

Journalism Alumnus Finds Success at McKinney

By Liz Rodell

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In a time where many college graduates are unemployed and [moving back to their parents' homes](#), it is encouraging to know that a UNC-Chapel Hill alumni can land a position at one of the nation's top independent creative agencies.

Andy Ives, UNC-CH journalism alumni, started working in the interactive department at



[McKinney](#) in September 2009. As the agency's interactive producer, Ives makes ideas come to life as he produces websites, web applications, rebranding campaigns and mobile advertising – just to name a few.

“I am the person that makes a project happen from start to finish,” Ives said. “I get everyone talking and give everyone a voice so [that] decisions are made swiftly and smoothly.”

When Ives graduated from UNC-CH in May 2009 with a double major in journalism and environmental science, he had an offer from a public relations firm in Raleigh calling his name.

However, he turned the position down because he had already committed to biking across the country with Bike and Build, a nonprofit that allows people to cycle across the country while building homes for affordable housing organizations.

After biking across the United States and [raising awareness](#) around the affordable housing crisis, Ives returned to the Triangle and began to do freelance work. But before he left for his adventure, he had submitted his resume to McKinney. So, upon his return he decided to follow up with the agency.

Two days later, McKinney called Ives for an interview. After several phone and in-person interviews that week, Ives was hired as the agency's interactive production coordinator. Shortly after that, Ives' title was promoted to interactive producer in December 2009.

Upon meeting Ives, it is clear that he motivated individual and has no intentions of ever slowing down.

During his time at UNC-CH, Ives built his resume and gained experience in many different fields. He worked closely with WUNC-FM as an intern and part-time employee. While he spent a great amount of time working on “The Story With Dick Gordon,” a nationally syndicated show with National Public Radio, Ives had others roles at the radio station. He

assisted with more than a dozen national shows by researching potential stories, pre-interviewing guests and working the master controls.

“Radio is a passion of mine that will never die,” said Ives.

He also worked with Innovation Management, a company that conducts market research to help clients better target their customers. In addition, Ives produced an audio book for a motivational speaker. He even freelanced his interactive skills throughout his college career.

Ives continues to be seen on the UNC-CH campus as he recently helped the students in the Chuck Stone Program build a blog on Wordpress.

When Ives discussed his role with McKinney, it is clear he enjoys his job and time spent at the Durham-headquartered agency. Some of his most recent work includes a [website](#) for Paws4ever, an animal adoption center in Mebane that focuses on improving the lives of cats and dogs. The website is gaining buzz in the category of animal rescue websites as it creatively maximizes user interface.

“The way we do things changes, the way clients think changes, the way we build to stay current is always changing,” Ives said. “I’m learning something new every single day.”

When offering advice to current college students, Ives encourages them try and find the experience and skills in everything that they do so that they can apply it to something else.

“You may have a really boring internship but have the opportunity to do one thing that is really cool.”