

Alumni Spotlight: Troy Keen (MDiv '17)



Current title: Chief Development & Engagement Officer, Wells Fargo Corporate and Investment Bank

Family: Wife: Jennifer, Children: Joy and Troy, Jr.

Favorite professors: Rodney Cooper and Catherine McDowell

Favorite classes: Biblical Theology and all Preaching courses

Favorite memory: I actually have many great memories of my time at GCTS, among them were attending Friday night chapel services during class weekends, visiting the Hamilton campus to take my final two courses, and being selected as the student speaker for the Baccalaureate Service.

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?

Upon leaving Gordon-Conwell, I returned to Wells Fargo and my corporate roots in investment banking, albeit in a much different capacity. For the first twenty years of my career, I worked directly with clients, providing them strategic advice and execution support for their capital-raising activities. While this was my primary responsibility, I always enjoyed being involved in activities such as recruiting, mentoring, and engaging with young professionals who had recently joined the firm through our undergraduate and graduate programs. It was particularly important to me, and somewhat of an obligation, to invest in them during the early stages of their careers, the way other senior people had invested in me during similar times. I benefitted tremendously from things like mentorship, career guidance, networking, and simply having people that I trusted and respected give me valuable advice along the way.

So about seven years ago, I switched paths to focus primarily on talent development, where I was responsible for recruiting, hiring, training, and managing our early talent hires within the Global Mergers & Acquisitions Group. A few years later, I was asked to organize and lead a team of others in this role in a newly formed business, which nearly doubled our coverage population. This provided the opportunity to create a “core and common” approach to the overall experience that we were delivering to our recent hires and to ensure that we helped them maximize their career opportunities. Finally, just a couple of years ago, I was named to my current role as Chief Development & Engagement Officer for our Corporate and Investment Bank. In this role, I have global responsibility for several aspects of the employee experience, including leading an organization responsible for early talent management across all lines of business; managing the program office responsible for our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



initiatives; leading our formal employee engagement programs; and overseeing key operational and administrative functions which support our employees every day. In all, I have the privilege of leading an organization that touches the full spectrum of employee experience, from their first day to their last, and potentially every day in between, in a positive way.

What do you love about your work?

I love having the opportunity to combine ministry engagement with the incredible opportunities and positioning I've been afforded in the business world. This allows me to influence and impact people both in their professional journeys and their daily experiences by seeking to make the workplace the best environment it can be for them. My responsibilities as a leader are to provide the resources our employees need to be successful in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities AND to provide the support they need to simply navigate through their day in the workplace. For example, I'm often fond of saying that "we don't check the other aspects of our lives at the turnstiles when we show up." This means that we all bring our cares and concerns with us to work every day and are often expected to set them aside and focus on doing our jobs. Well, that's simply not possible because life is happening 24/7. So, I try to remind people that we're likely all going through something at any given time, and occasionally it might be necessary to extend grace to someone who's not operating at their best or compassion when we know they need to feel supported. These things don't always happen naturally nor are they the focus of typical corporate culture. Yet, I have the incredible privilege of leading efforts and drawing attention to ways that we can "love our neighbor" in the workplace. For most of us, much of our day is spent at work and around our colleagues, so it's important to promote a culture and environment that supports its employees in all aspects of their lives. I get excited whenever we make progress on this front.

What are the joys and challenges of serving in the business / for-profit world in general and/or in your specific context?

Working alongside people who represent countless backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives provides the opportunity to learn so much about others and ourselves when we take the time to do so. This, in turn, can lead to tremendous growth on a personal and professional basis, meaningful and lasting relationships, and greater awareness and visibility of not just the differences which tend to separate us but also of the similarities which bind us a part of a community. Thus, the joys and challenges often derive from the same efforts to make people feel included, appreciated, supported, and valued in the workplace. For example, modeling principles of servant leadership, loving your neighbor and selflessness at times conflicts with behaviors typically aligned with corporate culture. Therefore, the ever-present challenge is to work towards an environment that is rooted in high character, integrity and ethical behaviors, that chooses what's fair and right, and treats people with equality, despite their respective roles and titles. These are the areas where workplace ministry can serve as the moral compass and give people the confidence to exercise their faith principles in their everyday work.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?

Great question. The full answer would take much more space than available here. Suffice it to say that I now have a much greater understanding and appreciation for my life's journey, both in business and ministry, and not just how they have been intertwined but, to some degree, have become indistinguishable over the years. Initially, when I shared with colleagues that I would be pursuing a seminary education, it resulted in countless conversations around faith and purpose

with people, generally with whom I had never had such an encounter nor knew this was an important aspect of their life. The fact that people had questions about the role of their faith at work but didn't really have anyone they felt comfortable discussing with pointed to the need for ministry in the workplace and that I was taking the right direction. That's where the unique role of relationships came into play. I have always been able to establish engaging relationships by leveraging connectivity with people on a deep and personal level with the ability to create the space for meaningful dialogue. At a certain point in my career, as mentioned above, it became evident that this is where God wanted me to operate by bringing those two worlds together with the skills, resources, and education that I had been blessed with along the way. Being obedient to the calling and taking the necessary steps to affect this pivot was much easier than imagined once I had this clarity. I'm so glad that I did and have enjoyed my time in this space as I know we're making an impact.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?

Beyond what I learned from so many professors and classmates over the years, the practical skills honed through mentored ministry and the library of knowledge that I have developed have and will continue to serve me and my work going forward. Having so many ministry resources to complement my real-world experience provides me with a unique frame of reference that I regularly draw from when deciding how to approach a particular situation at work. I often refer to *Listening & Caring Skills in Ministry: A Guide for Pastors, Counselors and Small Group Leaders*, by John Savage, in which he focuses on the development of specific listening skills that teach the reader how to engage with people in a compassionate way that makes them feel their needs are being met. In a role where listening to people articulate their needs, concerns, and experiences is central to the organization's ability to maximize its engagement, I continue to rely heavily and often on my Gordon-Conwell education and resources for effectiveness and impact. What a blessing that I get to bring it to bear every day!

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving in the business world?

Take time to prepare yourself for service in the business environment. Many young professionals want to come in and make an immediate splash. Getting to the desired level of impact will take some measure of time, so use it to make the necessary investment in your career and ministry skills as God unfolds His plan for you. The theological education will serve you well as you seek opportunities to employ it; however, the practical experience of succeeding and exceeding in your role is what will bring you credibility and create those "spaces and places" for ministry engagement. Don't rush or force it. It's not about what you can do but about what God will do through you in due time.

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