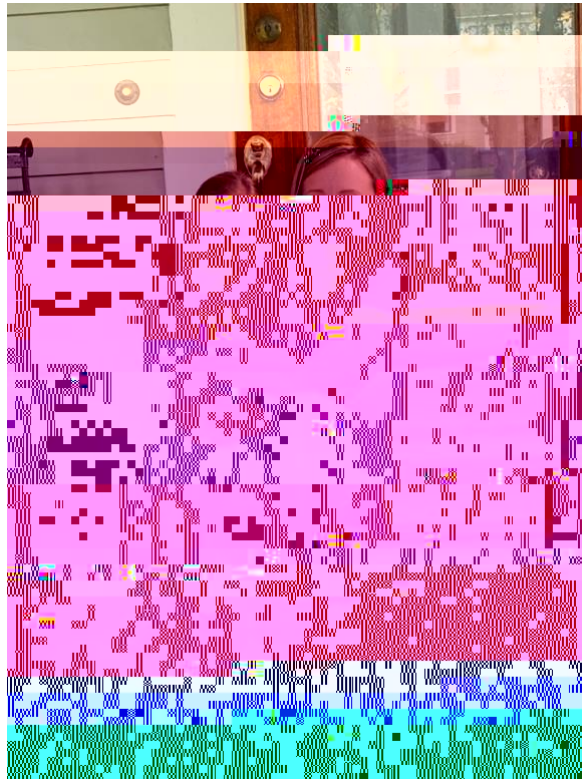


Ingram Scholar Alumni Spotlight



HUNTER GILPIN OSWALT, Class of 2007

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hunter-oswalt-27027716>

DEGREES

B.A. Art History, Vanderbilt University

M.A. Reading Specialist Program, The University of Alabama

CURRENT LOCATION

Mobile, Alabama

CURRENT EMPLOYER

Self Employed

CURRENT OCCUPATION

Business Owner & Reading Specialist

DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER PATH

When senior year started, I did not really know what I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to do something to make positive social change for children and families. Drawn to teaching from an early age, I decided to apply to Teach for America. So, a few short weeks after walking across the stage at Vanderbilt, I stood in front of a homeroom of 30 6th graders at YES Prep Public Schools, a high achieving charter school

founded by Vanderbilt grad Chris Barbic, in Houston, TX. Most of my students did not speak English as their first language and stared at me blankly when I gave directions or asked questions. I failed often and hard, but I learned fast because there was no plan B! I loved teaching, and to my surprise, I felt led to a long term career in education.

Soon after getting married in 2010, my husband and I moved to Mobile, Alabama to be closer to family. At that time, Alabama did not have laws allowing charter schools, so I needed to change my career focus a bit. I decided to pursue a graduate degree in reading from the University of Alabama. While working on my masters, I started working part time at a clinic for students with learning disabilities called Read-Write: The Learning Center. This ultimately led to me opening my own office in 2013. Now, I oversee intervention for our approximately 80 students, do testing and consultations for new clients, manage our staff of 10 instructors, and take care of all the nuts and bolts of running a small business.

I am fascinated by the science of reading and language acquisition. I have earned additional certifications in my field including Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT). I recently started serving on the Dyslexia Advisory Council, a statewide committee appointed by the Alabama State Board of Education.

I am also quite busy on the homefront with my kids ages 5, 3, and 1, but I hope to focus my work more broadly in the future. I would love to be involved in teacher preparation and education policy as it relates to reading, literacy, and language based learning disabilities. I definitely agree with Sheryl Sandberg's advice to women to think of their career as a jungle gym - not a ladder!

HOW DID THE INGRAM SCHOLARS PROGRAM PREPARE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING TODAY?

Many things! Ingram gave me increased confidence with public speaking, comfort entering new situations, experience with hard work, and an appreciation for the

9.14 RG(M)-15(a)-31(n-23(k))-11(.325 00.(dv)-23(i-7()h00092 0 r-31

accomplished authors, upper level administrators, community leaders, etc.. Never again will you have all of these resources at your fingertips!