



Fermentation Science and Technology industry instructor finds his passion in the science of brewing

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By [SOURCE Contributor](#)

By Elizabeth Holland



Charlie Hoxmeier at the Gilded Goat Brewing Company

Charlie Hoxmeier ('09, '14), born and raised in Fort Collins, grew up with the craft brewing industry that thrives throughout our town. Originally devoting his studies to political science, he quickly realized that his true passion was science, which he found while a student at Colorado State University. He turned his passion into business as owner of the Gilded Goat Brewing Company, and now as an instructor in CSU's Fermentation Science and Technology Program. It all started with his major in microbiology.

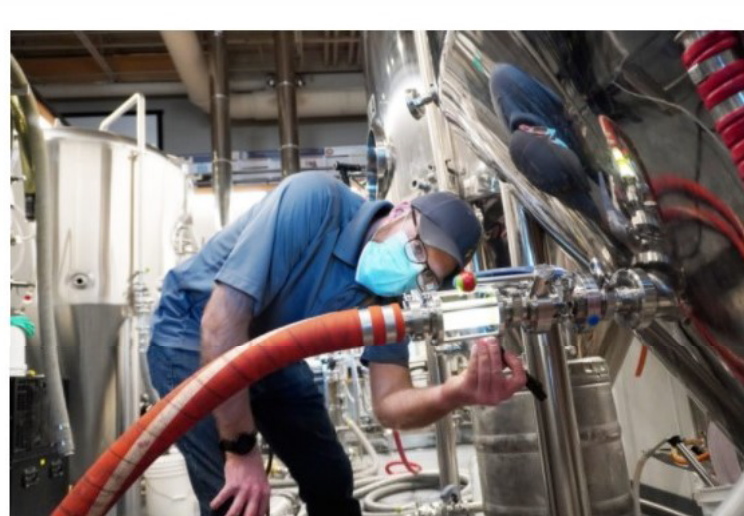
"After taking an extremely engaging human health and disease course taught by the late Gerry Callahan, I changed my major to microbiology, and everything fell into place," Hoxmeier said. "This transition should not have been unexpected for me though, because I spent my childhood collecting rocks and bugs, asking for chemistry sets for birthdays, compulsively organizing and cataloging my collections; I had always been a scientist really."

Hoxmeier's transition into microbiology and infectious disease came naturally, and he enjoyed the next few years of his undergrad degree because the topic and material mirrored his personality and interests.

Education at CSU

After completing his undergraduate degree, Hoxmeier went on to study as a graduate student under Karen Dobos in the Mycobacterial Research Laboratory at CSU. With a fresh Ph.D. in hand, he went to work as a postdoctoral scientist at the Fort Collins Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Near the end of his appointment, he was faced with a big decision; re-enter the academic world, stay with the federal government or enter private industry. Hoxmeier chose the third option and decided to try turning his beer-brewing hobby into a business.

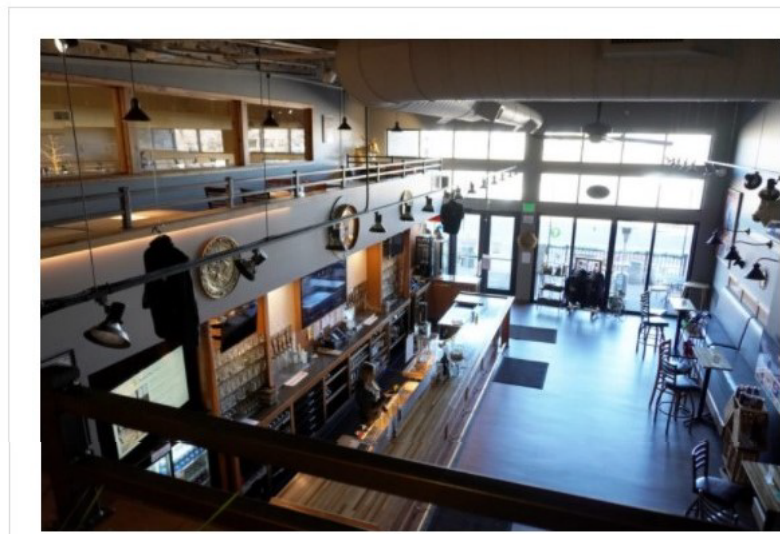
"There is so much science in brewing, the chemistry of the mash, the microbiology and biochemistry of fermentation, that I was able to apply a decade of training as a scientist to my beer brewing," Hoxmeier said. "And so began the next important transition of my career, from an infectious disease researcher to brewer. In early 2017, I opened Gilded Goat Brewing Company with my family."



Launching the Gilded Goat

Teaming up with his father, a former associate dean in the CSU College of Business, Hoxmeier traveled across Europe to visit taprooms and pubs, drawing inspiration from both the brews and the pub atmospheres.

"Many of the places we liked used warm wood to decorate with cozy and comfortable seating, and the owners were often behind the bar or out chatting with regulars. There was a sense of community at these pubs, a sense of welcome and ease that we needed to create in our own neighborhood pub," said Hoxmeier.



The Gilded Goat opened its doors after months of planning and construction.

"The brewery has two distinct vibes: heavy manufacturing where things are serious, potentially dangerous, and critical things be done accurately," said Hoxmeier. "Then, to balance this out after the work is done, the brewery becomes our hangout. After a long, physically demanding day in the brewhouse, I spend a few minutes chatting with a regular or someone coming in for the first time, and feel immense pride and validation for the blood, sweat, and tears that have gone into this business because of a short conversation with someone who appreciates all that we do here."

"I have had a very rewarding and challenging time running this business with my family," said Hoxmeier. "I couldn't have done any of this without the talented and passionate team we have put together, and I'll apologize to them publicly here for still learning how to be a manager. Altogether, we've built a solid and sustaining business around our love of beer and this town."

Teaching in Fermentation Science and Technology

Hoxmeier felt destined to follow his father's footsteps into academia, and his enjoyment from teaching and mentoring students during graduate school seemed to solidify this path. He rejoined the academic world by becoming an industry instructor in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition's Fermentation Science and Technology Program. He loves being able to relate information in a useful way to students.

"After opening the brewery, I volunteered to host students for their final seminar projects and numerous internships, and as guest lecturer and industry panelist," he said. "I knew I wanted my foot in the door of the rapidly growing Fermentation Science and Technology Program. After years of volunteer work and networking, I was asked to teach a course in the department. I've probably learned more in the past few semesters than my students have, but I love every minute of it."

The [Fermentation Science and Technology Program](#) is in the [Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition](#), part of CSU's [College of Health and Human Sciences](#).

TAGS ASSIGNED TO THIS STORY

ALUMNI

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