

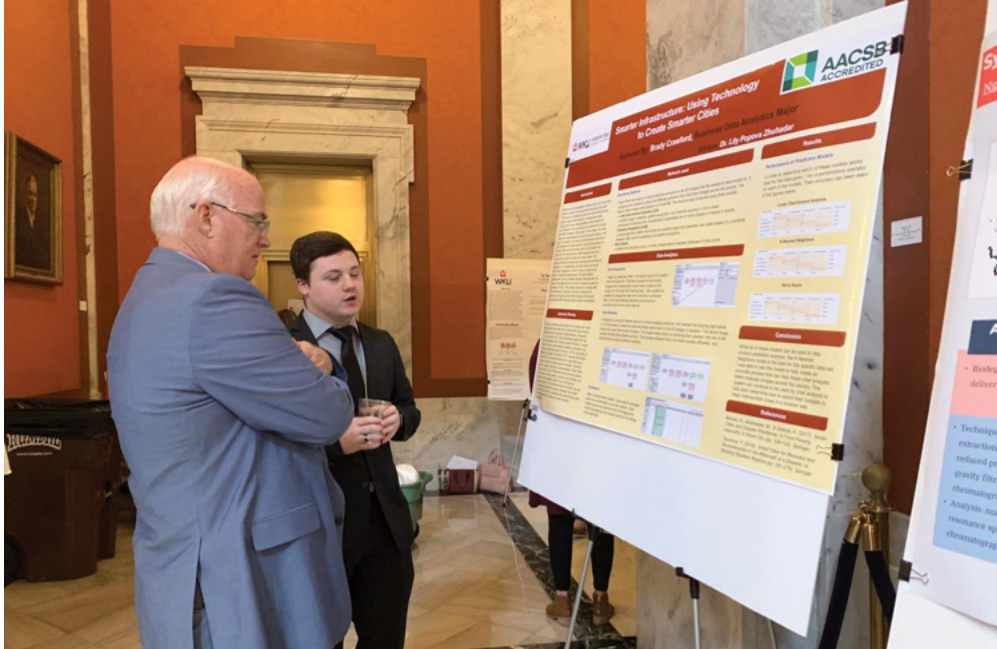
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MONDAY'S MAN

Crawford provides analysis, mentorship

By ANDREW CRITCHELOW THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

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Brady Crawford presents research on infrastructure to state Sen. Dennis Parrett in Frankfort in 2020.

Submitted photos

Getting to Know Brady Crawford

Hobbies: Hanging out with friends and family, watching sports, relaxing with his wife.

Family: His wife, Paige Crawford, parents, Eddie and Dianna Jo Crawford and older brothers, Collie and Reilly Crawford.

Pets: A dog named, Bernie, and a cat named WD.

Favorite sports teams: The University of Kentucky Wildcats and the New England Patriots

Favorite television shows: "The Office," "Breaking Bad," "Peaky Blinders."

Favorite film: "Moneyball."

Favorite author: Bill James.

Although he is only 22, Brady Crawford of Elizabethtown already is making great strides in professional development and is serving as a mentor to those on similar paths.

An Elizabethtown native and 2017 graduate of Elizabethtown High School, Crawford went on to earn an associate's degree from Elizabethtown Community and Technical College and earned a bachelor's degree in business data analytics from Western Kentucky University in 2020.

Following graduation, Crawford worked for consulting company KIZAN Technologies for about a year before landing his "dream job" at ARG I Financial Group earlier this year.

ARG I Financial Group provides financial advice and strategies, offering corporate solutions, business strategies, personal planning and advisor solutions. The company has offices in Louisville, Elizabethtown, Bardstov n, Bowling Green, Paducah, Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Elizabethtown branch was founded in 2016 after a merger with Stiles, Carter & Associates, CPAs, P.S.C.

Favorite music: Tyler Childers, Chris Stapleton, The Hill Figs.

Favorite food: Chick-fil-A.

At ARGI Financial Group, Crawford serves as a data and operations analyst, working with financial forecasting and analysis manager Connor Powell to build reports to assist the team in making informed business decisions.

“I work with our lead advisors and business analysts to identify goals and create metrics that allow us to improve each day,” Crawford said.

Last month, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that ARGI Financial Group will create 245 high-paying jobs in the coming years through a \$2.7 million investment. With this investment, the company intends to expand its 54,000-square-foot primary location in Louisville by 10,000 square feet, creating new management positions and back office support.

“The growth mindset is huge and the company understands the importance that data analysis is going to play in the next few years,” Crawford said. “I am excited to help the company utilize analytics to better serve the community.”

In Elizabethtown, ARGI Financial Group plans on opening a new office that will hopefully be completed by early next year, Crawford said. Like its current spot, the new Elizabethtown branch location will be on Ring Road.

“We have continued to grow here in Elizabethtown thanks to the awesome team we have at both the personal planning and business planning levels and it is exciting to see how their hard work is impacting our clients and our community,” Crawford said.

For Crawford, his trajectory in professional growth started while living in Elizabethtown and working for Chick-fil-A. He worked for three years at the Elizabethtown location and served as manager before leaving for Bowling Green to study at WKU.

Upon moving to Bowling Green, Crawford continued working with Chick-fil-A, serving as manager of the Campbell Lane location. He said he also had the opportunity to help establish a new Bowling Green location on Scottsville Road, which opened in 2019.

Through his work with Chick-fil-A, Crawford also was invited to the restaurant's corporate office in 2018 to give a presentation on the importance of team members in restaurants nationwide. He also helped their financial return consultants plan and set goals for 2019 and discussed some of the greatest issues management teams were facing at the time.

Though he was provided with plenty of opportunities through Chick-fil-A, Crawford said the most important thing he got out of the experience was meeting his wife, Paige, who also worked as a

manager at the Elizabethtown location.

"Chick-fil-A helped me to grow as a person," he said. "...After four years of working there, the relationships and connections I made are still present today."

While at WKU, Crawford also worked as a database developer for the Bowling Green-based organization Hotel Inc., a nonprofit that addresses area poverty through transformative pilot programs.

Crawford also served as a research assistant for the Gordon Ford College of Business at WKU during his time studying there.

"My internships with Hotel Inc. and WKU were crucial in helping me grow in the analytics field," Crawford said. "Both roles allowed me to not only learn important skills as a data analyst, but they allowed me to give back. Hotel Inc. does crucial work for the homeless community in Bowling Green and the research we did at WKU helped to push the importance of analytics to other colleges that are now adopting analytics programs as a direct result."

With his knowledge and experience in business analytics and with his status as a WKU alumnus, Crawford now regularly returns to campus to speak with current students at the Gordon Ford College of Business. Crawford said he tries to visit campus once or twice a semester to talk with students in the data analytics program and share insights with students who are nearing graduation.

Dr. Kirk Atkinson, professor of information systems at the Gordon Ford College of Business, said Crawford has become a great friend to him and to the college.

"He is doing so many great things with ARGI Financial Group all around Kentucky and despite his busy schedule, he continues to come back to campus and talk to our students and help them on their career path," Atkinson said. "Brady excelled as a student and continues to do so in the business world."

Crawford said as someone who experienced the anxieties associated with graduating and entering the workforce amid COVID-19, it is important for him to help others who are now going through the same experience.

"It means a lot to me that I can go back and share advice with these students that can help them as they prepare for that momentous time in their life," he said.

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