ITLS Spotlight: Stefan Wood

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The Wood Family

Stefan Wood serves as the Vice President for Online Masters Programs of the Instructional Technology Student Association (ITSA). In that position, he works to forward the goals and interests of the ITLS Online Masters Students.

Prior to coming to USU, Wood obtained a Bachelor's degree in business at Brigham Young University–Idaho and a degree in funeral services at Mount Hood Community College in Oregon.

Since 2013, Wood has worked at his family funeral home, Wood Funeral Home. He loves serving families and helping them through a difficult experience. He says that he puts the "fun" in funeral, but also recognizes that the thought of funeral directing makes some people uncomfortable. He wrote the following:

"It takes a special person to do your job"—this is probably the most common thing we hear about our profession. It's funny, though, how this statement can sound. Mostly, it's complimentary, but on occasion it sounds more like "only someone crazy could do what you do." We just laugh at this. And no matter what they mean, I think it really does take a special person; someone mature and compassionate."

Over the last few years, Wood became interested in obtaining a master's degree. He yearned for more experience and opportunity, and education had become a special part of Wood's life as he practiced delivering continuing education for funeral directors. As such, he looked for a program that was educational, but he also wanted something in-tune with the online world. When he happened upon Utah State's ITLS program, he was intrigued. He had never heard of Instructional Technology. After speaking with ITLS advisor Kristy Bloxham, he was very impressed and felt assured that this would be a great opportunity. He began the program in the spring of 2019.

The program has assisted Wood with his professional ventures, such as Continuing Ed Hub, which Wood started in 2015 to produce and coordinate continuing education for various professions. In 2018, he created Just a Pitch LLC, which provides educational presentations on various personal values including family history, marriage, and raising children. The ITLS program is helping Wood make these classes more accessible and engaging to all audiences in Idaho, and Wood hopes to expand throughout the nation in coming years.

Wood enjoys his family, fitness and sports, participating in church, and trips to Orange Leaf.

Wood offers some advice to students in ITLS. He says, "First, be wise about how you view your degree. It isn't just something to quickly complete so you can wear a badge of honor. Try in every way to personalize and take in everything you're learning. This will make it lasting." He also said, "Secondly, secure a job and obtain experience working professionally. Commitment to a company will shape you in very needful ways. Maturity and wisdom will come and more doors will open to you. Doing your own thing prematurely can be detrimental to the progress you hope for."