

campus life

Prof. Jones celebrates love of family, teaching

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Jason Jones loves his job. When life is this good, there is no need for change. Well, OK, maybe a little.

This new instructor of American Studies recently graduated with his master's from Penn State Harrisburg about two years ago in the same major. He said that never even considered teaching until he pursued his master's degree.

"My professors interested me in teaching because it was all just so fun," he said. "And now that I'm an instructor, I love it," added Jones. "I'm able to work in American Studies and find meaning in things that other people find meaningless."

Research is something that Jones is glad he does not have to do as part of being an adjunct.

"Not to downplay the research," Jones said, "but it's nice to be able to have family time after work."

He said that he likes being able

to spend time with his 20 month old daughter, Athena. He is able to be home for her in the afternoon after he is done teaching for the day. Sometimes, they even have "surprise mommy days" when he and Athena surprise his wife, Megan, while she is at work.

Jones has also taught at other places like Kaplan, but nowhere has he found the types of interactive students like on this campus, he said, which is part of the reason he enjoys teaching here. Besides being conscience and engaging, he stated that his students are also very opinionated.

"It's like a comedian act," Jones said. If you tell a joke and people laugh, it keeps things going, just as if I ask an opinion question that the students are active in. And similar to an audience who just sits there when they hear a joke, we'd have a hard time getting to the end of class if no one ever said anything," Jones explained.

Surprisingly enough, just a few years ago, Jones never imagined himself in higher education, he

said.

Jones was never the academic type. He got through high school and tried college but quickly failed and left it. Then, in hopes of giving it another try while in his mid twenties, he enrolled at PSH and got to explore the academic world. He got to know his professors well and realized that this was his calling to teach. A bachelor's and master's degree later, he is still here. He loves his job so much, he said, that he does not consider it work. It is all fun for him, he said.

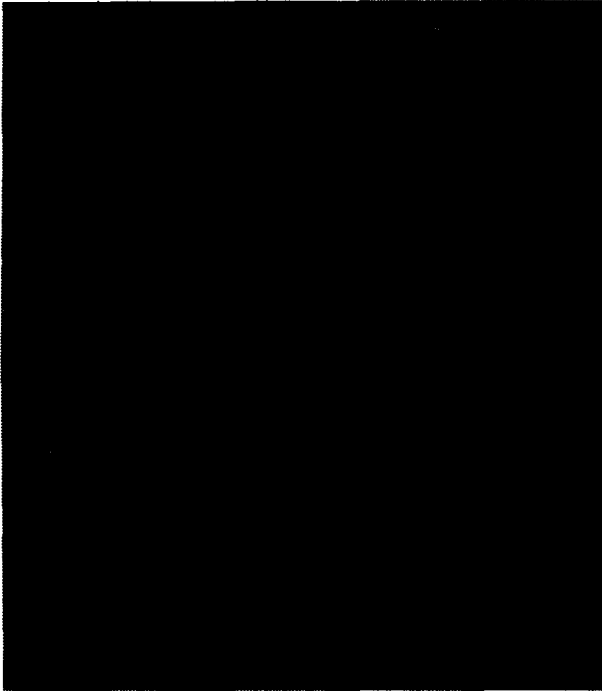


Photo by RABYIA AHMED/ The Capital Times

Professionally, Jones said that he would like to find an employer who would pay for his doctorate degree so that he could continue his career in higher education.

Jones also teaches at Central Pennsylvania College as an

adjunct. He stated that he is constantly looking for other places he can teach to always have a position in line for the future. Teaching is his passion, as one can sense by the excitement in his voice while discussing it.

Jones said that he wants his students to know that he has an open door policy. Regardless of how silly a problem or question seems, they are always welcome in his office to talk. He wants students to feel comfortable talking to him both inside and outside of class.

His hobbies include drumming, video gaming, digital culture like e-mails and Web searching, and playing backgammon that he now plays with his wife after teaching her the rules and hopes to someday also play with his daughter.

Even though Jones does not like flying, he has been to Canada, Britain, Holland, Germany, Bermuda, every state on the east coast and would like to go to Asia.

His kitty site became a kaboodle

By JESSICA GUYNN
(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

SAN FRANCISCO -- When you LOL at silly pictures of cats with even sillier captions, Ben Huh laughs all the way to the bank.

For the uninitiated, that's Web shorthand for "laugh out loud," an abbreviation that is common in e-mails, instant messages and online chat rooms. Huh, a Seattle entrepreneur, has built a mini-empire on the unique brand of humor illustrated by the "LOLcats" craze: photos with captions punctuated by deliberately misspelled words and mangled phrases.

His network of eight Web sites, which includes I Can Has Cheezburger and I Can Has a Hot Dog, attracts 5 million users and 100 million page views a month. The newest, which launched last week, makes fun of celebrities. It's called ROFLrazzi, as in "rolling on the floor, laughing,"

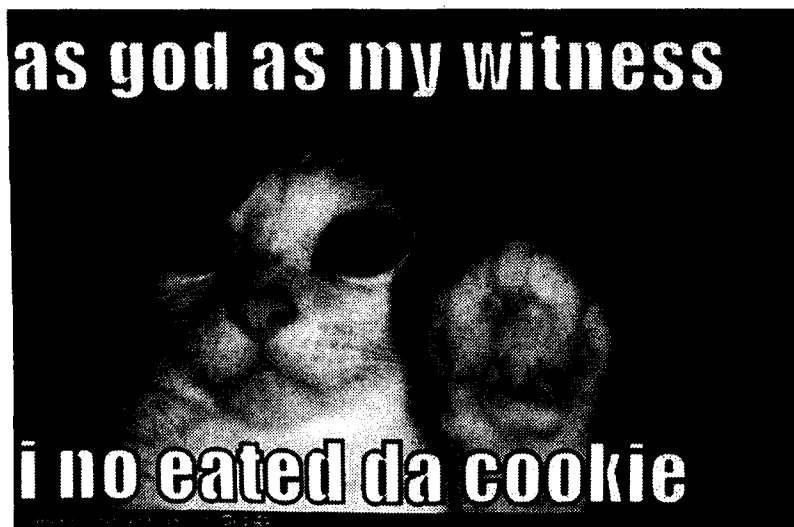


Photo courtesy of Ben Huh, I Can Has Cheezburger.

and razzi, as in "paparazzi."

Huh, 30, is trying to expand his company, Pet Holdings Inc., in the face of a slowdown in online advertising. The Korean-born former journalist now has 12 employees who, along with his wife, Emily, help him run the sites.

"Twelve months ago we were

this odd cat blog," Huh said. "I am not sure if we are on the cusp of a new type of entertainment or we are just a flash in the pan."

The LOLcats phenomenon began on a popular online bulletin board, 4chan. People started posting pictures of cats and slapping on captions from the feline point of view. The result

was LOLspeak -- or "kitty pidgin," as blogger Anil Dash dubbed it -- a typo-twisted tongue that quickly jumped to other species and subjects.

Huh seized on the commercial potential. He paid an undisclosed sum to buy a popular LOLcats site named after a picture of a chubby gray cat gazing into the camera, with the caption "I can has cheezburger?" The site's founders, Hawaii-based Eric Nakagawa and Kari Unebasami, had started the site as a hobby and were overwhelmed by the response. (They are publishing a LOLcats book next month.)

Since buying I Can Has Cheezburger, Huh has added companion sites devoted to dogs, politics and really bad translations of English, among others. A fan favorite is Fail Blog, in which people take joy in others' mishaps.

The Pet Holdings sites have achieved cult status with a populist formula: Users with quick wits upload images bearing idiomatic expressions and idiosyncratic grammar, vote for favorites and post comments. The best of the thousands of submissions the sites receive each day hit the front pages.

When the company posts job openings, it receives a flood of resumes. The subject line of one cover letter read: "I can haz dream Job? My rezumez! Let me showz u thm."

Huh hopes that celebrity coverage, which already generates huge online interest, will be another hit for him. For ROFLrazzi, users create funny captions for celebrity photos: Mr. T in a suit standing before a U.S. flag, saying, "I pity the foo that

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