

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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PAGE BY JULIE BONE

All in the family

For Aggie grads, inheriting a business comes with special concerns and benefits

By Kirk Ehlig
THE BATTALION

Klinefelter, who is also the director of The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers, a program that deals with a lot of family-run businesses.

This might turn a few students, who are anxious about pleasing their parents with their work, away from the family business. Klinefelter said it is important for the family members to have good communication at the job, and that children and parents should discuss the expectations of the job. It's also key for parents to not push the kids too hard and be too forceful with ideas.

Timothy said it's great working with his father because he has learned a lot about life and the community he couldn't learn in Houston.

"I wouldn't say he has taught me a lot about credit analysis or credit structuring because that is mostly what Houston taught me," Timothy said. "He's basically taught me how to navigate the local politics, how local customers want to be treated and the kind of banking that fits this area."

Timothy said concerns about coming back to work for his dad were that changes he envisioned for the company wouldn't be welcomed because everything had been one way for so long.

"That concern was totally unfounded, because after discussion of any changes I wanted to make, they typically agreed," he said. "I was worried I wouldn't be given enough authority."

"(The opportunities) to move into management and senior management and ... to implement your ideas, if you own it and control it, are easier."

With some expected doubts about working with family some might have, Timothy said some of the biggest positives that come from it are trust, support and the enjoyment of being around family.

Michael Lau, a graduate student at A&M, decided to go back to work for his father in the family's meat business in California, after he receives his doctorate in agricultural economics. He said that much of his reasoning is from family ties.

"I grew up in the business, and I enjoy doing it," he said. "My dad wants to retire one day, and he's built a great business and I

don't want to see it go away," Lau said.

Even though Lau and his younger brother want to take over the family business in the future, he doesn't want his doctorate go to waste.

"It gives me an opportunity to hopefully make money and to be able to expand and hopefully get some real world experience," Lau said. "If I ever go back and teach, instead of just saying, 'This is how you do it,' I can say, 'I did this and this is what really happens.'"



RYAN HUNTEN - THE BATTALION

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