



Fall 10-13-2014

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Recommended Citation

Kamp, Danielle, "Student and Entrepreneur LaVitola '17 Develops Clothing Line" (2014).
News and Events. 2459.
<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/2459>

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Student and Entrepreneur LaVitola '17 Develops Clothing Line

Oct. 13, 2014

Adam LaVitola '17 of Lake Forest, Ill. launched his own clothing business and gained thousands of followers on Instagram, all before he finished his first year of college at Illinois Wesleyan University.

As seniors in high school, LaVitola and his friend Sean McCauley started an online business reselling classic athletic jerseys they found on eBay. Their business has now evolved into Seam Street Prep, a prep clothing line offering pocket tees, polos, custom Greek tees, hats and vests. Ten percent of Seam Street Prep's profits are donated to the National Save the Sea Turtle Foundation in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.



Adam LaVitola '17

"We thought the turtle represented the slow and easy lifestyle we wanted to go with and that people can enjoy," said LaVitola. "We know about sea turtles being endangered and we thought it would be right to donate some of our profits."

Most of Seam Street's sales come from online transactions and from promotion on social media, which LaVitola says plays a major part in their business. Seam Street's Instagram account now has over 6,000 followers and displays products from the clothing line with their signature turtle logo. LaVitola manages the company's social media presence and also maintains the company's website. He says he spends more than an hour a day completing tasks for the business, which include developing new clothing designs, contacting manufacturers and customers, and packaging and shipping products. He and McCauley, who is a student at Indiana University, consult each other weekly on the business.

LaVitola, a business and computer science double major, said his accounting and marketing classes have helped him tremendously in improving his business, but balancing college life with running a rapidly growing business is no easy task. "Keeping up with customer service is difficult," said LaVitola. "Recently, staying in stock has been a problem because in the last couple of months we've been hitting numbers we didn't think we would get. We're also starting to see people coming back to us, and it's encouraging to see returning customers."

LaVitola and McCauley are excited to see how the business will grow from here. Currently they are seeking to expand into retail stores throughout the country.

"Before, I didn't think this was going to be a business after I graduated, but then it started to be something that I could look into after college," said LaVitola. "With the growth of our business we have an incentive to do more. Our goal is to become a brand people recognize and trust."

By Danielle Kamp '15