

# UC Davis alumni combine art, real estate with Caldecott Properties

## Andy Read and Michael Mandell discuss their partnership and connection to the community

**By: KATY BERREY**

**Posted: 8/2/07**

When Andy Read met Michael Mandell in kindergarten in 1978, no one could have guessed how much their relationship would grow and develop. The UC Davis alumni now own and manage their own Oakland-based real estate firm, Caldecott Properties.

Read and Mandell grew up together "listening to Blue Oyster Cult and programming Apple II computer games," Read said. They graduated from UC Davis in 1996, Read with degrees in sociology and philosophy and Mandell a degree in economics.

After the friends graduated, Read went into the advertising field.

"Advertising was a perfect job out of college as you get to learn a lot about different industries" he said. Learning about various fields was important too, since his majors did not automatically lead to specific occupations.

After spending time in corporate advertising and a startup business that fell short of success in San Francisco, Read moved to New York. The city was not right for him, though.

"A New York minute is much faster than a California minute," Read said. He left New York for Oakland, near his hometown of Orinda, Calif.

While Read was exploring advertising, Mandell delved into the legal world at the University of California Hastings College of the Law.

He graduated in 2000 and worked in private practice for five years with Archer Norris in Walnut Creek. There he worked in real estate law before starting Caldecott Properties with Read in 2005.

"Years of working for other people gave me the confidence to work for myself," said Mandell.

When the two started Caldecott Properties, they wanted to create a "non-traditional office environment" to fit in with the neighborhood and give the business a flowing workspace, Read said.

The two chose AfterImage + Space to design their Oakland office. The architecture company focuses on "creating dynamic spaces by integrating the powers of light and architecture."

The building has no cubicles or closed-off areas to promote cohesiveness throughout the office.

In addition to housing their real estate office, the building serves as a gallery for local artists.

"We wanted to give [the neighborhood] something to be proud of," Read said.

The building's lofted open space is the perfect atmosphere for a gallery. Since Read and Mandell showcase local artists, it also helps connect Caldecott Properties to the community.

Currently, a display of UC Davis alumnus Alan Tarbell's work hangs on the walls.

"I hope to relay the deeper connection that we have to our planet and each other," Tarbell stated in his biography on the Caldecott website.

The art not only symbolizes a connection to the earth, but also a connection between business and community that has served Caldecott Properties well.

Read said he is pleased with what Caldecott Properties has done so far, and plans to open a second office in Lafayette or Orinda. They're not stopping at offices, either - the two are always looking for real estate investments.

Even 10 years after graduating, Read maintains the "Go Ags!" mentality. Read said he advises UC Davis students to take classes that interest them, pursue internships and keep an open mind.

Read added how important it is that he and Mandell are able to distance themselves from each other outside of work, but that it's nice to have a partner he knows he can trust.

In all, the innovative approach to real estate seems to be working for Caldecott Properties.

"I think we're on to something," Read said.

KATY BERREY can be reached at [features@californiaaggie.com](mailto:features@californiaaggie.com).

---

© Copyright 2007 The California Aggie