

John Moore is a Big Apple, Blue Suit Guy with Carolina Blue

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John Moore worked from the ground up to build Manhattan-based Marwood Group into one of the most respected healthcare-focused financial service firms in the nation.



Alumnus John Moore and his wife, Tatiana.



John Moore, Carolina lacrosse player, late 1980s.

Today, Marwood's co-founder, chairman and CEO—and Carolina alumnus—looks every bit the part of the successful entrepreneur that he is. He's also supporting Carolina students, giving them an edge in a highly competitive job market and helping them obtain real world experience before they graduate.

At just 29 years old in 1995, an ambitious Moore was a founding partner and vice chairman of CarePlus Health Plan, which grew to be New York's 12th largest HMO before he sold it ten years later in 2005 to Amerigroup. While establishing CarePlus, Moore also started a successful homecare business in New York City.

Along the way, while he was working in the healthcare industry, he realized that there were vast gaps between what businesses wanted—and needed—to know and what information regulatory agencies and legislative bodies made readily accessible.

“For the longest time, there was a huge disconnect between Wall Street and Washington for accessible health care data,” said Moore. “If you’re an investor, you’re always looking for better information.”

During the 1990s, Moore became friends with Edward “Ted” Kennedy, Jr., son of the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy. The two shared a common interest in health care and in bridging that information gap, and in fall of 2000, the Marwood Group was born. The firm specializes in asset management, private equity advisory and proprietary equity research and has offices in New York City, Washington, D.C., and London.

“We named the company Marwood as a tip of the hat to Ted’s grandfather,” said Moore. “He understood more than anyone else, perhaps, that what happened in Washington affected Wall Street.”

That would be Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., the first chairman of the federal government’s Securities and Exchange Commission, who rented an estate called Marwood on the Potomac River when he worked in Washington, D.C. The senior Kennedy oversaw the establishment of SEC founding regulations that curbed some of the more speculative trading practices of the time and increased transparency, improving investor confidence in Wall Street during the Great Depression.

The Carolina connection

A high school senior and talented lacrosse recruit, Moore first experienced Chapel Hill— and North Carolina—on a trip with his parents in fall 1983.

“I was fortunate to be able to come to Carolina,” said Moore.

Ten years later, another high school senior from New York bound for Carolina had a chance meeting with Moore.

“John and I happened to be sitting next to each other at a Carolina lacrosse game in spring 1994 at SUNY Stony Brook and struck up a conversation,” said T. J. Modzelewski ’00.

“Although he was 10 years older, we had a lot in common, particularly since we were both from Long Island. I was impressed by his talent at understanding and explaining the ‘business side of business,’ those elements that fundamentally drive companies,” Modzelewski said.

Moore stayed in touch with Modzelewski during his college years, helping him understand the logic and complexity behind the business decisions of the companies that Moore was building.

“This became my informal education with John and led me to want to work with him when I graduated, even though my major had been physics,” he said. As a student in Pat Parker’s organizational communication class, Modzelewski, in fact, drafted the business plan for the Marwood Group.

Today, Modzelewski is chief operating officer at the Marwood Group where nine of the 95 employees are Carolina alumni.

“It’s been very rewarding to work with John as a colleague and apply in practice the many lessons he taught me at a young age,” said Modzelewski. “The great thing about John is that he is willing to teach young people at the company. He wants to empower them with knowledge on how and why things are done. It is the foundation of the Marwood Group’s great culture and a major reason for our success.”

Opportunities for the next generation

In 2005, Moore established the John and Tatiana Moore Student Internship Fund in the Department of Communication Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences to encourage promising students to think big and augment their Carolina classroom education with work experiences far from campus. The fund provides stipends to communication studies majors who have earned internships related to their course of study, with a preference for students studying in major cities.

Eight students have been granted awards, including Jennifer Carpenter ’09, a Moore Award recipient in 2008 who was an intern at the *Washington Post*. Carpenter earned a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Albania in 2009-2010, and credited the Moore Award with helping invigorate her filmmaking career.

Frederick Wellborn ’11, a communication studies major from Brevard, N.C., was elated to learn he was among three students to receive the Moore Award in spring 2010.

“This summer I was fortunate to land a position as filmmaker on the UNC Students of the World team. We will travel to Tanzania to film a documentary about unsafe drinking water in the Arusha region, and then spend the rest of the summer in Austin, Texas, for post-production. I am honored to have received the Moore Award to help finance my unpaid work with Students of the World this summer, and would not be able to do the project without this help,” he said.

Wellborn is just the type of student that Moore had in mind when he created the fund.

“I come from a small mountain town in western North Carolina, and I’ve always wanted to know what was outside of it,” said Wellborn, who wants to live in a large city and find a job in the film industry after he graduates. “I took a gap year before entering college, and in the fall of that year I traveled to Europe with a backpack and a rail pass, and went wherever I felt like going. The trip introduced me to so many different types of people, places and ideas that I didn’t know about before. My biggest regret is not taking a video camera with me.”

Moore’s generous commitment to Carolina students also extends to 12 coveted paid summer internships at the Marwood Group in its New York and Washington offices. In addition to office duties, students attend daily briefings, weekly “lunch and learns” with Marwood division heads and a weekly discussion lunch with Moore. They also tour local landmarks.

Several interns from this program have been hired as employees after graduation.

Francesca Rawleigh of Gettysburg, Pa., graduated from Carolina in May with a double major in political science and communication studies—and with a full-time job at the Marwood Group. In summer 2009, she interned in Marwood's Washington, D.C., office.

"I've known for a long time I wanted to work in D.C. after graduation and so having an opportunity to work there last summer was great. I wasn't quite sure what the Marwood internship would entail, but I knew I could use my developing communication skills and greater understanding of politics and policy.

"Every day as an intern at Marwood I learned something new. I especially enjoyed going to Capitol Hill and watching Congress at work. I know internships are supposed to help students gain real world experience, and I truly had the opportunity to live this every day," said Rawleigh.

"I know I have a lot to learn, but I am eager to do so. I feel very fortunate to have had this opportunity through Marwood last summer and now as an employee after graduation," she said.

Dennis Mumby, chair of the department of communication studies, said that it's hard to overestimate the impact of Moore's gifts.

"John's enthusiasm and support for our program epitomizes just how important our alumni are to the health and excellence of our educational mission.

"Our program is heavily invested in enabling students to experience how the analytic skills they learn in the classroom translate into real world life and work skills that will stand them in good stead for their entire professional careers. The Moore Internship Fund, as well as the Marwood Group internships, and the support they provide our best undergraduate students, helps us to make good on that investment in a very tangible and meaningful way," said Mumby.

For Moore, who now splits his time living in New York City and in Setauket, Long Island, with his wife, Tatiana, and their three young children, his support of Carolina is profitable in more than just the bottom line on a balance sheet.

"I want to give students opportunities that I didn't have," said Moore. "I'm glad that the internships and awards, in some small way, help students with potential yet no real world experience to bridge that gap."