Anthony Conn ’17
AJC Enterprises

Anthony Conn ’17 has owned AJC Enterprises, a franchise of Image One, since he was 16 years old, but as Anthony tells it, he has been around the commercial cleaning business since he was five. That is because Image One, which has 95 franchises, is a business built by his father, which has employed his mother, brother, an aunt and a cousin at various times. That is not to say that Anthony has it easy. As is the case with most entrepreneurs, he works many long hours in addition to being a full-time student, sometimes sleeping only three or four hours at a time. He may have started in this business because of his family, but Anthony is bringing his own ideas to his company. Anthony’s business plan is “to provide the best possible service to the client to sustain customer satisfaction.” His customers have movie theatres, real estate firms, shops, and office buildings. They have told him that some of his competitors have not continuously delivered the level of cleaning he provides. Anthony, therefore, wants to develop his business to fill the niche that concentrates on service to the customer, making sure that they are happy with the level of service he is providing.

Being a franchise owner, he has been able to take advantage of Image One advertising and referrals to his business, which allows him to focus his attention on other aspects of the business. He hires and trains his own employees, meets with customers, orders supplies, takes care of billing and payroll, and other operations of a small business. He also has the freedom to cultivate new accounts in addition to the referrals he gets from Image One. This year he has added enough clients to increase his billings 250% from last year, and believes that in two years, when he is no longer a full-time student, he will triple that figure. Enrollment in the entrepreneurship minor at Lake Forest College has helped reinforce what he does in his business. Does he expect to be doing this in ten years? He admits that is a little bit further in the future than he has thought – but acknowledges that running a franchise company like his father is a possibility!