

LC State Graduates Do More

A series featuring Warriors, written by Warriors

Eric Pemberton: From Morgan Stanley to Fishmonger

Managing large sums of wealth at Morgan Stanley is an ideal career goal for most business students, but it wasn't for Eric Pemberton. The LC State graduate's current day job involves shorts, flip flops (at least on the warmer days), and Bob Marley tunes.

Pemberton's career path started when a neighbor, who happened to be the owner of a local seafood provider, The Fish Folks, offered Pemberton a job over their shared fence. Soon Pemberton



was gutting fish and cleaning equipment on the weekends while attending LC State at the Coeur d'Alene Center full-time.

"As a first-generation college student, I needed to work while attending college," Pemberton said. "As a transfer student from various schools, while living in different geographical locations, I accumulated many credits that were able to be transferred to North Idaho College and then to Lewis-Clark State College. It completely made sense."

At LC State, he decided to pursue degrees in business administration and management because he said he always wanted to own his own business.

"I loved the flexibility of live and online courses while still being able to work and support my family," he said. "The fact that LC State is a small school with small class sizes felt more like a private school experience with a public Idaho school price tag. Also, being

able to complete it all through Coeur d'Alene was amazing!"

Pemberton earned two bachelor degrees at LC State in 2010 and his outstanding rapport with the LC State Coeur d'Alene Center led to his

position as the Business Division Program Advisor. During 2010-13 he advised over 200 business students, offered tutoring, and oversaw some fundraisers.

"It's cool to see LC State preparing students to move successfully into the work force or into advanced degrees in graduate school," he said.

After leaving LC State, he went back to school and graduated from Gonzaga University in 2015 with a master's degree in business administration.

"I was humbled to receive the Provost Award at my LCSC graduation (given to the outstanding graduate each year at the LC State Coeur d'Alene Center), and the MBA Student of the Year at my Gonzaga graduation," he said.

After Gonzaga, he was recruited by Morgan Stanley to work in private equity, which Pemberton said was a great experience. Later, Pemberton also began teaching business courses at GU and remains part of its adjunct faculty today.

He continued working for The Fish Folks throughout this time and noted, "I was literally working at a Wall Street firm, three-piece suits during the week, and I would go wash coolers in Grundens bibs (on the weekends)."

All of that changed when the owners of The Fish Folks gave Pemberton and his wife, Katie, the opportunity to buy the local seafood business.

"The timing with The Fish Folks worked very well," Pemberton said. "It was about the time where I began thinking about pursuing my passion of owning my own business."

Soon, the Wall Street firm was out of the picture and Pemberton was living his childhood dream of running his own family enterprise.

"We just absolutely love the business; our customers are our family," said Pemberton, who has become known as the Fishmonger.

"The business has been around for almost 53 years so we're the fourth generation." The flexibility of his schedule allows him to spend more time with his family and maintain Pemberton Investments LLC, where he manages his rental properties.

Within the span of a day, he might be ordering fish, working on a property, and grading papers. Frequent trips to the coast with his family are a staple for their seafood business.

"Happiness means loving what you do and loving who you are around," he said. "I don't get burned out on anything."



Clearly, his education in business has paid off.

"Today, in The Fish Folks, my real estate projects, teaching and serving on a board of directors at GU, I still use the tools learned at LCSC to make effective decisions," he said. "I was blessed at LCSC to have great professors (like Rachel Kaitz) who engaged me in marketing, HR, finance, statistics, etc."

He attributes his success to his work ethic and his wife's support.

"My education has afforded me the opportunities to follow my passions and live the professional and personal life I wanted," he said. "Life is short ... Do what you are passionate about and you will do well."



Morganne Nutt is a senior at the Lewis-Clark State College Coeur d'Alene Center and will graduate with her Bachelor of Science in communications in spring 2022. She transferred from North Idaho College after obtaining two associate degrees, and plans to attend graduate school to continue studying communications. Ultimately, she seeks a career in media, publications, editing, mediation, and/or community relations. Morganne is the recipient of the Work Scholar Award, which provides LC State students with a tuition waiver in exchange for work service to LC State.

LC STATE BY THE NUMBERS

#1 lowest tuition in Idaho among public 4-year institutions.

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report as **#3** in the West.

12:1 student-to-teacher ratio for academic programs.

Academic programs graduates have a **96%** placement rate.

80% of students receive some form of financial aid.

Ranked **#1** school for non-traditional students. (*Best College Reviews*)

130+ degrees and certificate programs.

Ranked by The Economist as **#2** in Idaho for economic value.