

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

Father, son plan to graduate together

By CASEY MacLEOD
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Ever since Brian Tondevold dropped out of high school, he has wanted to get a master's degree in business administration.

The 51-year-old Regina is now a member of the University of Regina's Executive MBA program that began classes this week. As an added bonus, sitting beside him is Austin Tondevold, his son.

The Executive MBA program is in its third year at the university and is designed for business professionals who do not necessarily have an undergraduate degree but who have a substantial amount of experience.

The 18-month program covers everything from accounting and marketing to public policy, and organizational behaviour.

Brian explained that it was Austin who first decided to return to school.

"He announced it at a family get-together and I got thinking, 'You know, that has been on my goal list to have a MBA,'" he said.

"So when he announced that, I thought what better time to do it than now."

He then approached Austin about enrolling together.

"I'm like, 'Yeah that would be awesome,'" said Austin, a business consultant with Dimension Eleven in Regina.

"We're going to come out with a lot of knowledge. There's a lot of character building that happens and I think — other than my wife — who better to do something like this with?"

Both Tondevolds agreed after a few days into the program it is already obvious that being enrolled together is enhancing the experience for both of them.

"The opportunity, of course, is that



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Austin (left) and Brian Tondevold are a father and son combo who are starting an MBA together and will likely graduate together.

you work together as a team," explained Austin. "We will have experiences with different groups within this, and then we can get back to each other and share our experiences. I think that gives us a greater opportunity for growth that we otherwise wouldn't have."

It is also proving to be a bonding experience for the two men.

"He's my boy, and here I am seeing a whole different side to him as an execu-

tive," said Brian, a former police officer, who now owns his own real estate business within Century 21 Conexus.

"He is coming out with some pretty amazing statements. He's a knowledgeable guy, he's smart and he's got experience behind him that I didn't realize he had. This is really cool because I'm learning from him now."

Brian, or 'Pops' as Austin calls him, isn't alone in his pride.

"I know him as my dad, I know him

as a police officer, I know him as a realtor, I know him as a community figure, but not in this sense. This is a different setting all together," explained Austin.

"Yesterday, he gets up in front of the class at the white board to go through a case that we did. He facilitated the discussion in front of the entire class. It was fun to go through the way he laid things out, put them on the board, explained it. He was really good."