with the right amount of effort, the rest is we can teach you, right?

Gavin Kelly

It just falls into place if you can, if you can have the foundation because these students, it's hard to put it into perspective for someone who hasn't seen it or heard about it firsthand. But the amount of work, I mean, even now, that is stretched over two quarters. It's such, it's these huge projects, and the same group of students over time. And again, like you said, these students are going to be changing may change career paths and may change, you know, what they want out of their, their major what they want their future career. Just see in this and no one can take that away from him, right? Because that's right, 1020 years from now, they're still gonna have been with those same, that same group of kids from their class making a difference out of med camps.

Robert Brooks

And I think that what I would point out there is that I would say, we probably maybe should have said this very beginning of the conversation, that Brad and I probably to a fault are humble in nature. But when I guess there was an old saying that those that can brag without a lion, let him brag. Yes, we recognize that our students are doing good work, the campers recognize that the students are doing good work. But here is the real magic in the surprise is that along the way, Brad, and I've had the courage to submit the work that we're doing in the state of Louisiana, AIA awards, competition, and in the Gulf states region. So to give a perspective, there's a network of architects who's been doing work over the years, or over the last year, or whatever the period of time that is, and they submit their work for consideration. And I've lost track of the number of a American Institute of Architects awards that our students projects have won, when we are making projects for \$15,000. And we're beating projects that have \$40 million budgets, that says something about it's not just me and Brad and a bunch of students splashing around in the mud up and shoot her in. But the work that we're doing is meaningful. And I guarantee you, Brad and I would keep doing it, even if we weren't winning awards. But the point in that story is that other people recognize its value to that don't have anything to that aren't directly related to education. They are related to the profession in which we're teaching that is absolutely humbling. And I'm not gonna lie a little bit thrilling to

Brad Deal

absolutely, yeah, the people that have seen the movies we've made, or seen as, as, as a result, some of these awards, they reached out to us and said, Ah, you guys reminded me why I got into this in the first place. And it's, it feels good to be reminded of those things. And it's mostly, I mean, for those that are unfamiliar with the, you know, design industry or architecture, it's mostly about creating experiences for people people think it's about buildings But it's actually about creating environments that are that are, you know, supportive and fostering of whatever they need to do. And so it's about creating experiences and comfort, and delight and economy and all these wonderful things that, you know, architecture history is have taught us, but it's really, it feels good to operate on this, this, this kernel that continues to give of just having people feel good about their work, having people feel good about doing good for others. That is, that's something I wouldn't trade for the world.

Gavin Kelly

So it is it is always deeper than it appears on the surface, there's always something going, there's more to what's going on people being impacted that sort of thing. We've hit on a lot. So you have any more to say about that any closing thoughts about the work that you do with this program, and with this specific aspect of this program?

Brad Deal

Yeah, if I could, if I could impart any words of wisdom that we've gained through this, to anyone hearing this, the things we've learned to share with the students is that if our students are working towards a project, they're working towards a grade, and they know all of that, and the project and the people that the project is for, is highly motivating. And the fact that that motivation is there is because we've we've set up the relationship, and we've set up the story. But the story gives the work purpose, and it gives the students purpose. And that working with some kind of purpose is just incredibly important to have if your purpose in whatever you're pursuing is, the paycheck or the money, it's just not enough, you need

to find something you believe in that you want with all your heart. And, you know, hang your hat on that don't Don't, don't do it, for the obvious reasons, do it for something that's genuinely motivating to you. And then the last, the last bit of it is that whatever you're doing, whether it's architecture, whether it's a project of any kind, you know, the the reward is never in actually finishing the thing. Even though that feels pretty rewarding, it feels pretty good. But everything that follows is just it's like Christmas morning, it's not as satisfying as as the things on the front end, get at the build up to it. And so and so something we tell the students that I think is something I've learned along the way is that whatever you're doing whatever you're working on, you've got to enjoy the journey, you've got to embrace the pursuit. Because that's where real life happens. And where contentment happens, is in chasing is isn't isn't the chase or in the pursuit of what you're doing. So, so enjoy it.

Robert Brooks

And I think for me, I'm going to sound like maybe an Instagram cliché, because I'm reading this off of Instagram right now. But it reminds me what is a motivation, and everything that Brad and I have said is true. But I think for me, you have not lived until you've done something for someone who can never repay you. And for me, that's motivation, what we do, the effort to time, the sacrifices that we make is a gift. And that gift is what continues to push us. It has a life beyond just our involvement. And then finally, no matter what your major, maybe you're already out of school, maybe you're thinking about coming to school, the thing that I would encourage everybody, no matter what it is you're doing is find a way to be empowered. Brad and I empower our students, whatever that empower may look like. That's something that someone and no one will ever be able to take away is become empowered. Sure. Appreciate you having us on.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, absolutely. And you got you know, you mentioned be empowered. And in a way you guys have also been empowered by the leadership here at the university. We mentioned carpool EOQ, you know, you said you guys don't do it alone. And it's true. No,

Brad Deal

we have certainly a big thanks to the support of my family and all my past mentors and experience, one of which still includes carpool Yak, but my wife Lacey teaches in kinesiology and and all the friends and you know, less than traditional family that have helped us get where we are today. All the support of Caleb and Casey for med camps and all of their giant network of support. We absolutely couldn't do it without without everyone.

Robert Brooks

And I would extend to that. Yes, if it wasn't for Brad, and if it wasn't for my friends and colleagues over at Hale, and over the last nine years if it wasn't for the audience wavering support of Marla Emery and her daughter, Mia? excusing me while I've been gone and checked out for three months, Brad and I couldn't do what we do. And we we don't do this alone, we take the credit for it. But we absolutely don't do it alone, right?

Gavin Kelly

Well, I know that if we sat here long enough, we could all talk about this all day, because it's there's so much to it. And it's it's a very amazing thing that's going on. If you're listening and you have not had a chance to see anything about med camps, you're encouraged to see it for yourself. At the very least, there are lots of photos and evidence of the good things that are going on out there that you guys have done over the years. So

Robert Brooks

and if and if it's appropriate, what we can do is we can provide you Brad is a very humble person. He's produced how many short films

Brad Deal

now? About eight or nine? Yeah, eight or nine videos won two

Robert Brooks

national awards for the story of what we do at Med camps. We can provide you guys with a link for that if anybody's interested in watching. And we have gigs upon gigs of photographs, because we really, really like what we do. We'd be glad to share that with

Gavin Kelly

absolutely, yeah, if you're listening and you would like to know more, you can look into our show notes. We'll have links there for you guys to check out. Brad deal, Robert Brooks. Thanks you both for being here today. Appreciate you being on beyond 1894. And we'll see you next time. Thanks.

Brad Deal

absolutely privileged. Thank you.

Robert Brooks

Thank you. We'll talk soon.

Gavin Kelly

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