

ALUMNUS REFLECTS ON HIS TIME WITH KNIGHT VISION FILMS

Knight Vision Films prepared Mathew Ohl for his career

In 2022, Matthew Ohl '20 of Independence, Iowa, opened Matthew Ohl Studios in Des Moines, a video editing studio where he creates motion design and edits videos for clients all over the U.S. As a freelancer, Ohl also does photography for social media, headshots, portraits, sports, and entertainment.

Ohl also had the opportunity to be a production assistant for American Idol during the 16th season when Clarksville, Iowa, native Maddie Poppe made it to the final three and visited her hometown for a parade and concert.

"I enjoy filming, but animation is my primary focus these days. Working with my fellow associates who are designers and videographers is a lot of fun," said Ohl.

This passion began during Ohl's first year at Wartburg while majoring in journalism and communication and member of Knight Vision Films. He started out as a cinematographer. His role was to film raw footage and filter it to make it more cinematic. He then rose to the position of assistant director, the second highest role among the film staff by his senior year.

"My favorite part of being a member of KV Films was collaborating with my fellow peers and making new friends. Everyone had an interesting vision that they brought to the group, and it was fun to bring that to life," said Ohl.

Ohl also played a large part in post-production, including editing the color on his favorite film student-created film, "Are You Jake Porter?". Ohl was able to gain experience in color and saw how various color techniques such as 8- and 10-bit color grading can impact a film.

"I really enjoyed animation and post-production throughout my time in KV Films and at Wartburg. The creative freedom and possibilities animation opened up excites me whenever I have a big motion project to work on," said Ohl.

Ronald Johnson, Wartburg's executive in residence, said Ohl was a superstar behind the scenes during his time with Knight Vision Films. "Matt committed to learning from those around him. In his early courses, Matt had a strong commitment to story and the visual elements of the story. Matt challenged himself to be the best he could be and embodied peer learning by collaborating with others," said Johnson.

Ohl was also able to gain hands on experience while working on the set with professional members of a crew that were filming "From this Day Forward." The filming of the film took place during April and May of 2017 in Waverly. Ohl was on set for every scene of the movie as he was the boom operator.

"It was an incredible experience for my resume"

“A boom op is a central member of the production crew, and the jobs I apply for the in the future will put a lot of stock into this experience. I also have a much stronger grasp on how an entire movie set works because I saw the ins and outs of it all for an entire month,” said Ohl.

During his time at Wartburg Ohl received three Iowa College Media Association (ICMA) awards including first place for best short documentary, first place for best multimedia slideshow, and second place for best:30-:60 promo commercial or PSA for his Wartburg capstone documentary “Behind the Battlefield.” Ohl also won a third place ICMA award for best short film for “The Viper,” which he created with a fellow student outside of Knight Vision Films.

After graduation and leaving KV Films behind, Ohl is grateful for his time with KV Films as the organization allowed him to experiment and explore the process of cinematography and gain hands-on-experience.

“I learned to plan for the unexpected. There are always going to be surprises when you’re on set and being able to adapt during a shoot is a huge part of the process,” said Ohl.

To learn more about Wartburg College and what makes Wartburg Worth It visit www.wartburg.edu. For more information about Knight Vision contact Ronald Johnson at ronald.johnson@wartburg.edu.



