

# eWEAL

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## Green Architecture Runs in the Family

by Cynthia Kinnunen

Over 35 years after graduating from University of Waterloo's School of Architecture – where he started in the second year of the program – David McAuley (BES 1972, Architecture; BARCH 1974, Architecture), owner/architect at [J. David McAuley Architect Inc.](#) has not only seen fulfillment through his own career passions but also seeing his son, Tavis (BES 2003, Architecture; MARCH 2007, Architecture), following in his footsteps.

It's reported that David and Tavis are the first father and son to ever graduate from the [School of Architecture](#) at UW. But it's not simply their alma mater that connects their chosen career paths; it's the passion both men have for sustainable architecture.



As David dove into the Architecture program at UW, he took advantage of the co-op terms by travelling to a variety of locales, including Gothenburg, Sweden. His most memorable courses at Waterloo, however, were Human Ecology and Natural Ecology, and these fed into David's increasing interest in sustainable architecture. From there, his personal pursuits in health and wellness, combined with international travel and investigation into indigenous builders and early civilizations, helped shape his view of designing sustainable, healthy buildings.

"Studies into building practices of heritage, aboriginal and ancient Egyptian systems have led me to promote building in the right place with local, durable materials assembled for longer life expectancies and healthier people," David explains.

Building biology, the science of holistic interactions between life and our living environment, became a large part of David's pursuits. After becoming a certified Building Biologist, he helped convene the first [Healthy Building Conference](#) at UW's School of Architecture in May 2005.

His interest in all of these areas offered inspiration for Tavis, who literally grew up surrounded by this work as David's office and home were blended as in Scandinavian architectural firms like Ralph Erskin in Stockholm. "There was not pressure to follow my footsteps," shares David, "but holidays were always adventures in architectural experience and celebration of nature."

Tavis, whose co-op placements at UW allowed him to experience many corners of the country, including one term working alongside his father, found the process of building design and construction to be exhilarating. He naturally found himself gravitating to green architecture and his thesis focused on the cost of sustainability.

Tavis currently works for [Busby, Perkins + Will](#), whose tagline says 'ideas and buildings that honor the broader goals of society.' "The company is 100% engaged in sustainability and it drives their work." His projects there range from restoration of municipal buildings to refurbishing homestead structures in Pacific Rim Park.

Father and son have been fueling their careers with passion for the earth and life on it. While Tavis still has a long career ahead, David shows no signs of slowing down. "I am looking forward to continuing my path into a more sustainable built environment for my grandchildren."