

# INDIANA ALUMNI

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MAGAZINE

## Evolution in the classroom

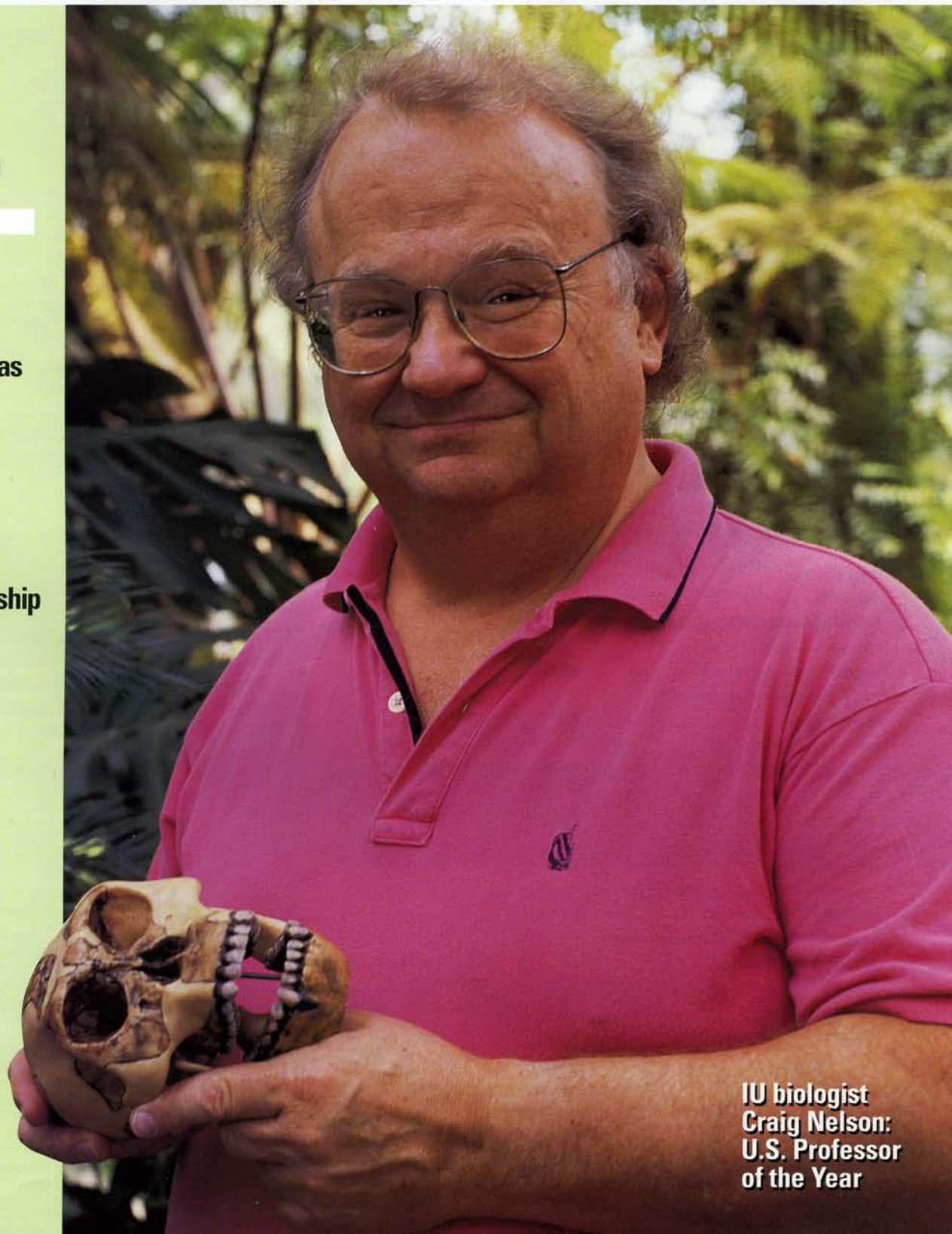
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## MUSIC CITY HOOSIERS CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN, CORNER EVERY MARKET

**T**he Baker Twins work twice as hard!" That's their advertising slogan, but if these young entrepreneurs had a signature bumper sticker, it might read, "Born to Hustle."

IU juniors Chad and Andy Baker went into business for themselves in grade school, selling pencils. Later, they took advantage of a student strike at the cafeteria at their closed-campus Nashville, Tenn., high school. The twins piled all their books into one locker and stocked the other with food, which they sold to customers choosing not to patronize the school food line.

On that occasion the principal put them out of business, but their persistence carries on at IU. They operate three small enterprises on a regular basis and take on one-time projects as opportunities arise. The income just about covers their out-of-state tuition and the monthly mortgage on their Bloomington condo.

The Bakers started their first business in Bloomington a week before they registered for freshman classes. They sold advertising to businesses and distributed their CASHCARDS free to students.

"You get discounts at places on the card, and it's reusable," Chad explains. "The business benefits because it creates customer loyalty."

The twins also extended a gumball machine business they started in Nashville to a few locations in Bloomington. And they sell advertising for placement in restrooms at several restaurants, health clubs, and recreation sites.

"It's a captive audience," Andy says.

One-time projects include the bargain purchase of a mobile climbing rock to sell to a local climbing gym and a gift-wrapping store in Bloomington's College Mall during Christmas 1999. Both projects took a lot of time and energy, but both turned a tidy profit in income and experience.

"We definitely worked some late hours," Andy says. "I was at the mall from open to close the whole day, and I did it for 19 days in a row. It was miserable, but at the end of 19 days, we had a nice profit."

Even the condo is an entrepreneurial adventure. "We spent thousands renovating it this summer," Andy says. "We'll live here until we graduate, and then it will be a rental property. We're not making money on it now, but we can see down the road the best move for our future."

The Baker twins picked up the entrepreneurial spirit at home, where their father, now a financial consultant, has engaged in some new ventures. Their mother is a university fund-raiser and their stepmother a travel agent. But they say the most important quality they took from their parents was a sense of persistence.

Life in the business world after college will continue to be an enterprise together, the twins say, even though they are not sure yet exactly what they will do.

"The future is something we talk about daily," Andy says. "We definitely want to work together. And we'd like to go back to Nashville."

Whatever they do and wherever they do it, the creative aspect of entrepreneurship is a motivating factor.

"As corny as it sounds, when I go someplace and see something I created, that's just so neat," Chad says. "I saw a guy the other day using the CASHCARD and I thought, 'That's the Baker twins. That's me.'"

Success adds to the pleasure, and the Bakers have learned early what it takes to be successful.

"Hard work and not giving up," says Andy. "We're definitely not in the top 5 percent academically, but I don't think that matters. We had dinner recently with Gene Glick [BS'42, president of Gene B. Glick Company Inc.], and he said the key was, 'Can you get it done?' I think that's what's great about us. I don't care what it is, I can get it done."

And they get it done now, even while going to school.

"We work really hard and do pretty well for college students," Chad says.

Adds Andy, "A lot of people say, 'When I get out of college, I'm going to do this or do that.' Why wait? To me, the more money you make sooner, the better you're set up for the future."

— M.W.



### CASHCARDS AND GUMBALLS

■ Chad and Andy Baker — or is it Andy and Chad? — miss no chance to double their money. Photo Chris Howell, Bloomington Herald-Times.