

**Alumni Profile for Matt Royer
Nysmith Class of 2008**



"Nysmith truly has made me the person I am today."

While at Nysmith, I loved all the classes and was particularly interested in our history and computer classes. I learned a lot of applicable skills in those classes that I have taken with me my whole life. Also, I remember being the lead defense attorney in our Frankenstein mock trial in Mrs. Stephens's class in 8th grade. When I was thinking about what I wanted to do for a career, I thought back to that time and in a way it inspired me to eventually pursue the major I chose at JMU, Intelligence Analysis, and pursue my law degree in the future.

After graduating from Nysmith, I attended Georgetown Prep in Bethesda, Maryland. I was a 4-year varsity athlete on the Swim Team and was elected team captain my senior year. We won back-to-back Metropolitan titles my first two years, 3 consecutive league championships, and 4 consecutive conference championships. I also played varsity rugby for 3 years starting my sophomore year, played lacrosse, ran track, and threw discus.

While at Georgetown Prep, I was heavily involved in campus ministry and community service. I was a religious retreat leader for the sophomores when I was a junior and for the juniors as a senior. I volunteered for KEEN Swim for 3 years, helping kids with mental and physical disorders learn to swim. I worked with Habitat for Humanity down in New Orleans building housing in the Hollygrove neighborhood.

After I graduated from Georgetown Prep in 2012, I attended James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. I majored in Intelligence Analysis and minored in Criminal Justice. Through my major, I learned how to be an analyst in both a government and private sector entity. I learned how to analyze big data, social media profiles, HUMINT, SIGINT, and GIS information. Also, I conducted research on current intelligence and political issues. During my sophomore year at JMU, I conducted research and briefings for the Defense Intelligence Agency in Charlottesville, VA and presented competitive intelligence to Siemens my senior year. My Capstone Project team partnered with Toffler and Associates to conduct research, analysis, and scenario generation for the Cybersecurity of Autonomous Vehicles in the future and presented our findings to the board of the Intelligence Analysis department at JMU.

At James Madison, I continued to play rugby with Madison Rugby for all 4 years. While on the team, we won 4 consecutive conference championships, and went to the final four for the DII national championship 2 years in a row. Our 7's team won the 2015 DII National Title in 2015 and our 15's team moved up to DI that very same year. I graduated with my Bachelor of Science degree in Intelligence Analysis with a minor in Criminal Justice in May of 2016.

Regarding my summer jobs, for a few years, I was a lifeguard and swim instructor for ESF Camps at Georgetown Prep.

I also had an internship with the Petroleum Institute in Abu Dhabi in January 2014. My good friend from high school, Rami Bedewi, built a car that could travel on 1 gallon of gas from New York City to DC. Two of my friends and I were invited out to Dubai and Abu Dhabi to help Rami build a model of the car for the students at the institute who were going to race cars like this one around the go kart track next to the Yas Marina Formula One Track. We were invited to test out the track for the race as well.

In the summer of 2015, I had an internship at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston with the Financial Support Office. I conducted research, budget and financial analysis for the FSO, who oversee the budgets and finances for all 12 banks in the Federal Reserve System and work very closely with the Boston Fed Vice President.

Directly after college graduation, I worked as a Financial Analyst and Pricing Expert for Deltek Systems in Herndon, VA for about 3 months.

I now work at a grassroots campaign firm in Georgetown, Five Corners Strategies, as a Digital Advocacy Associate. I do political intelligence and social media scanning for several clients in different aspects of Politics all across the country.

When thinking back on my time at Nysmith, I now appreciate the diversity of the student body that I was a part of. After leaving Nysmith, I never realized how lucky I was to learn about so many different cultures and backgrounds from all kinds of people I met between preschool and 8th grade. I have friends now who never were exposed to this and don't have that same appreciation for the people of the world that are different from them. It has been helpful when dealing with different groups in my line of work and my travels around the world and to fully comprehend who they are and what they believe in.

I also know now how important it was in those years to have the support and the interest of my teachers in what I did not only in the classroom, but what I wanted to pursue outside of academics. Having that type of support and interest from my teachers boosted my self-confidence to a whole new level, and to this day, I continue to remember and apply their advice in my life, as well as think back on all the memories. I feel that I wouldn't have been able to have that experience anywhere else and I have to thank the Nysmith administration and my teachers while I was there for opening me up to these experiences in my formative years.

If I were to talk to my former self, while I was at Nysmith, I'd have to say, "Don't take anything you have here for granted." You have a very unique environment you are in at this school, something that a very small percentage of people have. Take advantage of that. Don't just cast it aside because kids your age think school is a drag and that makes you nerdy to be invested in school work; if you do, you will never be able to have teachers that care so much or can show you your full potential. It took me a while to realize this, but as I got older and went through schooling, I realized just how lucky I was to be at the point I'm at today and that started the very first day I walked into Nysmith's Busy Bees pre-school class when I was 4. It truly has made me the person I am today.

If there is something that interests you and there is something at the school that can help you towards your interest, by all means take the chance to do it. Sitting at my 8th grade graduation, I wouldn't have thought I would be where I am today and doing the kind of work I am doing now. But I wouldn't have known what I even wanted to do if I hadn't taken advantage of the resources around me outside of the classroom.

So ask questions, be curious, join a club, join the band, tryout for the play, apply to that high school that you think you have no chance of getting into, take the chances that you have the opportunities for now, so you can truly find who you are and what you want to do with your life. It won't just fall in your lap later on. You have to make the opportunities happen for you now. I had that advice given to me from one of my former teachers and it made a lasting impact on my life.

Favorite Nysmith...

Field trip: Gettysburg

Place to hang out at Nysmith: The courtyard next to the Silver Wing

Book you read for one of your classes: *The Giver* in Mrs. Tyson's 6th grade class (I have read it several times now for high school, college, and for my own personal reading)

Classroom story involving one of your teachers: Mr. Stephens once made me and another of my classmates do the Irish jig for the entire class because we had been distracting the class by doing it in the back of the classroom. Needless to say, I have never done that dance since.

After-school club: Nysmith Jazz Band

Memory: The Holiday Sing-A-Long every year in the gym. It was one of the traditions I looked forward to for almost 10 years.

Do you still know all the words to the 50 states song? I can get to Nevada and then I get terribly lost

What state were you? Pennsylvania