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Account Ability

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ENROLL

Having parents who both were career secondary educators, Johnson County Community College adjunct professor and small business owner Tony Wayne grew up being accountable.

"But, no, I was anything but destined to become an accountant," he said. "Originally, I wanted to coach and teach P.E. in high school."

Then he attended JCCC.

"The new campus had just opened, and I didn't have the academics or the maturity to go away to school," he recalled. "I liked [instructor] Wayne Mackey so much, I took him for *Intermediate* as well as *College Algebra*, and I met my future wife in his Intr

"[The University of Kansas] was a very quantitative business program back in those days, as were most big-school B-schools," Wayne said. "I wanted to get my math prerequisites out of the way at JCCC, because I needed smaller classes and more personalized instruction."

Wayne said he dropped out in 1974, but then in 1977... "while lying on the floor listening to the Boss' [Born to Run](#) on the headphones, I had an epiphany. A momentary jolt of Gestaltic creativity and brilliance: I realized the career ceiling for me was tight, absent a degree, but also realized I had learned how to work my rear off. I decided then and there to return to college."

Wayne drove to the KU School of Business to discuss its requirements and a listing of JCCC courses that would satisfy those requirements.

"On the way back from Lawrence, I stopped by JCCC and met with a counselor to get enrolled for the summer session," he said. "I actually was likely one of the first students to attend KU and JCCC at the same time."

Wayne graduated with a dual major in business administration and accounting and worked for several firms, including Arthur Andersen, before striking out on his own.

"I founded [IronHorse](#) in 1998 and pursued the dream of always wanting to be my own boss," he said. "Truth be known, I never really enjoyed working for someone else, nor did I ever really thrive running large organizations, either. I thrive on the creativity, the challenge of doing my own thing and building something. I love the business development, the sales and marketing aspects of our business and building the Ir

Teaching at JCCC only came about after he became an empty nester.

"On a whim I ventured over to the [JCCC website](#) and found my way over to the job openings page," Wayne said. "I saw that we had an opening and decided right then to apply. Teaching is in our family genes, and it was something I always wanted to try, in addition to starting my own business. Timing seemed right, and I went for it. One of the best decisions I ever made."

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So now Wayne runs his business and teaches, too. He regards both as rewards for his time spent at JCCC.

"I had no chance in my career and in life without this great place. I found myself here, and feel a strong connection to non-traditional students who, like me, maybe needed some time, some life experience to get a feel for life before attending college.

"I tell my students that JCCC is the land of unlimited second chances, and they should appreciate that aspect of the college. I had a teacher once tell me when I was a student that the top-performing students tend to be those with the need to balance heavy work and family demands with it. He said he felt they were more mature, better organized and more focused," Wayne said.

"That was my personal experience at JCCC, and I feel that if I can reach, connect and inspire the occasional student, then that's as good of a feeling one can have in life."