



SPRING/SUMMER 2016

CSU ALUMNI

M A G A Z I N E

BREAKING BARRIERS

AND CONTINUED SERVICE

*Jay Kolick, Class of 2008,
MS Criminal Justice*

A publication of Columbia Southern University

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SUCCESSFUL

I chose to move forward through CSU because my experience with the staff and teachers was great. I selected an MBA with a concentration in public administration because I knew that one day I wanted to change career fields and move from law enforcement to the business field.

Michael Schiro

*Class of 2013 & 2015
MBA, Public Administration;
BS in Criminal Justice*



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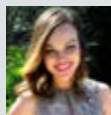
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COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

engage with us on social media or send us an email at CSU-Alumni@columbiasouthern.edu

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Subscribe online at Alumni.ColumbiaSouthern.edu. Cover story photos by Staci Fetterman.

LETTER FROM THE **EDITOR**



Beloved readers,

2016 has started off at full speed and it has been exciting to see all the changes, growth and excitement from our alumni body! We were able to distribute our last edition of the CSU Alumni Magazine not only to members of the Alumni Association like yourself, but also to those brand new graduates who walked across the commencement stage in October here in Orange Beach, Alabama. We were so proud of those who worked hard to attain their degree and traveled far and wide to be able to celebrate the graduation along the Gulf Coast! Now, like you, they are a part of a unique, elite group of graduates.

What an honor it has been to see our Alumni Association grow, thrive and expand with robust and centralized regional chapters! The response has been phenomenal and it has been a pleasure meeting some of you at chapter events across the country. I hope to meet a lot more of you in the coming months.

There are so many ways to stay connected to your Alma Mater and I am glad that many of you are taking advantage of these. From our networking socials across the country, to our social media outlets and clubs and organizations, you all are making the most of your alumni experience. Thank you for remaining connected, reaching out to others, and for spreading the word about Columbia Southern University.

I know that more growth and exciting ventures are just around the corner because of your support and interest. If you have an idea for a future edition of the Alumni Magazine or other ways to promote engagement, we would love to hear from you! These things are not possible without you. Together, we can rise to exciting heights.

Happy reading,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Libby Reilly".

Libby Reilly
Editor-in-Chief



We would love to hear from you!

Do you have ideas for your *CSU Alumni Magazine* or questions regarding the Alumni Association?

Please send an email to **CSU-Alumni@columbiasouthern.edu**

LETTER FROM THE **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT**



I ASSURE YOU THAT THE DEGREE DOES MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE. ”

Hello fellow Knights,

I hope each and every one of you is enjoying the fruits of your studies and hard work during these tough times when others may have wished they had taken the time to pursue their educational dreams.

Having spent the past ten months working in Puerto Rico, I daily witness the competition of jobseeking professionals as I search for great candidates to assist in making my company more viable in such a tough market. I assure you that the degree does make a big difference.

More and more CSU regional alumni chapters are starting up. The Gulf Coast chapter is moving along very well; I would like to take this time to thank those alumni who have come forward and accepted the challenge of leading it. THANK YOU! Your continued support of such a great Alma Mater is most greatly appreciated.

We are also moving forward with the Lone Star chapter. It appears this chapter could exceed the great number of alumni that we have in the Atlanta chapter and we are so excited about the interest our Texas group has shown. WELL DONE!

In closing, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work in completing your studies and being a valued member of the CSU family. This is a great accomplishment of which you should be so proud.

Please continue to spread the word about your time at CSU and the benefits of obtaining a degree. You can also get other friends, acquaintances, and coworkers who have completed their degrees to become involved as a member of our alumni community. We truly want to be Knights in this world.

Best wishes and continued success.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph Blessing".

Ralph Blessing
Alumni Association President

**SEND US YOUR
CSU STORY!**

**Do you have a story idea for future editions
of the CSU Alumni Magazine?**

Submit your story online at Alumni.ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Contact-us
or email CSU-AlumniMagazine@ColumbiaSouthern.edu

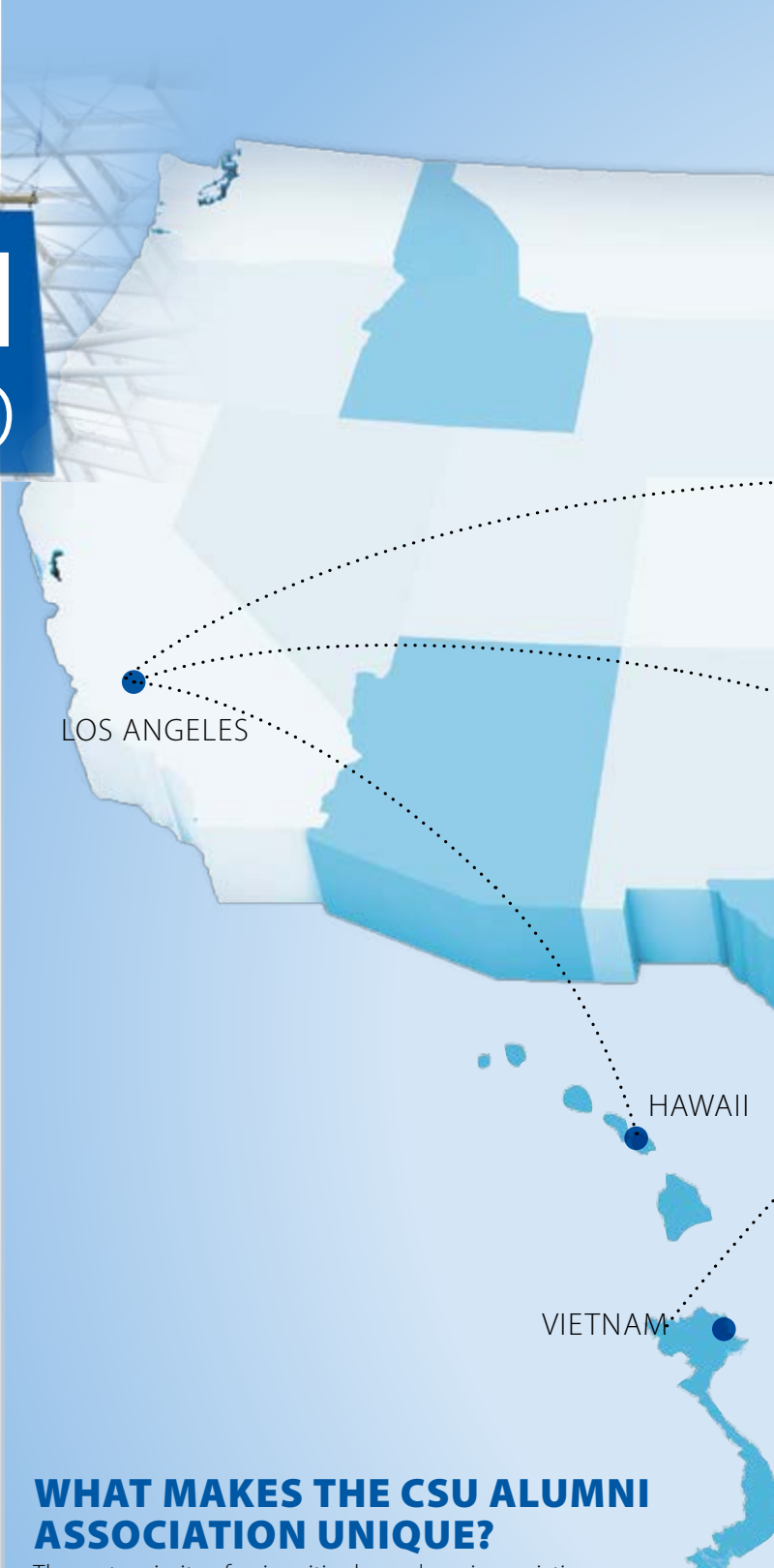
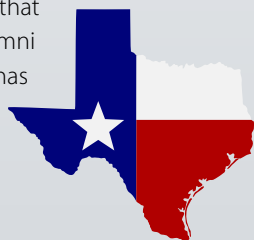
EXPANSION IS THE KEYWORD

WRITTEN BY MARK BRISCOE

Expansion is the key word to describe the CSU Alumni Association plan for 2016.

2015 was a historic year for the association as we saw the establishment of the first regional alumni chapter in Atlanta, Georgia. Plans are now being made for the chartering of the second regional chapter, which will be the Gulf Coast chapter to span the coast of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The response from area alumni who want to become founding members has been encouraging. We predict that by the time we have our official chartering event this spring, we will have surpassed the chartering numbers of the Atlanta chapter.

With two successful and thriving chapters so far, it is time to move westward to develop the next regional chapter. We will be headed to Texas to establish the Lone Star chapter! Like they say, "everything is bigger in Texas" and that is exactly what we expect from our alumni population in the Lone Star state. CSU has thousands of alumni in Texas and we will be planning a number of student and alumni networking socials as we develop a chapter the size of Texas!



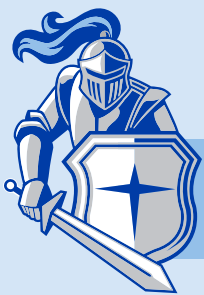
LOS ANGELES

HAWAII

VIETNAM

WHAT MAKES THE CSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION UNIQUE?

The vast majority of universities have alumni associations; the difference comes in the purpose and visions of those associations. CSU has taken the exceptional service model that you have enjoyed as a student and continues to provide this amenity to our alumni. By developing regional chapters, our alumni actually get to network at a higher level than other alumni programs. Through numerous student and alumni networking events held across the country, you have an opportunity to meet your fellow alumni and build mutually beneficial connections. Instead of coming to your university, your university comes to you.



ATLANTA

Our Atlanta chapter members enjoyed a great time at Der Biergarten this past December. The Atlanta chapter has now exceeded 170 members and continues to grow.

170 MEMBERS AND GROWING

FUTURE CHAPTER LOCATIONS AND HOW TO JOIN

If you are a CSU alumnus (graduate from an associate, bachelor's or master's program) and would like to join, follow these simple steps:

1. Visit ColumbiaSouthern.edu/alumni and click "Join the CSU Alumni Association."
2. Review the articles and documents.
3. Apply under "Alumni Chapters."

IT IS FREE, FUN AND EASY TO JOIN.

FINDING DIRECTION

Using Self-Assessments When Your Major is Not a Roadmap to a Career



WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MIMMS

Without a solid idea of career aspirations, you can head down many paths of uncertainty if your coursework did not direct you into a particular field of employment. With that in mind, how do you put your degree in perspective of employment choices? When your major is not a roadmap to a career, you still have hundreds of options and employers interested in hiring a college graduate. The key is to not get lost and overwhelmed along the way of discovering your niche. One way to narrow down your occupational research is to take a career aptitude assessment. This tool helps to gauge personalized interests, values, and preferences surrounding a career. A self-assessment can be very helpful identifying the right career that aligns with your unique goals and talents, increasing your satisfaction with your career plan, and uncovering potential roadblocks to success based on work environments and personality conflicts. With that self-understanding beneath your belt, you can begin to create a roadmap to success.

CSU Career Services is pleased to provide assessment and research tools through CareerQuest, a comprehensive online career management system hosted by Career Services

and located in the myCSU Student Portal. There, you can put your resources and education to use in securing your dream career. There are two resources, Career Finder and Career Explorer, within CareerQuest pertaining to assessment, both located under the Resources tab.

Career Finder can help you explore your work interests based on the Holland theory discussed in the Interest Inventories overview. Then, a list of relevant job titles points out relevant careers you might want to explore. The old adage “birds of a feather flock together” is a good way to think about this assessment because it supposes that if you enjoy the type of work you do and the type of people you work with, the outcome will be overall career satisfaction.

You can use the Career Explorer feature to research popular careers or leading industries. If you are unsure which industry would suit you best, narrow your search by choosing filters such as projected growth, level of preparation or jobs with career field for the environment or with a projected bright outlook. The source of Career Explorer information is the U.S. Department of Labor’s O*Net Online:

www.onetonline.org. O*Net provides tailored, state specific salary information and links to relevant occupations if you are unsure about your career direction. O*Net also details expected knowledge, skills and abilities within a particular field, and lists multiple job titles used to describe a position.

Are you up to the challenge of figuring out what you want to do next? Are you looking for a little direction to help get you started? Follow the next three steps to use Career Explorer, Career Finder and O*Net together to obtain a more holistic view of your work-related self.

1. Take the Career Finder Assessment. By taking this assessment, you will better understand your interest inventory and receive your unique personality assessment based on three out of the six Holland personality types.

2. Use the Career Explorer feature to identify jobs of interest. Once you have selected a job title of interest, Career Finder will provide the projected growth potential, average wage/salary information and an in-depth job overview including relevant knowledge, skills, abilities and educational expectations.
3. Visit the U.S. Department of Labor's O*Net Online at www.onetonline.org. Enter the job title of interest to access specific information on career assessment matches, state-specific tailored salary information and relevant occupations.

Before you login to CareerQuest, think about what kind of information you want to gain from the experience. A great way to start thinking about the outcomes of career assessments is to ask yourself the following questions:

- What strengths and talents do I want to use every day on the job?

- Are there aspects of work that I definitely do not want to do?
- How will my career choices compliment other facets of my personality?
- How can the results of an assessment help shape my career goals?

Once you have determined your relevant skill sets and interests, you can do anything you set your mind to. To assist in that, Career Services is here to provide you with resources to reach your career-related goals. Many of the resources available can help identify degree-specific career paths and help prevent stalling due to being overwhelmed with choices. At this time, we do not guarantee job offers, nor do we place individuals into positions.

THERE ARE FOUR TYPES OF CAREER ASSESSMENTS: personality tests, interest inventories, skills assessments and values assessments. Each different type of assessment offers a motivating, work-centered look into who you are, what motivates and interests you and which particular careers suit you well.



PERSONALITY TESTS A personality test matches career options to personality traits. For example, if you were more reserved, practical, objective and methodical, perhaps a job in security, safety or law enforcement would

complement your personality type. The most reputable personality test available is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The MBTI breaks down personality types into 16 four-letter codes known as personality types. These personality types are a result of unique preferences including how you process ideas, gather external information, react to a situation and interact in social situations. The goal of knowing your personality type is to better understand, and work with, the people around you.



VALUES ASSESSMENTS Often the most underutilized career evaluations are the values assessments. These examine work values and what you would prefer your work life to be like. Some people are content with a routine day.

There is security in knowing what to expect, right? Others crave variety and excitement. Neither set of work values is better than the other; they are equally appealing but to different types of people. This type of values assessment is extremely helpful when attempting to perform company research. Typically, your ideal career field offers the type of environment you feel you need to thrive; however, having a better understanding of the company culture could reveal that in fact, it does not offer the characteristics you crave. Taking this type of assessment can help determine which specific work values are most important to you and compare those to the work values of an employer.



INTEREST INVENTORIES

Interest inventories consider personal interests and find career fields that incorporate those interests. For example, if you are interested in understanding what makes people

tick but hate biology, perhaps a role as a counselor would suite you. This assessment is based on the popular theory of vocational choice developed by John Holland, and is also known as the RAISEC code. This theory proposes that career decisions are based on personal orientations, or six personality types: Realistic, Artistic, Investigative, Social, Enterprising and Conventional. Each type signifies a cluster of unique personality traits that, depending on how strong or weak they manifest in the assessment, gives indication of potential success (or lack thereof) in an organization or job position.



SKILLS ASSESSMENTS These attempt to measure your skills and abilities, similar to aptitude tests you may have taken in high school to help choose a college major. They measure your expertise and tell you what careers may be related. If you are already aware of your marketable skills,

however, little insight might be shed from a skills assessment. One way to use them for new insight is to help get an idea of careers that are not suited for you. For example, if you know you are creative and enjoy unstructured work parameters, would working in a routine 8-5 office job truly match your creative skills set? Unfortunately, sometimes even very career-relevant jobs are cloaked in miserable work conditions that affect productivity, morale and overall sense of well-being. By having a better understanding of your specific knowledge, skills and abilities you can better screen for toxic work cultures.

CONTACT A CAREER DEVELOPMENT COUNSELOR CALL 877.297.6192 EXTENSION 6551 or **EMAIL** CAREERSERVICES@COLUMBIASOUTHERN.EDU
CAREER SERVICES OFFICE HOURS 8 A.M. – 5 P.M. CST MONDAY-THURSDAY, 8 A.M. – 3 P.M. CST FRIDAY



Darnell Davis, Class of 2014,
BS Occupational Safety and Health

KEEPING THE FUTURE OF AMERICA SAFE

WRITTEN BY SONYA LAVETT

Darnell Davis will never forget the day his son, a kindergartener at the time, came home from school to tell his dad all about the different drills they had practiced. Davis, who was working third shift and missing out on some much needed sleep, still took the time to practice those very drills within his home in order to protect his family in case of emergency. Fire, earthquake and tornado drills were something with which Davis' family was quite familiar. Safety is a huge priority within the Davis household. If a natural disaster were to occur, they would be prepared.

What Davis remembers most about this particular conversation was the fear in his child's eyes when he spoke about the "bad man drill." Davis turned cold as he realized what his son was referring to . . . active shooter training. This is a drill that many of us did not practice when we were school-aged, but something that is all too familiar in our current way of life. Something so terrifying that is difficult to even fathom.

Davis' child questioned his dad, "Why would anyone want to come to a school and hurt kids?" This is truly a perplexing question that any compassionate adult would have trouble answering. All Davis could do was hold his six-year-old tightly and tell him he simply had no idea.

Senseless aggression and random violence do not make any sense. These behaviors solve nothing, but only serve to instill fear in all of us. With every new incident, we are left feeling vulnerable and exposed.

While Davis had been working diligently toward earning his degree in occupational safety and health and fire science, he knew that his decision to pursue this would mean much more now on a personal level after speaking with his oldest child. To be able to look his children in the eye and tell them that he works every day to not only keep his family safe, but his community safe as well, is significant.

Davis is currently working on his master's in occupational safety and health/environmental management. Once he earns this degree, his career plans involve going into the emergency, health and safety field (EHS), which will allow him to put his safety focus to great use every day.

His wife, Lori, is simultaneously working toward a bachelor's degree in homeland security. Her future career plans include emergency management and

local law enforcement. Both Lori and Darnell have many family members with military backgrounds, so perhaps their shared family history is what has guided the Davis family to pursue lifelong career goals that emphasize safety and security in their community.

CSU has been a blessing to our family by giving us both the educational opportunities we were looking for without having to sacrifice time together.”

Davis explains, "Being parents, it is our responsibility to keep our children as safe as we possibly can. Active shooter awareness and training are a part of both of the education and career paths we have chosen. CSU has been a blessing to our family by giving us both the educational opportunities we were looking for without having to sacrifice time together.”

STUDENT & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT



NEW AND EXCITING INITIATIVES

WRITTEN BY AMANDA MANJONE

The Student and Alumni Engagement team has been busy working on new initiatives to bring the CSU campus to you, no matter where you are located. One highlight of how we are doing this is the newly-formed CSU Knights Run club. We have heard from our students and alumni that many of you share a passion for running and fitness so this club is the perfect way for you all to connect!

Another exciting offering CSU now has is the Sigma Alpha Pi chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success. The mission of this honor society is to build leaders who make a better world, similar to our goal here at CSU. Admission into this honor society is merit-based and by invitation only; you can visit our website to learn more.

Career Services has been adding many new opportunities to our job database. Our career development counselors are here to assist our many alumni with your job search, interview

practice, or any other career-related situation with which you need assistance.

The most exciting news for our alumni is certainly all of the growth we are experiencing with our regional alumni

CSU is the first and only fully online university to offer this amazing source of networking and relationship opportunities.

chapters. CSU is the first and only fully online university to offer this amazing source of networking and relationship opportunities.

We travel somewhere new each month to meet all of you and get to know you better. It is certainly our biggest highlight. Be sure to check out all of the updates in this issue! 📺



We are always listening if you have any ideas for new clubs, organization, honor societies, or places you would like us to visit. As alumni, I am sure CSU played an important role in your life and we want to remain a part of your life for years to come. We look forward to meeting you out on the road or having you come visit us here in Orange Beach.

BREAKING BARRIERS

AND CONTINUED SERVICE

WRITTEN BY LIBBY REILLY



Jay Kolick was one of the youngest sworn law enforcement officers of Pennsylvania when he began his career at the age of 19. He began with patrol work and the courts, working for a judge in warrant summons and extraditions. He was eager and hardworking, doing all he could to learn, improve, and build a career of which he was proud.

COVER STORY

“CSU has given me an awesome opportunity to provide the ability to help educate professionals on the mental health component that faces society and public safety.”



Jay Kolick, class of 2008, MS in Criminal Justice

Kolick did just that. He worked in law enforcement in Pennsylvania until 2014 when he began an early retirement following a career with experience in law enforcement, emergency management, and homeland security. Retirement for Kolick, however, is anything but sleeping in late and watching daytime television. Oh no, Kolick is taking retirement in stride as he works tirelessly to change the face of mental health stigmas in law enforcement.

“Now that I look back on it, I have a very diverse career that I have been given the fortune to experience. It’s pretty neat.”

Kolick has been busy working in academics doing research and education surrounding behavioral health, criminal justice, and emergency management.

He earned his master’s degree in criminal justice from CSU in 2008, a degree to accompany a list of other noble educational feats. Kolick loves to learn and will never cease being a student. While enrolled at CSU, Kolick was introduced to Dr. Joe Manjone, the vice provost of continuing education.

Both from the Philadelphia area and enthralled with education, the two became comrades quite instantaneously. In 2015, Kolick reached out to Manjone regarding the possibility of behavioral health projects for CSU, and the ball started to roll.

They have since created two courses together in the Continuing Education department at CSU: forensic sociology of addictions and what Kolick calls a shortened version of abnormal psychology, a course that breaks down psychology to field personnel in the effort to evoke empathy and understanding when dealing with those suffering with mental illness.

A lot of what we see in the fields of public safety and mental health today is not enough training in empathy of those they are dealing with aside from the basic clinical knowledge,” says Kolick.

He has made it his life’s missions to change this. By working with CSU, his goal is to “break barriers and social stigmas.”

Kolick hopes to spread the knowledge of alternate responses from police force when the background of certain behaviors are recognized. He also hopes to spread knowledge and empathy when it comes to those working in first response positions that they are human too, that they aren’t immune to mental and emotional traumas.

“We have a huge issue with law enforcement dealing with addictions and post-traumatic stress from routine duties and jobs. There is a high rate of alcoholism, divorce, depression, suicide. I’ve seen friends and colleagues commit suicide or go to rehab and go through very traumatic experiences. These are people you were at the academy with and have grown very close to and you want to do anything you can to help them. This is how I got involved in the mental health component.”

Kolick says part of the issues he sees is law enforcement officers not being able to embrace the notion that they feel things just like everyone else. He

Cover Story Continues on page 14

COVER STORY



“Having a focus and mission on mental health helps me to focus on my own life and feel good about the things I’m doing for the field.”

Jay Kolick is a shining example of the impact that our alumni can make in their communities, professions, and the world.

wants them to know that it is okay and that nonjudgemental help is available.

“Think about it,”

Kolick explains, “When police officers meet people, it’s typically at their worst moments; nobody calls 9-1-1 when things are fine. They’ve dutifully taken on this role and are being exposed to trauma on a daily basis and they may not realize it until it’s too late. If we can get them to recognize the signs, we can intervene early enough so they don’t have all of the negative outcomes like depression, suicide and divorce.”


It is post-traumatic stress, which can manifest itself in many different forms and times. It can cause symptoms immediately after a traumatizing experience or long after. It can also cause disassociation, flashbacks, irritability, difficulty sleeping, isolation, codependency, and more. This can be especially concerning for those in law enforcement aside from the stigma and the lack of understanding associated with mental health. Symptoms can be triggered at any time on the job or on a specific type of call. While officers are often responding in fight or flight mode and must be both physically and mentally present in the face of harm, symptoms of post-traumatic stress can come about at any time, triggering memories of the traumatic event of their past. Many are not aware of the implications of what they are experiencing and also that there are options out there.

“Having a focus and mission on mental health helps me to focus on my own life and feel good about the things I’m doing for the field.”

Kolick has made a huge impact with those in the Department of Continuing Education at Columbia Southern University through their joint efforts to promote education surrounding the relationship between law enforcement and mental health. Assistant provost of continuing education, Dr. Joe Manjone, said, “Jay is truly a superhero - in spite of being faced with much adversity, he has amassed a great deal of knowledge and has done much for his community, profession and students. I am honored to say that he is a part of the CSU family.”

Today, Kolick is working full time, teaching, working on a criminal justice program at a college in the Philadelphia area, and working with the Center of Continuing Education at Columbia Southern University. He plans to pursue a doctorate in traumatology over the next few years.

“CSU has given me an awesome opportunity to provide the ability to help educate professionals on the mental health component that faces society and public safety. Problems come back to the lack of training and education and proper communication. My work reminds me that I am striving to make a difference for everyone in these fields. It keeps my mind from wandering and keeps me out of trouble.”

Jay Kolick is a shining example of the impact that our alumni can make in their communities, professions and the world. 

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESS



Columbia Southern University has established a chapter with the National Society of Leadership and Success, Sigma Alpha Pi. Admission into this esteemed honor society is merit-based and by invitation only.

The National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) is an honor society (not a fraternity or sorority) with more than 200 college chapters. The society's mission is to build leaders who make a better world. The society is founded on the core beliefs that one can achieve one's dreams with the proper support and dedicated action and that we accomplish more together than we would achieve alone.

Society membership gives our students and alumni access to leadership certification that is a valuable asset to your professional resume and a life changing personal development tool.

Please contact the online chapter advisor or CSU Student and Alumni Engagement (SAE) representative to discuss the criteria of students that were invited to join your chapter of the Society this semester.

CHAPTER ADVISOR:

Danielle Sarnicola
csuonline@societyleadership.org

CSU SAE CONTACT:

Libby Reilly
libby.reilly@columbiasouthern.edu

STUDENT & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

I WILL USE MY DEGREE
TO ADVANCE
WITHIN THE RANKS
OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Katrina Johnson
2015 Graduate
Criminal Justice



COLUMBIA
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY

FLEXIBLE.
AFFORDABLE.
ONLINE.

Gainful employment information available at ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Disclosure.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Continuing education for criminal justice professionals, formal or informal, is critical to professional development. Self-directed learning is an important tool for professional growth both inside and outside of the criminal justice arena. I like to think of time spent in self-directed learning as courageous moments.



READ AND
SHARE FULL
ARTICLE.



CAREER SERVICES



MENTORING

BUILDING SUCCESSFUL MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

WRITTEN BY HEATHER KIMBREL

Sometimes we need that special person in our lives with whom we can share our challenges, ideas, and successes. We need someone who has been where we are trying to go, someone with an outside perspective we can turn to for guidance. We need a mentor.

A mentor is someone with more experience who can offer feedback and guidance to help us grow into better individuals and professionals. Goals are rarely accomplished single-handedly; a mentor can help you achieve your goals in less time than it would take going it alone.

Consider these benefits of having a mentor:

- Building a new relationship with someone you see as a role model
- Developing new skills and building existing ones

- Having a safe environment to openly reflect on your goals and receive helpful feedback
- Identifying and devising a plan to reach your personal, professional and academic goals

HOW TO FIND A MENTOR

Finding a mentor can be as easy as taking a look around you. Who are the movers and the shakers in your industry? Who do you admire and aspire to be like? It is up to you to identify someone you could learn from and who would be willing to put in the time and effort to offer advice and guidance. Approach that individual and propose your idea. The worst thing they could do is decline, but they will at least be flattered you asked! If they decline, ask for a referral for someone else who might be willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

CAREER SERVICES

A mentor can be just the ticket you need to grow, develop and reach your greatest potential.

For business professionals and entrepreneurs, if you cannot think of anyone off hand, you might want to look

into SCORE for free business advice or even the Department of Defense's Mentor Protégé Program. Both of these programs are designed to set business-owners up for success; all you have to do is make the initial contact.

For the rest of us, we may need to turn to our network for advice. Membership within a professional or trade organization associated with your professional or personal areas of interest can be a great help. Professional organizations may not specifically offer a mentorship program, but you should find many veteran members willing to assist.

HOW TO BE A MENTOR

If you are passionate about what you do and want to pay it forward, becoming a mentor may be for you. You may not win any awards or receive any special accolades, but you will have the satisfaction of helping someone in need to be successful in your community.

In order to be the best mentor possible, keep these characteristics of a good mentor in mind:

- Show a sincere interest in seeing your mentee grow as an individual
- Give your undivided attention and really listen to what is on their mind
- Ask thought-provoking questions to help them see things clearly
- Respect your mentee and show you are trustworthy by keeping sensitive information confidential
- Facilitate problem solving and refrain from giving directives

In essence, mentoring is a relationship based on the intent to help a less experienced individual grow by providing knowledge, wisdom and expertise. Wisdom does not just come with age, so consider your peers when seeking out a mentoring relationship. Better yet, find a mentor for each area of your life, whether it is professional, personal or academic, since it is difficult to find one person who can advise you in every aspect. You may also think of mentoring taking place face-to-face, but mentoring relationships can be built over the phone, through email and over Skype with people worlds away. No matter where you are going and how you choose to get there, a mentor can be just the ticket you need to grow, develop, and reach your greatest potential. Give it a try! 🎓



BECOME A PARTNER BUILD A FUTURE



Columbia Southern University offers companies, associations, municipalities and other agencies the opportunity to provide learning partner benefits to their employees and members. CSU offers a 10% tuition discount to partners' employees/members that extends to their spouses and children. CSU also offers exclusive scholarship opportunities for partners.

These exciting benefits come at no cost and can be obtained by signing a memorandum of understanding listing all benefits offered to the organization!

Becoming a CSU learning partner is easy and a great way to offer additional benefits to employees or members of your organization.

For more information on how your company or organization can become a CSU learning partner, visit ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Partners or call **800.344.5021**.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SPOTLIGHT



Ronald Louque is a recruiter in the Army who has earned an Associate's degree of Applied Science in Criminal Justice from CSU and is working towards his Bachelors of Science degree in Business Administration.

Ronald Louque, Class of 2014, AAS Criminal Justice

Ronald Louque is a recruiter in the Army who has earned an Associate's degree of Applied Science in Criminal Justice from CSU, is working towards his Bachelors of Science degree in Business Administration and has plans to begin a master's degree program as soon as his bachelor's is complete. He is a member of the CSU Alumni Association and the National Society of Leadership and Success, where he earned the National Engaged Leader Award.

Ronald spent the past 12 years of his military career at Ft. Benning near Columbus, Georgia. Ft. Benning became home to Ronald and his family and he took a great interest in serving the community. He volunteered with the Valley Rescue Mission, Habitat for Humanity, and area schools.

Ronald says that being an Army recruiter involves a lot of community involvement but his service was completely volunteer and not directed by his command.

"You want to build a good relationship with your community and have people trust and open up to you.

For me, that went beyond my day-to-day job and outside of the box. I wanted to engender trust."

Ronald noted that not everyone always has the best opinion of the Army and the reputation of its people, which is why he wanted to do his part in changing that by serving his community.

"Community service is my way of showing good face and hopefully giving people a good feeling about the army, to change the reputation it sometimes has."

Ronald completed four different units at Ft. Benning, deploying for Iraq and Afghanistan four times and then becoming a recruiter.

He says being a recruiter has been very good for transitioning into the civilian world. He enjoys interacting with business leaders, teachers and the community as a whole, finding new ways to volunteer.

"My job in the army before was kicking in doors and shooting weapons—that was my forte. I didn't really have the opportunity to interact with others like I do now."

He and his family recently moved to Woodbury, New Jersey where he will serve as the center leader for a recruiting office.

"It's a different atmosphere in New Jersey; it'll be difficult adjusting to life here but my arms are wide open. I know it takes time for people to trust you, to show schools and other places that you aren't just there to build your numbers."

Community service is my way of showing good face and hopefully giving people a good feeling about the army.

He plans to serve his community and "continue the positive motion" he began in Georgia.

"Trust takes being present and being visible," he says. "People aren't going to trust you if they don't see you and see your work ethic." 🇺🇸



Staff Sergeant Brad Jumper has served in the United States Army for nine years, first serving in the Alabama National Guard for four years, then active duty where he served in Afghanistan, and now serves as a recruiter in Woodstock, Georgia.

Staff Sergeant Brad Jumper, Class of 2014, BS Information Technology

As his time with the Army is soon coming to a close, Bradley Jumper is looking to move back to his roots near Mobile, Alabama. He hopes to begin his civilian career in information technology as a system administrator.

Jumper earned his Bachelors of Science degree in Information Technology from CSU in 2014, where he attended graduation and was honored to receive his commencement address from, and speak to, Colonel Oliver North.

"It was so cool to meet and hear from Oliver North. That was definitely a highlight of graduating," he said.

Jumper was active duty while completing his bachelor's degree, completing his assignments while on an extended 15-month tour in Afghanistan. He recognizes that time management and keeping priorities in proper order are of the utmost importance; while serving his country and completing his degree, he was also serving in his most important role as husband and father.

"I got my GED and I wasn't headed in the right direction for a while. I was the first one in my family to complete a degree and I am very proud of that. I am now just trying to set the best example for my two boys."

When Jumper and his family move back to Alabama, he hopes to complete a second degree with CSU, this time in information systems security.

"IT takes me out of my comfort zone. I grew up pretty poor and my family never had a computer. I started in the Army as a radio operator and that job didn't have anything to do with computers; I didn't even know how to add an attachment to an email. Getting out of my comfort zone and completing a degree that could take me so many places drove me to finish."

Jumper will also continue to serve his country through the Alabama National Guard part time.

When asked what he most wants his young sons to learn, he responded, "I want them to know how to work hard. That education is vital for success. Family is always the priority."

Jumper is also a member of the CSU Knights Run virtual club, where he interacts with fellow students and alumni through the mutual interest of running. He says running and fitness are a huge stress reliever for him and he hopes to get back to his prime when he was training at Ft. Bragg in North Carolina.

I was the first one in my family to complete a degree and I am very proud of that. I am just trying to set the best example for my two boys.



"I was running five to six miles a day, five days a week. Lately, my fitness has taken a backseat but I want to run more, participate in local races, and get involved in CrossFit. It's something I really enjoy and I thrive on working toward and completing goals."

In his roles in his career, family, education and leading a healthy lifestyle, Staff Sgt. Jumper personifies the qualities needed to succeed: dedication, goal setting, drive and hard work. Jumper leaves this important legacy for his children and his fellow CSU alumni family. 🇺🇸

NETWORKING EVENTS

2016 Student & Alumni Events *Please note that dates and locations are subject to change.*

APRIL



MAY



San Antonio

Dallas

JUNE



Atlanta
American Society of Safety Engineers (Conference)

Phoenix

JULY

Kansas, City, Kansas

"The networking events are an excellent opportunity to network and extend the online university experience in to a brick and mortar school type experience. It is like hanging out at the student union!"

LUTHER LOUGHRIDGE
CSU Student



TO FIND OUT MORE OR TO REGISTER FOR AN EVENT,
VISIT COLUMBIASOUTHERN.EDU/EVENTS



WHERE ELSE SHOULD WE GO?

That's up to you! Let us know by joining the conversation in the Facebook Closed Group or emailing alumni@columbiasouthern.edu

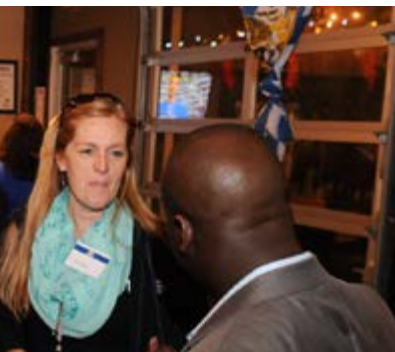
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NETWORKING EVENTS



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