

JASON KANARIS '06

# LIFE IS 24/7 FOR THE CONSUMMATE DEVELOPER

He wouldn't have it any other way

By Kim Sillcox

**J**ason Kanaris '06 discovered his passion for engineering and manufacturing early in life through the family business, Van der Graaf Inc., a corporate manufacturer of industrial equipment with operations in Canada, the U.S. and the Netherlands.

He started working in the engineering department at Van der Graaf while still in high school at CDS. Jason went on to study Electronics Engineering at Humber College and Manufacturing Engineering at The University of Ontario. Today, a decade later, he is an Electronics Engineering Technologist working in research & development at Van der Graaf.

Because of his personal connection to the company, Jason wears multiple hats and is involved in everything from developing marketing strategy, web development, photography, and video production, to engineering and manufacturing through the design and building of custom equipment – it's all part of his life.

Not one to sit idle, Jason also has his own consulting engineering practice providing technology solutions for industrial applications. In February, he and his brother, **Dimitri '10**, launched another company operating a unique shared workspace environment for the arts & culture industry in Toronto.



Always on the go, Jason makes setting up for another photo shoot appear effortless.

As a founding co-owner, he is responsible for overseeing the “maker space” where people will be creating prototypes and micro-manufacturing. It is fully equipped with CNC machinery, a recording studio, and many specialized workstations; Jason & Dimitri plan to provide the resources for people to realize their visions. Their company name, *ildsjel*, is Norwegian for the passion to do something unique and special for their community.

“We feel it really speaks to our business because we are leveraging the idea of collaboration,” Jason explains. “We want to take someone’s expertise and help them realize it in a creative manner outside of their typical workspace environment.”

Jason describes his life as very 24/7 – non-stop. He likes wearing multiple hats and wouldn't have it any other way. He also buys and sells high-end audio equipment under the brand name Kanaris Audio and

does restorations on turntables and stereos in his spare time.

Another interest is flying drones and teaching best practices. A lifelong lover of photography, Jason is often approached at work to do photography and videography for marketing purposes. When the family business recently requested a quote for drone photography, the costs were so exorbitant that the company decided to purchase their own drone. Naturally, Jason was the person chosen to fly it.

He has also generously donated his time to his alma mater. Jason was instrumental in advising CDS in the purchase of our first drone last spring, and we are incredibly grateful and pleased with the results – [www.cds.on.ca/mediagallery](http://www.cds.on.ca/mediagallery).

No one knows what the future holds, but in the case of Jason Kanaris, we can be pretty sure it will be varied, exciting and action packed. ■