

# Hesburgh Alumni Career Panel

## November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022

### **Joe Zoeller '14**

After graduating from Notre Dame, Joe attended Washington and Lee University where he studied Biochemistry. He decided he wanted to explore more about biomedical research. He went to the National Institutes of Health to study molecular and human genetics at a 2 year fellowship. He then decided to focus on physician scientist training and began his application process at various colleges all over the country. Joe is currently a third-year student in the Medical Scientist Training Program at Baylor College of Medicine.

### **Aidan French '17**

Studied architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston where he earned both his bachelors and master's degrees in 5 years. He currently works at an Architecture firm, CUBE3 that focuses on multi-family residential.

### **Tony Bontempo '02**

Attended Northwestern University where he studied business and economics. After college, he IT and Technology and focused on sales. He currently works at HashiCorp and is VP, Americas - Major Accounts in the sales dept.

### **Jeff Escher '99**

University of Illinois – Champaign where he majored in political science and history. Illinois Institute of Technology Kent College of Law and graduated from law school in 2006. He began his career as an in-house counsel at Allstate for about 3 years. Since then he has been a litigation partner at a firm called Connolly Krause LLC. The majority of his practice focuses on malpractice defense law.

### **Brian Pelrine '07**

Brian attended Marquette University and received his Master's in Urban Planning at University of Illinois –Chicago. He currently is the Aldermanic Director of Buildings and Development for the City of Chicago.

## How did the Hesburgh Program help get you to where you are today?

**Joe:** Build a strong network among others in your program and checking in with one another. Always keep in touch and learn from one another.

**Aidan:** Networking is important. Your rigorous academic schedule and organization skills you are developing now will really help prepare you for college and beyond.

**Tony:** The program broadened my reach and exposed me to many possibilities and opportunities. My eventual career path was fostered through the program, sports and clubs I was involved in. It provides you with a great forum for you to explore and push yourself out of your comfort zone. As an Evans Scholar caddy, I used that time as an opportunity to meet people and network.

**Jeff:** Being a Hesburgh provided a great foundation that fostered curiosity in me and exposed me to different fields. The rigorous academics, especially in creative writing, have contributed to my success as a lawyer today.

**Brian:** Being exposed to opportunities and taking advantage of the courses that help you later in life is important – especially writing and public speaking.

## Knowing what you know now – what would you tell your younger self as a ND student?

**Tony:** “Don’t be afraid to try new things and get outside your comfort zone.”

**Jeff:** “Looking back, I wish I had traveled abroad. Foster a business mind because business is in everything.”

**Brian:** “If there are opportunities, take them. Look for internships in order to find what you love so you don’t end up regretting anything”

**Joe:** “There are many opportunities out there so take advantage of them. If you are not getting “no’s”, then you are not asking enough.”

**Aidan:** “Push yourself now because the habits and routines you get into now will transfer over into college and your career and professional life. Try and make as many connections as you can”