

Young Entrepreneur



Highlighting Schuyler's “Young Entrepreneurial”

Meet Zach Johnson, Funeral Director/Manager of Svoboda Funeral Home

Schuyler has been blessed to have young Zach Johnson move into our community, for so many reasons! Our Chamber sat down with him and asked him some questions and we know you will be as excited as we are by getting to know him better through this spotlight.

Why did you want to own (manage) your own Business?

Funeral homes are generally small, and family owned, and it's great to have something that you can put your efforts into and make it your own. By having direct ownership or managerial responsibilities, you have the drive to make it succeed, it's not just a paycheck.

When you were young what did you want to be when you grew up?

I did not aspire for anything specific, however, when I was in high school, I had a classmate who committed suicide and watching how the funeral director handled everything and the admiration I had for him- I decided to dig into this career path and learn more about it and then ended up job shadowing. From that time on, I have always worked at a funeral home and completed my education for it.

What do you wish you knew before you became a Funeral Director?

Every service affects you differently. Burying people, you never knew at all to be good friends to children... Everyone of them hits you in some way.

What did you learn from the best boss you ever had?

I learned that the best way to show your employees how you want things done is to lead by example. Do not ask employees to do things that you yourself would not do.

What do you admire most about your mom and dad?

Both of my parents have a strong work ethic, my mom is a go-getter and never

slows down and my dad is always willing to try new things. I picked up attributes from both.

What did you learn from your biggest failure? That sometimes, no matter how hard you try, things are not always going to be perfect. Although that thought is sometimes hard to swallow it is very much true. So always do the best you can, and most times people will be appreciative of that.

How do you find inspiration? Knowing that with my job I see people at one of the worst times of their life and if I am not doing all that I can to help them through it I have not done all that I can for that family.

What do you think is the most important innovation of your lifetime thus far? Technology. Being able to stream a funeral live and have people be able to view it while feeling safe at home, is great, even through a pandemic.

Who would you most like to have dinner with?

Betty White, she is someone that has literally seen it all and is still living to talk about it. She has a life is what you make it attitude!

What was your fave class in college? I enjoyed all my psychology classes.

Do you have any other business plans for your future? Eventually I would like to buy the funeral home and own it.

What do you feel Schuyler needs for additional businesses? Maybe more clothing stores and “sit down to order” restaurants.

Zach is 26, he graduated from high school in Wisner-Pilger, received a bachelor's degree from Wayne State and an Associates in Mortuary Science from Kansas City Kansas College. He is incredibly involved in our community as he serves on the Theatre Board, helps with the Schuyler Food & Toy Program and the Food Pantry, serves on the CASA Board as the Colfax County Representative, is the Youth Activities Director for the Knights of Columbus, and is on the Downtown Revitalization Board. He is glad to call Schuyler home as finding a community the right size was really important to him. It gives a person the chance to get to know everyone and build relationships. Something that you can find in a small town!

