

Order One: Kuppa Joy and a side of football

* Samantha Washburn | Entertainment Editor *
swashburn@therampageonline.com

Zack Follett grew up knowing one thing, and that was football. Getting drafted into the NFL was his only end goal.

After studying landscape architecture at the University of California, Berkeley in hopes of designing golf courses, he entered the 2009 NFL draft and was selected in the seventh round, pick 235 by the Detroit Lions.

Sadly, only after two seasons, Follett's career was cut short after suffering a career-ending head-to-head collision with a New York Giants player in MetLife Stadium, formerly known as New Meadowlands Stadium.

"It happened so fast that I had to stop playing. I was 21 years old and in the blink of an eye it was gone," Follett said.

While in the United Kingdom on a mission trip, Follett was reading his Bible when he felt a higher spirit instructing him to return home and spread his love of coffee and faith.

He saved up the money that he received from the NFL and opened his first Kuppa Joy, a local coffee shop, in Old Town Clovis in December 2012 at just 24 years old.

Follett's work ethic came from watching the leadership roles in front of him his whole life. His father instilled that ethic into him, teaching him how to save money and invest it when needed.

"Most business owners weren't getting up at 5:30 a.m. every day running drills with a trash can next to their stations because they were going to throw up," Follett said.

Going from being told what to do every day to having to be the person telling people what to do is a major step up that he never expected in his life.

With passion and excitement in his voice, Follett explained just what this new chapter does for him.

"My role now is to embrace the CEO role, which I never wanted. But, I'm learning now that as a CEO, when I'm in a meeting I respond with the fire in me and it tends to dampen things and just being aware of that can be humbling and results in humility and apologies," Follett said.

It took Follett almost three years after the Clovis cafe opening to receive enough revenue to open the second location in Fresno.

If any students ever go inside the Fresno location, right across the street from Fresno High School, people might notice the white throne with pictures surrounding it, which is called The Bible Project, which consists of a cartoon depiction of The New Testament.

When one orders a coffee, whether iced or hot, they might notice the throne or the picture depiction on the cups.

The picture consists of the throne which symbolizes the chair of God, next to it you have the throne room of God, and to finish you have a picture of Revelations 4 with the creatures of seraphim.

The website displays several apparel options that range from the throne to different phrases ranging from "The Gospel" to actual bible verses.

They also have an employee at the Old Town Clovis location who is like a "bread whisperer" who makes the sourdough bread in-house every day so it can have that authentic home feeling.

Follett, just like many other business owners, was hit by COVID-19 restrictions. This change forced him to adapt his playbook.


"Customer service has been the worst and the best since COVID-19. I'm human, so I get it. People can be hard, but at the same time, that is why we got into this business," Follett said.

As of January 2024, Kuppa Joy has seven locations, which include two drive-thru-only. There are hopes of an eighth location opening in Visalia by the end of the year and a third drive-thru in Fresno.

"I'm just a believer in doing things right. Go over the top, deliver the customers the best in everything you can and you will win," Follett said.



The first Kuppa Joy Coffee Shop opened its doors in 2012 at Old Town Clovis. Photo taken on Jan. 25 by Michael Lin

 Fresno City College
Psychological Services

Group Therapy



SCAN ME



All groups are located in SC-216
(2nd floor of bookstore)

For more info or to join a group, scan
the QR code or call psych services
(559) 443- 8687

**Call 9-8-8 (National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline) for 24/7
crisis counselor support.
Or text HOMEto 741-741
for Crisis Text Line**