

NEWS RELEASE

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UW-Stout inspiring graduate Ari Ben-Ami: ‘Collaborative efforts lead to the creation of the most innovative solutions.’

Graphic design major excited to launch marketing services company

[Ari Ben-Ami’s inspiring graduate Q&A](#)

[Additional inspiring graduate Q&As](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 23, 2023

Menomonie, Wis. – After graduating with his [bachelor’s in graphic design and interactive media](#) on Dec. 17, Ari Ben-Ami is excited to move to Reno, Nev., and launch a product with his start-up company [Prosper](#), which he co-founded in March 2022 with business partners Dylan Brownstein and Taha Hasan.

“Prosper provides word-of-mouth marketing services to businesses online and in-store. We created a one-of-a-kind referral widget which can be placed on any webpage and allows consumers to share products with each other and receive rewards for it,” Ben-Ami explained.

Their company was accepted into gener8tor’s Reno-Tahoe startup accelerator and received \$100,000 in venture capital from [gener8tor](#) and Nevada’s Department of Economic Development.

“We’ve grown our business tremendously over the last few months, and we are beyond excited for everything to come in the future,” Ben-Ami said.

Ben-Ami, of Fitchburg, is interested in reaching students in the graphic design and interactive media program or who will be joining UW-Stout’s [School of Art and Design](#). “I am a firm believer in the power of working in teams and supporting each other, which starts with expanding your network as a designer and professional,” he said.

He offers his email, ariel@getprosper.io, to any designer interested in chatting.

What other design initiatives were you a part of at Stout?

I spent a considerable amount of time growing my personal ideas, projects and businesses. This proved to be one of the best decisions I've ever made, and the support I've received has been nothing short of amazing.

As a junior at Stout, I launched a clothing brand with a business partner which donated 10% of proceeds to charity. I assumed the position of creative director. The job entailed everything from sourcing fabrics, designing clothes and creating original artwork, to creating a brand identity and designing a website. I also learned a lot about product fulfillment, e-commerce and marketing. After a year of running, releasing three collections, selling out multiple products, and earning money to support myself as a student, the brand was shut down.

About eight months later, I was contacted by the same business partner to provide feedback on an idea for a new business, and perhaps provide consultation and design services. One thing led to another, and I joined the team and co-founded [Prosper](#) along with Dylan and Taha.

I am extremely excited to launch Prosper as we receive immense support and backing from the community in Nevada. All these experiences have been nothing short of career-defining for me, and I see them as a testament to what students can achieve if they budget their time wisely. I believe that my time at Stout prepared me both as a professional and a designer and led me to these opportunities.

How has Stout prepared you to work in your field?

Stout has definitely prepared me well to work in my field, at times in ways that I didn't expect. The first and most obvious way was through careful instruction and teaching of the basics and nuances of graphic design. The second and more meaningful way was through experiencing what it's like having to be resourceful in my school projects and doing things on my own. Whether that meant teaching myself a new skill or finding someone who could help me with a specific task, Stout has taught me that I am more than capable of acquiring new skills and completing tasks that I may not have been trained for beforehand.

I've come to find out that the internship program can be truly career-defining. During the summer I worked as a graphic design intern with Modernistic, in Stillwater, Minn., and I expanded my skillset tremendously. Working with real clients in a professional environment can be a lot more demanding and challenging, but it forces you to move quickly and adapt. Just like playing sports, designing for eight hours a day will improve your skills.

How has your Stout education and experience changed you?

I have gotten to know myself and my surroundings better. Being able to push myself in the professional aspect while also forming connections with the people around me proved to be instrumental to my success and overall happiness on campus.

I discovered the power of working together in groups, and I found out that collaborative efforts lead to the creation of the most innovative solutions.

Most importantly, I learned how to create new ideas and bring people together through the power of storytelling.

What stands out about your Stout experience?

My professors have greatly influenced me and pushed me to learn about design and specifically learn about myself as a designer. So many of our School of Art and Design faculty members, especially within the graphic design program, are extremely talented and knowledgeable professionals.

You can always count on them to provide constructive feedback at a high level, and they have the credentials and expertise to back it up.

Being able to interact and learn from designers who have proven track records and impressive portfolios can go a very long way for anyone studying design, as they often can provide insight and advice that designers earlier in their career cannot.

How did you overcome the challenges you faced in earning your degree?

I faced many challenges, but my struggle with academics always stands out as the biggest I've faced. In high school, I was never a hard-working student, in fact, I was consistently putting in the minimal required effort just to pass my classes.

During my first year at Stout, I spent a considerable amount of my time interacting with other students in social settings and building a circle around me, something which clearly was reflected in my grades. One day I walked into my academic adviser's office and told him I was considering switching degrees because mine seemed to have way too much homework.

The truth was that for the first time in my life, something actually required serious effort on my part. Eventually, my adviser talked me into staying in the GDIM program and giving it an honest and fair try. When I did decide to start focusing on school, I was amazed at just how fascinating my classes were and how much I was growing as a designer week by week just from applying myself. In return, producing higher level work truly made me excited about being a student and pursuing the things that interest me.

What are you most proud of as you finish your degree?

I am most proud of being able to pursue my passions and work for my own tech startup after graduation. As a designer, I find it extremely important to remain creative and perform problem-solving tasks to keep myself motivated. In that aspect, being able to oversee a product developed and manage a team of developers and designers is a dream come true for me.

UW-Stout is [Wisconsin's Polytechnic University](#), with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes. Learn more via the [FOCUS2030](#) strategic plan.

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Photos

Ari Ben-Ami with his diploma at commencement on Dec. 17.

Ari Ben-Ami. Portrait provided by Ari Ben-Ami.