

WHEATON

No Pane. No Gain.

by Jeremy Weber '05

Find out how one alumnus turned his summer job into a franchise—with soap, water, and a little elbow grease.

PROFILE

Many students graduate from Wheaton wondering what they will do with their hard-earned degrees. Biology major Jack Ruegsegger '98 found himself washing windows.

Years later, he's still at it—and loving it.

A second-generation alumnus, Jack returned to his native Twin Cities (still home to his parents, Dr. Michael '66 and Mary Bergeron Ruegsegger '66) after graduation and resumed a longtime summer job as a window washer to make ends meet while applying to medical schools. None accepted him, so he tried pharmaceutical companies, but again came up empty-handed.

The following year, he found himself working for Paine Webber as a stockbroker while still washing windows on weekends with his brother, Joe.

"I was watching the stock ticker go by and thinking, 'This is so boring,'" recalls Jack. "Plus I was actually making more money washing windows than selling stocks." He asked his brother, a business major, about starting their own company, and Joe agreed.

"I quit the next day," says Jack. "And from there it was destiny."

The brothers founded Jack and Joe's Window Cleaning in May 1999, targeting affluent homeowners in the Twin Cities. Business grew as their reputation spread, and by May 2003, although they had garnered 30 employees, they still couldn't meet the demand for their services.

The brothers responded by launching plans in November 2004 to franchise their model nationwide under a new name: Squeegee Squad. They closed their first franchise deal this January, and plan to focus first on building a Midwestern base.

Jack had no idea that his old summer job would become his career path. "I tried all these things after graduation, but no doors would open," he said. "So I just went back to what I knew — window washing — and those doors kept opening."

Jack's time at Wheaton taught him two skills essential to business: "how to manage time and work tirelessly." It also gave him a solid faith that leads him to emphasize honesty, integrity, and fairness in a business world that offers many opportunities to cut corners. He says, "It's all about doing your job in a way that reflects the good Lord and how He has affected you."

The brothers demonstrated these principles this past year when they took on their two biggest jobs yet, washing the host of windows at the two Twin Cities megachurches they attend. The projects took days to finish, and the brothers donated their services.

"The best part has been watching, firsthand, divine providence as this company grows," reflects Jack, who notes that the company even played a part in his brother's marriage to second-generation Wheatonite, Elise Anderson '04 (daughter of Dean '77 and Debbi Anderson). While working for Wheaton's advancement division, Elise placed a fundraising call to Jack. Their conversation led to a summer job for Elise . . . and wedding bells for Joe and Elise in 2004.

Reflecting on the past eight years, Jack says, "The perfect timing of things that have happened here . . . These things just couldn't have worked out by my own abilities alone."

To get in touch with Jack, visit www.SqueegeeSquad.com.

Top: Brothers Joe and Jack Ruegsegger '98 (right) make window washing a family affair.

Below: Joe met his wife, Elise Anderson Ruegsegger '04, when she interned for the Squeegee Squad one summer.



For more information visit:
SqueegeeSquad.com

