

TRANSCRIPT: TROY THOMPSON INTERVIEW

Mr. Troy Thompson · Business Planning and Analytics Major at Chevron

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An interview with Mr. Troy Thompson, Business Planning and Analytics Manager at Chevron. Thompson is a 1989 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

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Mr. Troy Thompson | Transcript
Tyurus R. Timm Honor Registry | Department of Agricultural Economics | Texas A&M University

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about your career?

I'm Troy Thompson, Class of 1989 graduate of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M. I came to Texas A&M to do a master's degree and was accepted on probation by Dr. Dan Patberg. He was the department head at the time. So I came, and I worked for Tom Knight. He was the—my thesis professor. Then I went to work for Ed Rister as a research associate, and I did that for several years. I loved that so much that they practically had to kick me out, and I really enjoyed working with Ed and learned a lot. When I finished there, I went to the Corps of Engineers at Galveston. I worked as an economist for a short period of time, and then I went into the energy industry. And I made the transition there—I had an interview at Halliburton, and the person that was hiring me was an Ag[gricultural] Econ[omics] graduate from Oklahoma State University, and so he knew what I could do, the capabilities that I could do, and that's how I got into the energy industry. I worked at Halliburton for several years and then at Deloitte, and currently I'm with Chevron, and I've been at Chevron for about nine years.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences at Texas A&M?

Well I really enjoyed my time at Texas A&M, and I've felt that it prepared me well for what I did. I had some great teachers that prepared me well with the tools that I used in my career in business. And so I enjoyed—made a lot of lifelong friends when I was at the department and still keep in contact with many of them, both on the faculty and then also colleagues that are now in various parts of the country. So building my skills and building relationships and lifelong friends—I think those are the things I really enjoy and remember from being my time here.

Can you describe your early career?

After graduation, so I was interested in Ag Economics, I was interested in agriculture. My high school economics teacher—he was a big influence on me, Lou People, and so I was interested in economics. Then my grandfather, Raymond Louse, he was a farmer rancher in central Texas, in Holland, Texas, and he was a big influence, and so I like to bring both of those together, and so that's what I wanted to do as a career. And I would say in all my whole career has been in building or extension of economics, either analytics or business planning, and I think that the time I was at A&M bridged me well to transition into the companies that I worked for.

What advice do you have for students of Agricultural Economics?

So the advice I would have is to work hard, and you have to apply yourselves. You have to think a can-do attitude, honesty. I would advise not only that your core curriculum in agricultural economics but to take as much finance and accounting as you can if you are going to look at a career in business, but fundamentally you got to believe in yourself and work hard, and you can achieve what you set out to do. I firmly believe that.

How were you able to manage time for family, work, and other priorities throughout your career?

So I when I came to graduate school, I was married. So I was starting a family, and I had to make time to do both. It is difficult to balance, but any time I would advise someone you got to put family first. I put in a lot of hours, but we were able to do a lot of fun things when I was in graduate school. One of the things I remember—my oldest son was born when we were here, and we were in the old agriculture building on the main part of campus. They have an elevator there that they would come up and visit me, and it was an elevator to go up to the floor I was in. So it's like a big tin box, and he was real afraid to get in that and he still talks about that. They would come up and spend time, and we would roam campus, and it was really a pleasurable time.

In your opinion, what does it take to achieve success?

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I think to achieve success you need to work hard. Like I said, believe in yourself, a can-do attitude, positive attitude. I think you have to be open to all possibilities, not to be afraid to take risks, kind of get out of your comfort area, and look for opportunities, and build relationships with people that you know that can open doors for you. Those are the kind of things I think will be in terms of keys to success.

What are your thoughts on being selected to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry?

Well I never did have the opportunity to meet Dr. Timm, but I know many of the people that are in the registry either went to school with him or worked with him or had as teachers so it's quite an, it's quite an honor to be selected, and I really appreciate it in terms of the selection committee, and I'm just so thankful to be here.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

So on the like to add, again I'm so thankful for Tom Knight who was my master's thesis advisor and Ed Rister. Like I said, I really worked—worked with for several years—really enjoyed working with for several years. Ed gave me a—when I left, he gave me a compass to have in terms of direction where you wanted to go in life. One of the stories that Ed told me when I worked worked as a research associate—we would go out and work with farmers and ranchers, and he would tell me “Thompson, when you go get a pool car” which had the A&M emblem on the door, he said “you be sure you know where you are going. We don't want to have someone driving around lost with the aggie emblem on there,” so I made sure I knew where I was going to go, so he gave me good advice. Another thing I was going to say is in terms of preparing the—like I said I had good teachers, and I thought the mix of being able to take learning from the classroom and go out and work with the extension, the faculty 'cause we worked with agribusiness owners and farmers and ranchers and being able to explain the concepts that I learned in class—I thought that served me well in the—in my career. And so that was something unique in terms of what the department can offer, and it really helped me.

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Transcribed by
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