##### [00:00:01.520] - Brian Shelton

If you've driven on the tollway in Chicagoland, you've certainly seen the clever billboards for Restore Hair, have you ever thought, who's the creative mind behind this? Then this episode is for you. I'm Brian Shelton and you're listening to Harper Talks, a co-production of Harper College Alumni Relations and Harper Radio today on Harper Talks. I'm excited to speak with Jacob Sadoff co-owner of Restore Hair and Harper College alumni. Jake is an active coach for the Harper College speech and debate team, which is where we met. And I've been looking forward to talking with him about serial entrepreneurship and his continuing desire to give back to Harper College. Jake joined me for the Harper Talks podcast over Zoom. All right. Hey, Jake, thanks for being here today. I appreciate it. How are you?

##### [00:00:48.230] - Jake Sadoff

I'm great. Thank you, Brian.

##### [00:00:50.720] - Brian Shelton

I'm doing very, very well. It's nice and warm today. The first half talks podcast that I've recorded where it's been warm, it's been freezing cold and everyone that I've done. So this is fun.

##### [00:01:00.320] - Jake Sadoff

Thankfully, the weather is changing here.

##### [00:01:02.040] - Brian Shelton

That's right. So tell me how you got to Harper College. You grew up in the area?

##### [00:01:06.440] - Jake Sadoff

I did. I grew up in Hoffman Estates and I went to Harper in nineteen ninety six in ninety seven. And I was always kind of like understood in my family. That's where we're going to go. And we go to Harper College and the parents were big believers in it. And so it was there was always something that we were excited and interested to do. And because we we we we knew of it and we knew people that went through and so on.

##### [00:01:34.070] - Jake Sadoff

And actually for a short period of time, my dad taught some classes at Harper College when I was a little kid. I remember running around his class. He brought it to class one time when we were probably about five or six years old. So yeah. So we knew Harper really well and we always were going to see I went to ninety six, ninety seven and then went on the Northern.

##### [00:01:58.790] - Brian Shelton

Great. That's great. So what were things like at Harper in 96-97. Obviously I wasn't there then. What was the campus like. What was the atmosphere like.

##### [00:02:06.320] - Jake Sadoff

You know I'll tell you about my first day in Harper. I'll never forget it was a very foggy day and there was no signage anywhere. That's what I remember my first impression of the school and I was like, where is building L? How do you get the building L? You can't see the letters on any of these buildings. And then so I don't know how I figured it out and something. And maybe somebody told me the big, mirrored building in front.

##### [00:02:30.620] - Jake Sadoff

And finally after this, the fog cleared a little bit. I saw L, OK. So I think in my impression of Harper at that point was it was sort of an aging campus again. So there was there we didn't we didn't have the beautiful signage that we have on campus now kind of directing people where to go in and buildings were a little bit older. And it was it's always sort of transition point. I think that the campus was probably, what, maybe twenty five to thirty years old at that point. So it was with aging. It was such a great place. We loved it. It was, it was it was still a good layout and everything else. And once you got the lay of the land there, you can you can figure out how to get from one building to the next. And I think it was at that point when when they were just starting to put computer labs in campuses and high schools. So I remember having access to to the cool new computer labs and the Internet. Wow. Maybe you didn't have Internet at home, but you could certainly go and get Internet on campus. So but it was great with the student center, of course, and and there was still a lot of good programs on campus. And I was involved with a couple of things. So, yeah, I really I really like the campus back then. But definitely a lot's changed.

##### [00:03:47.390] - Jake Sadoff

There's there wasn't, you know, all the newer buildings that we have now, there wasn't a parking garage, so it wasn't, you know, Avante in front of campus. So the gymnasium hadn't been redesigned yet. So there was a little bit aging and stuff, but it was still a really good place to take classes.

##### [00:04:08.510] - Brian Shelton

Yeah, since I've been at Harper, the amount of construction that's gone on there has just been fascinating. I always tell people that Harper never stops building and it seems like only just now during COVID that we've actually stopped construction, but we're getting ready to start again. So that's really exciting. And it's also interesting that you mentioned the student center because my colleague Shannon Hynes and the alumni office always says they like to have alumni events in the student center because it's the only building that hasn't changed in 50 years.

##### [00:04:36.680] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, that's true. Right? Well, you know, it's got a classic feel on there and it's got like a nice feel that I know that they are they're doing work there as well. But but yeah, it's it's a big campus and everything, but there's. Yeah, right. There's always construction going on the last several years. But again, when I was on campus, I don't think it was anything that would be built at that time. It was, it was at that stage kind of between things when it was starting to age, but it wasn't too bad at that point. But it's amazing the development that's gone on in the last several years.

##### [00:05:11.080] - Brian Shelton

Yeah, it's pretty amazing. You were heavily involved with the speech and debate team while you were at Harper, right?

##### [00:05:16.870] - Jake Sadoff

I was. I joined the team as a competitor when they started at Harper in 96. And I did this a couple of years. I was there and we had to really have a really good competitive team with great coaches. Coaching staff has changed a little bit, but long, really long standing coaches. One one in particular, Jeff Pryzbylo for example, Jeff was the the head coach when I was there. And he's still the head coach and director I'm friends with now. I really enjoyed being on the speech and debate team. It was a great, great way to meet new people and travel and sort to learn new skills and and to kind of break out of your out of your door a little bit and get out there to talking a little bit.

##### [00:06:04.900] - Brian Shelton

That's great. I want to you know, I'm going to kind of jump ahead on the questions I was going to ask you, because we are talking about the speech team and I see you're still involved with the speech team is as a coach. And I also know that you and your brother Jordan started a scholarship for the speech and debate team. And I just curious, what is it that drives you to continue being involved with that and also to be so involved with Harper as an alumni? Because, you know, so often when people leave the community college, they go on, they get their four year degree, and that's the school that they identify with. Right. But you really heavily identify with Harper and are very actively involved to talk to you about why you choose to continue to be involved at Harper.

##### [00:06:46.720] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, well, that you know, I think a couple things happened. One was that and I'll tell you the first thing actually that happened in terms of all of the coming back and helping out and being involved in campuses, I did go on and I competed in speech and debate after I left to Northern Illinois and I competed. And I moved back to the area and I stayed close with the coaches, Jeff Pryzbylo at the time, and Marcia Litrenta. And they really fostered a program that allowed and asked for alumni to come back and help volunteer coach.

##### [00:07:27.700] - Jake Sadoff

And I think it was really that program that really interested me. And I think that I benefited from that when I was a student. I I certainly liked the peer coaching and the sort of recent graduate coaching. So I was really intrigued by that. And I think any time somebody said to you, like, hey, we value you, we value your knowledge and your abilities and your skills, and we would like you to help somebody else and help a student. And there's something that's really compelling about that and rewarding. And it's hard to say no when somebody says we value and we want to hear, we want to hear you. We want to hear from you. We want your help. And I think that's really what we're doing in the end. And I guess that the pay it forward mentality. So I really enjoyed coming back and coaching was a volunteer position. But I mean, that's what I was looking for at that point. I was looking to to stay involved. I really like the activity. I like what it did for me and on a personal level and and I really believed in that program. And I also knew that a lot of the kids that are on campus, there's sort of sometimes greater disconnection. It's not like high school where people are a little bit more connected. So people are looking for these kids are looking for something to do.

##### [00:08:52.210] - Jake Sadoff

And I know the value of programs like speech and debate. And so I really wanted to participate and, and to be involved in. So I started coaching and we go to tournaments and and coach and judge the tournaments and really enjoyed it. It was a great extracurricular activity for me, a great creative outlet. And so I know I got as much out of it as I put into it and as much as it helped other, it helped me more. And so I did that and have done it for several years.

##### [00:09:21.910] - Jake Sadoff

I've slowed down a bit and I should say in the last handful of years and I started a family. My job has changed a little bit, but I still stay involved a little bit. But in terms of the the scholarship, I actually received a scholarship when I was a student for the speech and debate team. And it was a time where, you know, it's kind of I actually like tell the story of the cost of credit hour. And it was, I think, forty, forty one dollars a credit hour. You know, as much of a bit of a great value as it was then. It's it's still a great value now. It's one hundred and something. But it was money was a little tough back then and I got, I'll never forget, I got three hundred dollar scholarship and by today's standards, maybe that's not a lot, but that's what was available. I was thrilled that I received absolutely thrilled. The money is coming at a good time. There was three of us, three kids in my family. They're all going to college at the same time as my parents had a hard time trying to pay for all of us to go to college at the same time. So 300 bucks, was great. And I never, I never forgot that. And so, again, that's kind of on that pay it forward mentality as well, where I've done well and fortunate. I think I've gotten so lucky and stuff.

##### [00:10:39.170] - Jake Sadoff

But I, I know how that three hundred dollars impacted me and I enjoy sort of paying it forward and allowing somebody else to benefit from a scholarship. So yes, I so I started along with my twin brother who started a scholarship about 10 or 11 years ago. And it's I know it'd be helpful. It's usually one or two students a year pay their tuition or have even a few classes depending on how the money is split up. But it's something we enjoy doing and it's very rewarding.

##### [00:11:20.870] - Brian Shelton

Yeah, that's great. And we appreciate that you do that and the students do as well. I remember years ago when I graduated from college, I had won a communication award and it was a five hundred dollar cash prize and back in nineteen ninety seven, a five hundred dollar cash prize paid my rent, you know, so it made a huge difference back then. So we appreciate you doing that. Talk about the speech team. You were talking about your involvement.

##### [00:11:44.470] - Brian Shelton

I don't think a lot of people realize because I travel with the speech team on occasion, I don't think a lot of people realize the amount of practice and work that goes into that. I mean, the students are involved in that are practicing four or five days a week. They're giving up their weekends almost every weekend to go out and do tournaments. And the coaches are doing the same and the volunteer coaches as well. And it's just as competitive and just as much work as any athletic events that you would be involved then.

##### [00:12:08.690] - Jake Sadoff

You know, that's so true. It's very competitive and it's as competitive as you want to get with it. Some some kids are sort of touch and go with it and don't put lots of time into it. And they they enjoy going to a couple of tournaments and other kids get very, very competitive. And as you said, Brian, they will go to tournaments. I don't want to say every weekend, but many, many weekends and there are four or five days a week. There are at the highest collegiate level. There are students that are practicing seven days a week and going to tournaments every single weekend throughout a given semester. I think with our program where we're not maybe we're not that intense, but certainly very competitive. And, you know, you get you get out of it what you put into it, it can be very rewarding. You get some really great successes when you win at a tournament and you compete at the highest level in and then certainly at the end of the year, there's this culmination event, this national tournament where you get to travel to not this year, because a typical year you get to travel and you know, and and Harper has traveled as far away as Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. and in Florida and New York.

##### [00:13:29.930] - Jake Sadoff

So you get to travel to really cool places that these kids probably have never been to. And I know that sometimes when I travel in with them, you've traveled as well with them, sometimes these kids have never been on an airplane before and and they're flying to California, to Los Angeles to compete in a national speech competition. I mean, that's that's pretty remarkable. And that's what it does for kids confidence and for something they can put on their resume, is just incredible. I know it helped me when I was right out of college. I was I was a big, big item on my resume. And I landed a really decent job right out of college and paid well. And I know that that was a big thing that helped me get that job that was impressive to the company when I was twenty one or twenty two year old young man or woman. So but yeah, it's a lot, a lot of, to get to your point. A lot of competition, a lot of preparation. Sometimes there is two or three hours a day of practicing and it's like I think it's like any sport you can't get good at football or baseball or if you just have natural talent, but you don't practice that. You've got to practice. You've got to rehearse your speech several times over. You've got to polish it. You've got to get it ready. You know, and I think when when you watch any other politician or anybody who's giving a speech, it's not the first time they've read it. They, they have to read. Over and over again, and to get ready for it and I think back to several times in my life and given speeches and or done a presentation and everything that I learned back on speaking and everything that I teach, my coach comes back to what we teach on what is taught on speech and debate about how to practice the speech and rehearse it and how how to how to write the speech, how to make it not too long, not too short, including the right points and the right arguments that you're trying to make and using your voice the right way, adapting to your audience. It's all those things that that you that you learn on by giving a speech is something that I certainly have carried with me my whole professional career.

##### [00:15:46.730] - Jake Sadoff

And I don't know if I knew that at the time that this was something that was my life, but it really, really has been. So, yeah. Get back to your point. A lot of competition and a lot of preparation, but really, really well worth it.

##### [00:16:00.290] - Brian Shelton

So I read in your bio, right, that while you were going to school at Harper, you were in the Army National Guard or Reserve.

##### [00:16:08.870] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, I was. I was in the Army National Guard and which is a state funded branch of the military. And it was good experience. It allowed me to go to college and get my degree at the same time while I was serving and helped pay for my schooling, which again, getting back to getting back to the three hundred dollar scholarship certainly was part of the overall plan with again, it was tough for my parents to pay for college. So it was great.

##### [00:16:46.910] - Jake Sadoff

I enjoyed it. I learned alot, it built character, woke up, woke up many early mornings and the push ups and the running and sit ups and stuff like that, you know, but yeah, I was it was good I to being on campus and during the week and then there were weekends where it's Friday, Friday afternoon, and I had to get ready to go for a weekend, drill weekend as they would call it. So that was good. It was something I would definitely recommend to people if they're thinking about joining the military.

##### [00:17:20.390] - Brian Shelton

So you are what I would call and you and your brother, don't want to leave Jordan out, but you're what I would call a serial entrepreneur.

##### [00:17:29.860] - Jake Sadoff

OK.

##### [00:17:30.260] - Brian Shelton

I love talking to entrepreneurs. And when I first met you, Jeff Przybylo introduced us and he said that you were the Beanie Baby King. Now, tell me about that.

##### [00:17:43.520] - Jake Sadoff

Well, when you said I was when you started selling the cereal, I was like, oh, this can only go bad from here on. When you're a cereal, something, you're a you know, usually the next word, probably cereal is not good.

##### [00:17:54.170] - Brian Shelton

Not Killer. Not serial killer. Serial entrepreneur.

##### [00:17:57.230] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah. So so thankfully, it all got better. I guess that I guess that could be worse things. I use that term for serial entrepreneur and yeah, I guess I do sort of consider myself a serial entrepreneur. I've always been and as much my brother where we are business partners and we have been our entire career. Yeah. We've always sort of been into something, into some sort of business, and when we were in college and I don't think I was at Harper at the time, I think it was once I went to Northern. And I'll tell you, this is it's a I guess it's an endearing or cute story, but it's one that I maybe I try to a part of the business that I maybe I try to forget about because, you know, it's hard maybe it's hard to get taken seriously when you tell people you were in the Beanie Baby business.

##### [00:18:40.270] - Jake Sadoff

But it's part of me and the people who know me well know that it's it's kind of where I got my start. So I guess I should be humble about it. But, yeah, you know, I used to sell Beanie Babies and other stuff, plush stuffed animals so we would sell other stuffed animals. And Beanie Babies was was our main product. And I know you'd probably like how did you get into that? But in the late 90s, Beanie Babies were all the rage. And I don't know why. They just they were a trend and they got really hot. And I think that it was we were sort of opportunistic and we saw the ability to get involved in buying and selling them. I was in my living in my my dorm room in Northern at the time, and I saw these things on campus being sold for, you know, at the bookstore. And they were five dollars each. And I bought a few of them just because I thought they were cute and whatever. And, you know, they're kind of fun. And so I did. But then I realized that there was like a value to these things. Right? People were buying and selling them. And I couldn't believe that some of them are worth five hundred dollars or a thousand dollars. And I was like, how how can I find those? So we started sort of looking for them, putting ads out in papers and newspapers at the time, kind of before the Internet was really big.

##### [00:20:03.610] - Jake Sadoff

And we found, you know, kids or parents who had these old Beanie Babies sitting around and that we could buy for three hundred dollars and sell for three hundred and fifty dollars or four hundred dollars, make a little profit. And then we kind of know. And so it started as a hobby, but then it turned into a real business and we ran that business, believe it or not, for nine or 10 years. And we had an office, we had employees, we had and we were. On our best year we sold close to a million pieces. So it really whereas it started out as a kind of a fun little hobby or a goofy little thing on the side or whatever it really turned into, it turned into a real business for for four years. And and it was I was able my brother and I were both able to make a real income when we were in our 20s. It was great. And, you know, the fun thing about it is it was a business that you never had to take too seriously because we were selling kids stuffed plush. You know, we weren't solving the world's problems. We weren't dealing with any crisis, we were dealing with stuffed animals and, you know, people usually there was and there wasn't a lot of stress or tension in that job because, again, the nature of what we were doing. So it was it was certainly a lot of fun. And I look I would look back and smile at those at those times, but that was a lot of fun.

##### [00:21:24.570] - Jake Sadoff

So, yeah, I guess I guess it was sort of my my entree into the entrepreneurial world. And we're really giving my start there.

##### [00:21:34.380] - Brian Shelton

And you guys went on from there to start a gold buying business, right?

##### [00:21:39.090] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, kind of like right after that. It was it was kind of interesting, the kind of the timing there. The Beanie Baby business was kind of getting hit hard or our business because a few of our big customers were going out of business filing for bankruptcy, KB Toys. And and at that point, the Toys R US and a couple other big retailers that we would sell to were having problems and fjling bankruptcy. And so that really kind of took us out of the game. And that was, I think, 2008. And at the same time, the gold business kind of was dropped on our lap. So it was a great transition for us. But we, we found out that and I had no idea that gold jewelry, gold in general was worth so much money. I didn't know anything about gold. I didn't own any gold. I didn't I wasn't an investor in gold or silver. I just didn't know the first thing. But we heard that or we learned that the price of gold, the commodity sort of tripled overnight or almost virtually in a very short period time. And it was creating sort of this opportunity to sort of buy and sell old, sort of unwanted gold jewelry and coins and and other scrap metal that that consumers, with consumer gold. And we realized that there is there was this sort of dislocation in the market, if you will, or sort of an opportunity to buy from the consumer and then to have the gold melted, which is what we would do, and then sell it on the commodities market. And there wasn't a lot of people doing it at the time. And we we figured, let's give it a shot. And we tried it and um. We got a slow start. We weren't we didn't we didn't have it all figured out. There was a lot we didn't know yet how to do it. And then all of a sudden one day it just clicked. And we we really kind of found the big, some big opportunity there. And we started opening up stores. Retail brick and mortar stores throughout Chicagoland. And we opened our first one. And I think it was December of 2008. And within a few months we had three or four stores open. And then before you knew it, we had 50 stores open in Chicago. And eventually at our peak we had 90 stores, retail brick and mortar stores opened in Chicago and then we expanded to other markets. We took on a couple partners in Atlanta and then we moved to Los Angeles. We took out some other partners in Dallas and in Kansas City, Indianapolis. And at our peak, we had two hundred and twenty five total retail stores open nationwide. So it was a great, it was a great business. It lasted for five or six years, slowed down when the when the economy picked up and when the price of gold dropped, gold spiked and then it dropped, came back down again. But for about five or six years it was a great business, we learned a lot.

##### [00:24:43.170] - Jake Sadoff

We really learned a whole lot about business. And and and we just get we got a lot along the way there, got some really great employees that that then we used, stayed with us and we've kept them on for our for next business after that. But, yeah, it was it was really great. It was a great business. There's a lot of fun. There's a lot of fun. And it was intense. It was because it was kind of you know, we were doing some bigger volumes. And so it was intense. But it was yeah. It's really interesting. I learned a lot from it.

##### [00:25:17.820] - Brian Shelton

That sounds really interesting. It's a lot of employees to be dealing with in a lot of different locations. That would stress me out.

##### [00:25:24.570] - Jake Sadoff

It was, yeah. At one point we had probably three or four hundred employees at one time and it was it was quite a bit

##### [00:25:32.520] - Brian Shelton

So, all right, you can't drive through Chicago land without seeing a billboard for Restore Hair, they're everywhere. In fact, it's even become a joke on social media. I'll see them every once in a while. And I'm like, oh, look, there's somebody making fun of Restore Hair because there's so many billboards everywhere. How did you guys come to own Restore Hair is that I like the product so much I bought the company kind of thing. You know, the old razor ad or what's the story there?

##### [00:26:00.640] - Jake Sadoff

I first of all, I will say we love when when people on social media or just people kind of take jabs at the billboards and make fun of it or make comments because it's it means I guess we've kind of made it or we're we're notable enough that people talk about it. Yeah.

##### [00:26:21.400] - Brian Shelton

You're part of the zeitgeist now.

##### [00:26:22.810] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. So we like it when hear things abou that. And yeah, the billboard thing, really, it's become sort of a fun, the fun part of it, the real fun part of it. But how do we get into it? Gosh, you know, so so Jordan and I both had a hair procedure done hair restoration procedure, which you might call it a hair transplant. That's what we kind of used to call it. And we had it done with a doctor in Oakbrook. And for years after that, we stayed sort of friendly with him because we would go in and we would get a checkup or whatever, would get, you know, get a prescription for medication or whatever it was. And he saw what we were doing in the gold business. And he asked us on a few occasions if we'd be interested in partnering up with them and starting, he wanted to be in his own, have his own practice.

##### [00:27:17.770] - Jake Sadoff

He was at the time he was working for a bigger clinic, bigger company. And so he wanted to start his own and he asked us if we'd be interested in partnering up with him. And, you know, the gold business was going well. Goldmax was going well at the time. So there was really no we could we didn't have the time and so on. But then finally he asked us in 2013, I believe, and at that point we were, you know, we were winding down the gold business we saw that is coming to an end.

##### [00:27:43.330] - Jake Sadoff

And we said, you know what, maybe the time would be right now. Maybe this would maybe this would work for us. And so we started talking about it and we said, let's give this a shot. So we we did that. We partnered up with him, branched out on his own. And we started with just a small clinic in Oak Brook. And it was about late 2013 or early 2014 and just a real small office. And we were getting a couple leads, a couple of people here and there and you get a patient once, you know, a couple of a couple of patients a week.

##### [00:28:18.700] - Jake Sadoff

And we thought this would be something that maybe would take us some years to grow. And then we, Jordan and I, had the idea, probably his idea, to to get a spokesperson. And we were like how could that work and who could we get in Chicago that could be somebody notable that people would listen to and respect and trust, because this business was sort of like stigmatic, there's a stigma of getting your hair. That's something your your dad or your grandpa did. And so we wanted to break the stigma. And we're like, who are some bald Chicago guys? Chicago guys and those of your listeners who know you know, with who are spokesperson is, you know how the story ends. But we came up with a list of kind of Chicagoans who are balding or whatever. And I think the top of our list was Brian Urlacher. We sort of joked about it like because it seemed so absurd. There's no way. First of all, how can we even get a phone call with Brian Urlacher, how would that even work? What do we just look them up in the Yellow Pages? Do we do we, like, send them an email and how how you can possibly get a phone call scheduled with Brian Urlancher. He was still playing at that time. Or maybe it just retired this year. We just needed that year he had retired. But how on earth would would that happen? And so it would seem like it was really out of reach. And then what would we offer him? I mean, to be a spokesperson for us?

##### [00:29:50.590] - Jake Sadoff

You know, we're just starting up. And so long story short, we we kind of got lucky. We got an introduction to him. We knew somebody who knew him and we got a phone call with his agent and his agent said, no, thank you, click. So that was upsetting, I was like, OK, but the call was how we expected. No thank you. And then and then we called back again and we said, hey, you know what? Let's we want to talk to you a bit more. What what if we did this? What if we came up with a few ideas and then we actually gave his agent a procedure just with no strings attached. We want to give you a procedure and a chance to show you what it looks like and how it whatever it is. So the agent was standing as well. So they did a procedure nine months later. His agents hair, looks great and he went to Brian and went right to Brian. Look, this whole family, these are those guys who telling you that they want you to partner up with and advocate for them. So Brian said, let's talk. And so we started talking and one thing led to another. And we came up with a plan or a proposal that worked for him to endorse us and to do the procedure. First of all, you have done a procedure to do the procedure and to promote as an advocate for us and then and then to let us put him on 50, 60, one hundred billboards throughout Chicago and use his name everywhere, which I think I'm sure he never dreamed would happen. But, yeah, he did the procedure, maybe reluctantly, I don't know. But he did it and his results are really good. And he was like, yeah, this is great. Fast forward six or seven years later. Now he's got billboards all over the place and he couldn't be happier and he thought he would just be a retired bald Bear for years to come. And and now he's got hair again and he loves it.

##### [00:31:51.570] - Brian Shelton

It's such a great story. And then you've got several Chicago sports figures on on the different billboards. And I imagine that really helps with the stigma of it, because you're right. I mean, when you think about a hair procedure, I mean, it sounds kind of funny and like who wants to be the poster child for a hair procedure? It's like being the poster child for a hemorrhoid cream or something like, you know, you don't want to you know.

##### [00:32:12.390] - Jake Sadoff

We might have had more luck in the beginning with hermorrhoid cream than the hair procedure. Yet the hair thing is something that was it was like people were just so quiet about when I had my, I've had two procedures now, and when I had my first one, I didn't tell anybody about it for years, its kind of private. You just don't really talk about it. The thing that you want people to just think you have great hair or whatever. And but then it changed to where after we got Urlacher involved that people wanted to start talking about it because he was talking about it.

##### [00:32:42.180] - Jake Sadoff

So it became this domino effect. And it throughout the entire industry, not just with us, it's always been tough to get guys to speak out about it. And even some of the many of our competitors and some of the big, bigger national brand names have a hard time getting spokespeople. And if they only knew if they only knew that the types of athletes and actors, especially when you think of any older or aging actor, you know, in Hollywood, they have great hair. Think of the Stallones and the and the Schwarzenegger and guys like that. They've all, they've all had procedures. That's kind of part of what goes along with it. So, yeah. But it's hard to get guys to talk about it. So since then, as you mentioned, you know, I think Urlacher kind of open that door. You got you got a lot more guys interested in doing it for one and saying, hey, yeah, if Urlacher can do it and talk about it, I can, too.

##### [00:33:37.920] - Jake Sadoff

And so our second big sort of person that we got was Ryne Sandberg. And not just do it, but then endorse us. We want to talk about it. And he came to us. I think he came to us right after we launched Urlacher. He heard about it and he was like he was just coming back to Chicago at that point. He moved back here from from Arizona. And he wanted to he wanted to get back into Chicago sports scene and everything else and be involved and be notable again and and get his name out there.

##### [00:34:08.340] - Jake Sadoff

And he's like, this might be a way to do it. And he was really bald. He really wanted some hair and make you feel younger, look younger. And so he reached out to us and yeah it was great. And he's so he's had the procedure done and he looks great. I think he was he had more hair loss than Urlacher did. We gave him a great result. He's really thrilled about it. We see him all the time and he loves showing off his hair.

##### [00:34:35.190] - Jake Sadoff

And now he's the guy he works for a Marquee sports, Marquee network. And you can see him on broadcast and so on Cubs game. So he likes to talk about it. So we know. And since then, we've got a couple of other guys. We got Eddie Olczyk and Deion Sanders and recently Ian Happ from the Cubs, for those of you Cubs fans, hes one of the younger guys on the team. He's become a standout player. But you've got a bunch of notable Chicago players.

##### [00:35:07.380] - Jake Sadoff

There's Jason McKee former Chicago Bear who was Brian Urlachers teammate on the on the Super Bowl team of 07. He's done the procedure and he's promoted us. Jim Cornelissen, who who had the procedure done, and the announcer for the Blackhawks. And then we did Brian Bickel from the Blackhawks. And we've done numerous athletes from all the Chicago sports teams, the ones I just mentioned, a lot of the ones that I can mention. There's a lot that I can't mention.

##### [00:35:41.160] - Jake Sadoff

But, yeah, I wish I could. But there was there's there's a lot of guys that have a lot of big name athletes who have done it. And we're thrilled. We're honored that they come to us. Kirk Cousins is another one that we can talk about. He's done it. He's the quarterback for Minnesota for the Vikings, so, yeah, we've gotten a lot of guys and it's been great.

##### [00:36:02.660] - Brian Shelton

So with that business, I mean, do you carry around a card and every guy you meet, you look at him and say, you know what, you need our service. Is that something that you do? Because that's kind of funny, I think.

##### [00:36:10.790] - Jake Sadoff

But it is funny. And I always like I always run this like this thought, gosh, you know, if I only could be so bold as to just go right up to guys in an airport or where ever I see them and give me my card, slip it into their bag or something. Hey, this is just a hint. Just a little suggestion. But I have friends that come up, come to me and they are bald or balding and they mention and I'm like, look, I wasn't going to say anything, but yes, I can help you. I don't want to be pushy. But, you know, a couple of my really, really close friends are totally bald. And I'm like, you know, I could help, I can help you, but I try not to push. I think it's very much a personal choice that I try to be a resource and help to people who are who are thinking about it. And I really actually like, you know, what I really enjoy is when I get a lot of younger guys that come to me who are thinning or starting to thin, guys in their early 20s and they say, hey, what should I do?

##### [00:37:14.480] - Jake Sadoff

What should I do now? Maybe they're just thinning, receding hairline in the front. Should they do a procedure. And and I really like giving those guys advice because I was one of these guys and I had thinning hair and I didn't know what to do about it. And I didn't really have people give me advice and so on. But I like telling them, hey putting aside doing a hair surgical procedure. There are nine surgical therapies and medication that you can take to stop your hair loss or slow it down. And that's really the thing that most people don't know and that I wish I would have known when I was twenty five years old and starting to think and that it's not just about adding more hair and surgically adding hair, that's that's great. But it's about stopping the hair loss of your of your native or your non transplanted hair. That's equally or more important than doing the surgical procedure. So a lot of times I'll have friends that are my age or a little older, that have have kids that are 18, 20, 22 years old and they're just starting to thin out. What should I do? And I love giving them advice because I want them to be able to make good decisions on how to preserve their hair now so that maybe they don't have to come to me in 10 years to do a procedure. Also, you know, we can't help everyone. Not everybody is a candidate for this procedure. You have to have the right amount of remaining what we call donor hair in the back of your head, in the back.

##### [00:38:46.160] - Jake Sadoff

And you have to have not too much hair loss on the top. There is a lot of guys that that are have lost too much hair and don't have enough donor hair. We can't help them. So it's not just as simple as that. We can help everyone. We like to. I really like to give advice on how to preserve their original hair so that they so that maybe they don't have to do a procedure or that they just don't need too much.

##### [00:39:12.560] - Brian Shelton

That's great. So I know that you are heavily involved with the Harper College Foundation. Can you tell me about your involvement there, what you're doing?

##### [00:39:19.370] - Jake Sadoff

Yeah, so I'm on the Foundation Board, board of directors. I think this is my this is my ninth year. And they asked me to to join the committee. At first I did a committee and then from there they I was asked to to join the the Boundation Board, which I was extremely honored and, you younger guy, early thirties. And I guess it goes back to what I said earlier about what you value when somebody asks, you said, hey, we value you, we want your opinion, we want your feedback. We want we want your knowledge. We want we want you to help. And it's it's hard to say no and it's very easy to say yes. And that's what I did. And I was flattered. And so I said I would like to be involved in this. At the time, I'll admit I didn't know what it meant to be on a Foundation Board. I was very naive and sort of inexperienced. And I said, what? OK, what does that mean?

##### [00:40:20.540] - Jake Sadoff

What does it mean that I'm on a Foundation Board? And I didn't understand, but I obviously looked into it and they explained it all that. And I said, yeah, this is great, you know, and at the time I started my my scholarship and that I that I started for other students and I think the point of being on a foundation board is and again, for those of you who are like me and didn't know, the Foundation Board helps to get support for scholarships, for student scholarships, to help raise money.

##### [00:40:53.330] - Jake Sadoff

And so I at the time, I was kind of afraid. That does mean that I'm just going to be contributing more money than I am now, feel obligated, and it wasn't it was not that way at all. But I like being on the Foundation Board is we, our mission is I said is to is to help get support, raise money for scholarships for students. And I think that everybody who has the ability to do something philanthropic or to help others to do it, to try it, whatever it is, and the smallest level or the biggest level, whatever, whatever one can do is is great. I think it really is very internally rewarding to know that you can help somebody else. I feel like the time that I spend and the money, maybe the small, small scholarships I give, I really feel that I get I get so much out of it sometimes that I get more out it than the students got out of it, received a scholarship. I feel that I gave a thousand dollars for something. Five hundred dollars. One hundred dollars.

##### [00:41:59.810] - Jake Sadoff

I got more internally out of that and then they got from me. But it really is rewarding. But so I enjoy we have meetings quarterly. We have these events that we do. I'm on a few different subcommittees and one of the one of which that I'm most passionate about is the golf committee. But yeah, we do events and we do different, different things to raise money. And and we know there's a lot of helping to decide who the scholarships go to and helping to set up scholarships, endowed scholarships, which is which is a perpetual scholarship that's given out every year from somebody. One of the things I like the most about it is it's a way to a lot of people use scholarships, a lot of donors and scholarships is a way to sort of honor a loved one maybe who's passed. And so they set up a scholarship in memory of somebody so that that person's has a legacy. So if you set up an endowed scholarship that lasts for or that you set up with a certain amount of it to start with, that produces money, that creates a gift of scholarship every year for a different student that never goes away, it generates interest, interest revenue, that scholarship that never goes away.

##### [00:43:18.830] - Jake Sadoff

So with one gift, if you're if you're able to give a certain amount of gifts, can create an eternal indefinite scholarship that every year student is getting in the name of whoever you want to leave it, memory of create a legacy for. So, yeah, that's great and again very, very rewarding. It's great work. And I just met great people on the foundation board. I've met a lot of the guys got to know Dr. Endor very, very well and with my foundation work and he's a great guy and I've met Dr. Proctor and she's amazing as well. And it's just been a great experience. And they keep asking me to come back. And it's hard to say no because because of everything I get out of it and because I really feel valued.

##### [00:44:09.320] - Brian Shelton

That's great. We really appreciate you doing that work. I just wanted to ask before I let you go, what advice would you give to a current or maybe incoming Harper student how to make the best of things?

##### [00:44:20.000] - Jake Sadoff

I think and this is one thing that I think maybe just in my in my time, I've really become a big proponent of education. I mean, how can you not? And in terms of running my own businesses, I realized, I learned that education can continue, the ongoing education. Higher education is so important to get that edge. A lot of people have associates degrees, alot of people with bachelor's degrees. Not too many people have master's or MFAs or MBA degrees or PhDs.

##### [00:44:54.590] - Jake Sadoff

And so my message is, is to just continue on. Go as far as you can with it. And it's something I didn't do. I got my bachelor's degree. I did not go on and get a degree after that. I didn't get a Masters or an MBA. I really wish I would have. I feel that there's a lot of knowledge that I'm lacking or could have if I would have gotten an MBA, for example, in business. And so I really feel that the time to do it is now when you're when you're young and before you've gotten too far along in your career and maybe have started a family. I feel like at this point it's probably too maybe I'm too old or whatever to go back. But do it while you can, while you are young, go on and get the bachelor's degree after you graduate from Harper, go on to get your bachelors. And if you can get that Masters MBA, go to law school if you can. If you're able to. There's a lot of really good programing again, Brian , we talked about scholarships. There's a lot of good scholarships that are out there, at least four-year university and even beyond that, to get your to get a college degree. So take it as far as you can to get you know, once you have that degree, they can't take it away from you. You always have it. It's something that you've always got. If you get it, if it takes you two years after your bachelors to get a masters degree or three years, whatever.

##### [00:46:25.250] - Brian Shelton

That's right.

##### [00:46:25.850] - Jake Sadoff

You have that on your résumé forever. And it will always help you to get a better job. Whatever, getting to get a promotion, hopefully earn more money. Certainly that's important. Do better things, do things that are more rewarding for you. And you have that opportunity when you're when you're young and you're still in the education minded mindset to do that. So that that is my very best advice that I can give anybody is going to take your education as far as you can before going out there and working with you, not the rest of your life for all sorts of years to be out there working. Trust me, it's there. They're not going away. Take your education.

##### [00:47:07.520] - Brian Shelton

Yeah, it's always so hard to do it afterwards, especially after you've started a family and sort. And I always admire when I have students who, you know, they they have a job, they have a career, they have a family, and they're going back to school and taking classes. And it's like, man, that takes a lot of dedication and a lot of work.

##### [00:47:22.040] - Jake Sadoff

And I've never done it. So I mean, I haven't gone back, but I can only imagine how hard it is. And I do have a family, so I can only imagine what it would be like to try to juggle work, family and going back to college to get a degree. So, yeah, do it. Do it while you can.

##### [00:47:35.840] - Brian Shelton

Well, Jake, thank you so much for being here today. Really appreciate all the work that you do with the Harper speech team and with the Harper College Foundation. That work is very much appreciated and very much needed and your saint for doing so.

##### [00:47:48.440] - Jake Sadoff

So thank you. That's very nice. I appreciate. Well, thank you for thank you for indulging me on this. I do you appreciate. Appreciate that and I like talking. Yeah. Thanks again. Thanks for having me on the program and appreciate you.

##### [00:48:01.670] - Brian Shelton

Jacob Sadoff is co-owner of Restore Hair and a 2010 recipient of the Harper College Distinguished Alumni Award. If you're enjoying Harper talks, please subscribe. And while you're at it, rate and review us so that others might find us. Harper Talks is a co-production of Harper College Alumni Relations and Harper Radio. Our show is produced by Shannon Hynes. Our technical producers are Erik Bonilla Sanchez and Mary Renner. Our theme music was created by Aidan Cashman. I'm Brian Shelton. Thanks for listening.