

# Homeschool Graduates: Their Accomplishments and Advice

Dr. Jay L. Wile

## Qualifications

- Helped Develop Indiana's Only Residential High School for Gifted and Talented Students
- NSF-Sponsored Scientist with More Than \$200,000 In Research Grants
- Became Interested in Homeschooling Because of Excellent University Students Who Were Homeschooled
- Currently writes homeschooling materials through Berean Builders
- Is an adjunct professor at Anderson University

## Mark Flage

Homeschooled K-12

Biology B.S. (Honors), U of Minn.

IRTA Fellow at the NIH

Biotechnology Masters, Johns Hopkins

“College is very similar to homeschooling, in that they expect you to put in a significant amount of effort and will not spoon-feed you material, nor can you show up without cracking the book and manage to ace the exams.”

“Unfair grading will probably happen. It's up to you to be good enough on tests to compensate for the system.”

“Yes, there is shocking depravity in a college campus and in the dorms, but sheltered, perfect homeschooled families are equally wicked. Don't let your homeschooler superiority complex be a divider between you and people who don't have Christ.”

“Don't buy a laptop, because you don't need one, and it's a HUGE distraction. A flashdrive and the campus computer labs should be all the computing resources you need.”

My addition: Take notes BY HAND!

“If you find yourself having a hard time avoiding facebook, give your password to a friend and have them lock the account until the semester is over. It may seem like a large sacrifice now, but four years later you'll be glad you did.”

“Even if you've taken all the AP courses, don't jump straight to your sophomore year of college. There is no real advantage to getting out of college a year early, but there is a HUGE advantage to getting all A's that first semester.”

“Homeschool textbooks are designed with one goal: for the student to learn. Most college textbooks have other goals besides student learning...Enjoy them while you can.”

Dr. Nathan T. Brewer

Homeschooled 6-12  
Physics B.S. (Honors), Union U.  
Physics Ph.D. Vanderbilt U.  
Research Scientist at ORNL

He and his team developed an alternative method for making one of the heaviest known elements. They think it will be successful at making new, heavier elements.

In homeschool, he considered being a musician, but he said, “I thought physics would be better than standing on the corner begging for money, but little did I know about grants.”

While he thinks that homeschooling prepared him well for university, there was one thing he thought his parents could have done better. He wasn’t ready for the heavy workload that comes with college. He could learn well, but he wasn’t used to doing so much work to demonstrate that he had learned.

He thinks that science should be studied in a way that energizes faith. “My Christianity gives me a desire to learn. The world is absolutely breathtaking, and studying the world’s beauty fuels my faith.”

His advice to students: “Think carefully about the end game. Think about what the career you are thinking about looks like. Find a mentor to help you get a realistic idea of the career.”

Victoria Miller

Homeschooled K-12  
A senior at Anderson U., majoring in Elementary Education  
My best student in last year’s “STEM in Education” class

She had a lot of college credits before coming to university, so she will graduate after having been a student for only three years.

She did not accept credits for any classes related to education, but she did take credits for unrelated courses.

One reason she wants to be a teacher is that homeschooling instilled in her a deep appreciation for how important education is.

At the same time, however, she wasn’t prepared for the diversity of views that exist among her peers, even at a Christian university.

“Find the balance for your children so that they have a strong faith in Jesus while at the same time having exposure to others besides just homeschoolers. They need to be able to converse with unbelievers and other people outside of their realm. It helps mature your children and

prepare them for life outside of school... You might not be useful for Jesus if you continue to be shocked about what's going on.”

This is the wisest thing she said: “Make sure that you don't think your ways are always right. Sometimes, we can get so focused on our walk with God that we forget to be open minded in a healthy way.”

This has all sorts of applications to education and to our spiritual lives.

Think of the Pharisees. They were absolutely certain they were right. Even though they knew the Scriptures better than anyone, they did not recognize the Messiah!

Christopher Stout

Homeschooled K-12  
Graduated with Honors, USC Film School  
Runs a production company making commercials

He looked at USC and the “reasonable” option, University of Delaware. “The time had now TRULY come for my parents to put their money where their mouth was. Either all things were possible for me, or all things within reason. Either greater was He who is in me than He who is in the world, or greater was He than pretty much everything but the darkness in Hollywood.”

“I'm just getting started on this whole life thing, and there's not a whole lot of wisdom I have to impart from experience, but my experiences have encouraged me to confidently assert one thing – **trust your kids**. If my generation is called to make disciples of the nations, we're going to have to get our hands dirty. We might have to go to college with tax collectors and sinners...I'm confident that there was no better place to learn how to do that than at the front line of the battle between light and darkness.”

Nathan P. Hay

Homeschooled K-12  
Graduated (EE), Cedarville Univ.  
Works as a Network Engineer

He says he thinks his math was not quite up to speed with his fellow students, but **“Because homeschooling taught me how to learn independently, I quickly caught up to them.”**

**That statement is the perfect description of what your homeschooling should accomplish. Don't worry about teaching them everything they need. Worry about teaching them to learn on their own.**

Robert Rowlett

Homeschooled K-12  
Political Science BA, Anderson U.  
Law degree (honors), Indiana U.  
Deputy Attorney General, Indiana

Like Victoria, he was not ready for the immoral behavior of some of his fellow students (at a Christian University).

“Continue to stress with your children that when they go to college, they will have a lot of opportunit[ies] to make bad choices...Tell them, “When you see all of your friends going to the bar, and they are all underage...just don’t be stupid. Don’t go.”

He has this advice for university students, which also applies to life in general:  
“Focus on the things that you have skills in, but don’t be afraid to move around. I switched majors. I started in biology, switched around, and still graduated early. If you get in marketing, for example, and hate it and want to switch to psychology or dance, do it.”

Dr. Winston Ewert

Homeschooled K-12  
Went to a Canadian community college after graduation  
Computer Science BS, Trinity  
Computer Science Ph.D., Baylor

He started working for Google but got frustrated because he didn’t think his job was making a positive contribution to the world.

He started his own company so that he could devote time to research into intelligent design.

He says that you need to be happy with what you are doing. If you aren’t, change what you are doing.

Bethel McGrew

Homeschooled K-12 (very traditional)  
Double major in philosophy and mathematics  
Masters in math  
Currently pursuing a Ph.D. in math

On creation/evolution: “Familiarize yourself with the debate so you are not caught off guard. Don’t be afraid to question the evolutionary paradigm, but be sure you understand it so that you know how to critique it.”

She has no doubt that homeschooling made her a more successful student, and partly, that was because it was so flexible. But that flexibility has a downside. Homeschooled students sometimes expect their universities to be flexible as well. She has this advice for when the student is in the last years of high school:

“The transition to college education will be much smoother if parents do these three things:

1. Administer timed tests
2. Hold the line on grades
3. Set and stick to deadlines”

Dr. Daniel Playne

Homeschooled 4-12

Computer Science B.S. (honors), Massey University

Computer Science Ph.D., Massey U.

Senior Lecturer, Massey U.

This advice comes from his mother: “At times along the journey I would stumble and doubt myself, especially when other people would criticize what we were doing, but looking back I don’t think I would change anything except that I would shut out the negative voices and relax even more.”

Sydnee Tuckett

Homeschooled K-12

After graduating (age **17**), went to Monrovia, Liberia to serve in an orphanage that helps parents from other countries adopt unwanted African children

“My parents were not all that crazy about the idea at first, but after a lot of prayer, they came around. I am so glad they did.”

Remember: YOU aren’t the one with plans for your children. The LORD is. You must accept those plans, no matter how much you don’t like them!