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Jenkins '12 and Sweeney '14 Unite in Business Venture Anchored in Shared Values

BY JULIA PEREZ | FEBRUARY 23, 2024

NEWS



BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — What began as two Illinois Wesleyan alumni celebrating each other's career success has evolved into a dynamic business partnership at a freshly launched company, anchored in a similar work ethic and shared life values.

Will Jenkins '12 and Erin Sweeney '14 both studied business administration at IWU and were involved in Titan athletics. They kept track of one another's career trajectory after graduation and eventually met to catch up and discuss their professional goals moving forward.

"We were so amped to run into each other. That's Wesleyan for you," said Sweeney. "The micro-communities like athletics really keep you connected."

Sweeney's career journey after graduation began in the Chicago sales and events industry. From there, she delved into the world of advertising and discovered a knack for social media strategy, brand storytelling and elevating creative leaders, earning them recognition through global awards. That led her to a position on the Global Marketing & Communications team at VML Commerce, an advertising company under WPP, eventually rising to Global Director of Creative Excellence for VML. In June, Sweeney left WPP and decided to start her own LLC, Deybruyar — a creative consultancy revolutionizing the way creatives are represented and how brand problems are resolved.



Titan business alumni Erin Sweeney '14 and Will Jenkins '12 are now colleagues at Journey, a new company founded by Jenkins.

Jenkins gained experience after graduation by rising through the ranks in the transportation field. He co-founded MoLo Solutions, a freight brokerage firm in 2017. MoLo was recognized as one of the fastest-growing companies in North America, generating \$1.25 billion in annual revenue in 2022. The business was acquired in November of 2021 by ArcBest. Jenkins stayed with the company for 18 months after the acquisition before taking time off in May of 2023 to contemplate his next business venture.

In late 2023, he founded [Journey](#).

"We are a recruiting, consulting and training company focused on freight brokerages. We want to help companies find the best talent and equip them to do their jobs well. Journey also serves as a network and community to allow people to meet others in the field and further their careers," said Jenkins.

Beyond a strong work ethic and passion for entrepreneurship, the two Titans also bonded over their shared experiences with grief. In 2017, Jenkins lost his older brother Desmond to cancer.

"Watching Desmond persevere through the challenges put in front of him taught me more than any other lesson ever has. He taught me how to make the most of every moment and appreciate what I have," said Jenkins. "He set an example for me that guides the way I approach life and I am forever grateful for him."

Both Sweeney and Jenkins were friends and fellow Titan athletes with Andrew Weishar, who passed away in 2012 after a battle with colorectal cancer.

Before his death, Andrew Weishar had requested that his family and friends pay forward the acts of kindness and generosity he received while going through his own battle with cancer. Sweeney serves on the Executive Board of Weish4Ever, created to honor the memory of Andrew by providing resources to families with children diagnosed with cancer. Sweeney said Andrew's legacy serves as a reminder to value every day as a gift.

"We've donated over \$3 million to families battling cancer and we're not stopping any time soon," said Sweeney. "I would do anything to have him back. We miss him dearly, but we're making a difference in his honor. The bond within the Wesleyan community still persists to pay it forward."

As the pair chatted about their professional goals and personal convictions for living life to the fullest, an alignment of goals and values became clear.

"We both care about followthrough, execution and trust. The businesses that have been the most successful have been built on trust. Erin has these qualities along with a level of intensity and focus, and she has the ability to create content that impacts people. Erin started working on Journey's marketing a few hours here and there. Then we realized we just need to dive in completely, so here we are," said Jenkins.

Sweeney now works as the Head of Marketing and Public Relations for Journey. She said studying at IWU taught her the value of a strong network, creative writing techniques, the power of simple language and how to maintain authenticity.

"When it comes to a brand, it's all about the people behind it. What Will is creating here with Journey is just the beginning, and I'm helping tell that story through visual content, social strategy and brand collaborations," she said.

Jenkins said he still utilizes his "hands-on IWU education" as a CEO. He makes a conscious effort to recruit IWU alumni and create internship opportunities for Titan students. He sees it as a way to return the favor after receiving support as a student and a budding entrepreneur.

"It all just comes back to the tight-knit community (at Illinois Wesleyan). Seeing that as a student made me want to replicate it in my career and in businesses that I build," said Jenkins. "I've also had so much support from Wesleyan in my entrepreneurial journey — having the opportunity to come back and speak to students and talk about sales and entrepreneurship, and the opportunity to win the [IWU entrepreneur of the year award](#). A lot of those things motivated me because the school gave so much to me as a student and made me want to be able to give back."



Will Jenkins, right, with his late brother Desmond.



Fellow Titan and friend of Sweeney and Jenkins, Andrew Weishar, passed away in 2012 after a battle with colorectal cancer.