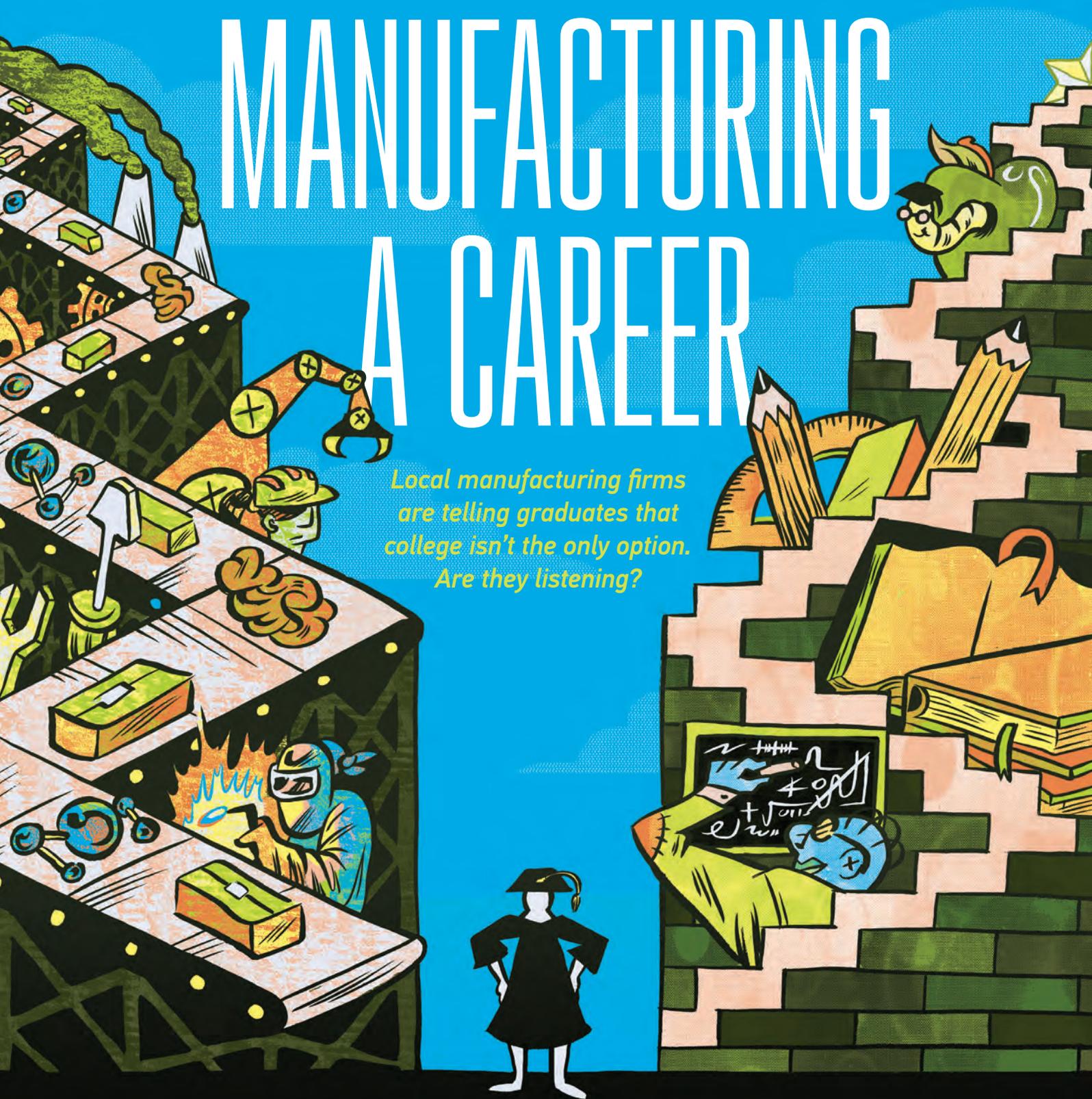


# 425 Business

## MANUFACTURING A CAREER

*Local manufacturing firms  
are telling graduates that  
college isn't the only option.  
Are they listening?*





## DAVE JOHNSON

*President, Elite Fitness Training*

WORDS AND PHOTO BY JOANNA KRESGE

There aren't many businesspeople who can say they began their professional careers on the playground at age 8, but Dave Johnson, president of Elite Fitness Training in Bellevue and Seattle, is an exception to the rule.

"I would organize kids my age at recess, and I would make the Olympics," he said. "It was just a very physically demanding obstacle course. It required a lot of climbing and some kids couldn't make it through. ... When they couldn't do it, we would practice a certain chunk of it until they could do it."

Johnson continued down the fitness path by working part-time at gyms during his youth, getting certified as a trainer before his 20s. He considered a similar path in college, but changed his major to business.

"I figured at least business can be applied to anything," he said. "Then I had an opportunity to manage a personal

training studio. I could blend the management side with the personal training side and that was it — I realized that was exactly what I wanted to do."

While Johnson is passionate about his job, the not-so-distant memory of the late-2000s recession keeps him grounded in the fact that it could all go away tomorrow, even though his business escaped the downturn relatively unscathed.

"This is a luxury service, and it'd be the first thing to go because it's not food or shelter," he said. "I think it's a real possibility because I see it in other gyms, with other trainers. I see it in other businesses; I see it with our clients. It is also my motivation, so I don't take it for granted."

See how this personal trainer makes it through a physically demanding business day. →



**4:21 A.M.** Already hit the snooze button twice, so it's go time.



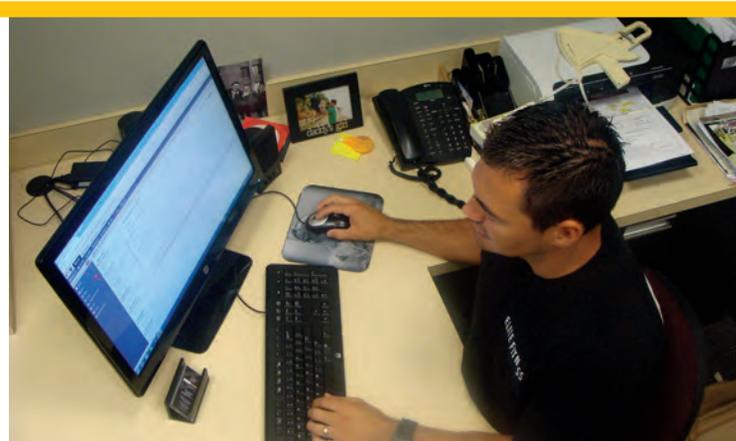
**5 A.M.** Make my usual breakfast for my daughter and me. We have steel-cut oats with eggs, protein powder, almond and coconut milk, berries, and almonds.



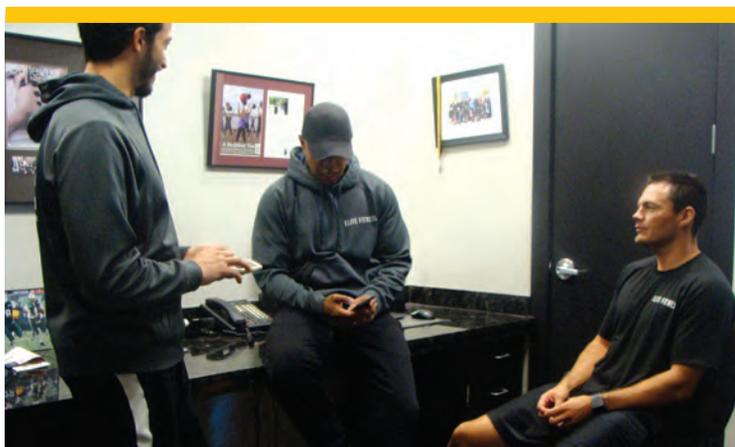
**5:35 A.M.** Meet the team at the Seattle location before training starts. We run through client files for the day and clean the gym together before the fun begins.



**NOON** Phone conversation with Eric from Habitat for Humanity regarding some details for our upcoming "train the trainer" fundraising event at our Bellevue facility.



**12:45 P.M.** Send follow-up emails to the morning's clients I trained with, then update their files. I'll also do follow-up emails to prospective clients.

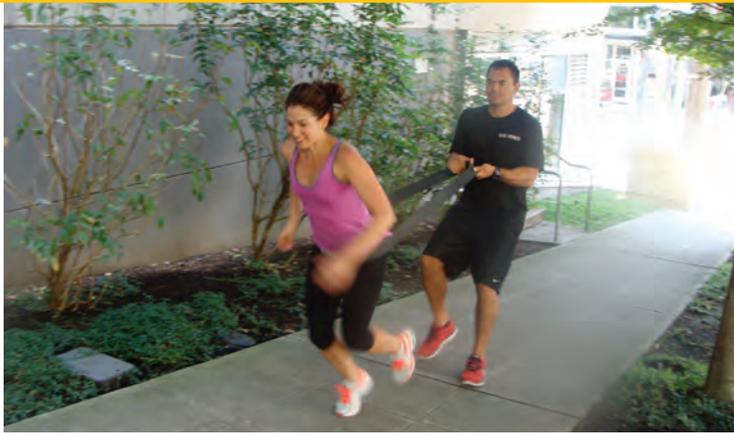


**3 P.M.** Back at the Bellevue studio to meet with our manager, Paul, and our event coordinator, JP, to discuss our newest trainer and programs for clients who are training for an obstacle race in New York City.



**4 P.M.** My turn to get trained. I jump in with longtime client Jeremy as our trainer, Matt, nearly kills us.

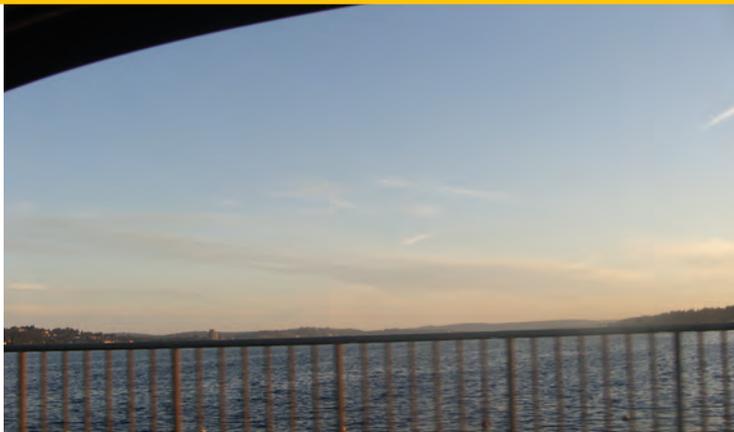
ALL PHOTOS COURTESY DAVE JOHNSON



**6 A.M.** Training clients is the best part of my job. I'm blessed to have had my passion be my career for the past nine years.



**11:15 A.M.** Quick meeting with our Seattle manager, Benji, about where we are with this quarter's goals. It's nice outside today, so we get out of the office.



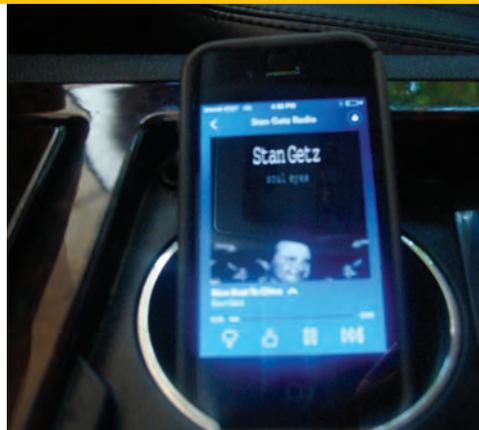
**1:30 P.M.** My partner, Alex, and I drive across the bridge to our Bellevue studio while discussing today's upcoming meeting with Monica from Wallace Properties.



**2 P.M.** Head to the 520 Bar and Grill to meet with our client, Tom. We discuss his training plan leading up to a Mount Rainier summit attempt, tentatively planned for the end of May 2016.



**5:30 P.M.** Meet with Monica, who shows Alex and me a potential space for a group fitness concept we've been toying with for some time now.



**6:35 P.M.** Put a relaxing Stan Getz station on Pandora for my drive home after a pretty action-packed day.



**8 P.M.** I shower, eat, and then it's time to be Daddy Princess with my daughter. Then some TV before I doze off, hopefully in bed rather than on the couch. ■