

Alumnus of the Year

MICHAEL DAVIDSON '86



Michael Davidson has dedicated his life to transforming the lives of the patients he comes in contact with—individuals who have suffered limb-loss and whose bodies are incomplete. However, with the talents and skills God has blessed him with, he is able to make them whole again.

Graduating with the Class of 1986, Michael continued to Pacific Union College as a pre-engineering major. But this did not give him a sense of mission and purpose or feed his passion. During a break from college, his older brother shared with him his homework from a biomechanics class taught by an orthoptist with an engineering degree. Michael was instantly hooked and changed majors. He later changed schools and went to California State University, Dominguez Hills—the

only school in California that offered a degree in orthotics and prosthetics at that time.

Currently, Michael is Clinical Manager of the Department of Orthotics and Prosthetics at Loma Linda University (LLU). When asked to describe his average day at work, Michael said, "I get to manage a lab that produces 2,200 medical devices a year. I have nine employees and 57 students who work with me to provide these devices to individuals with limb loss or injuries to extremities or spine. Every day we get to explore new technologies of bionics and 3D printing to provide these services with better outcomes."

Michael's God given talents and skills have afforded him the privilege of working with Paralympic champion, Rudy Garcia-Tolson, a young man born with pterygium syndrome—a rare birth defect in which webbing of the skin limits mobility. Rudy was told he would never walk or run, but that did not stop him. When Rudy was 8-years-old, he started running 5K races, then sprint triathlons, and later Olympic distance triathlons. In 2012, Michael had the privilege to see him compete at the London 2012 Paralympic Games where he won a silver medal in swimming. Rudy has been an inspiration to many people, and today Rudy is helping Michael create a biomechanics lab to study sports and limb-loss.

Along with his job at LLU, Michael is working towards earning a Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Sciences. One of his areas of study is the RONI arm, a project to develop a low-cost bionic arm that can be rapidly fabricated anywhere on the planet. The idea is to provide regionally-relevant technology to those of limited financial resources. Michael also works with the LLU Health organization, PossAbilities, an organization that works to reintegrate those with physical disabilities into the community. "I love helping people," says Michael. "It gives me a sense of purpose. My job makes me whole."

Michael and his wife, Karen, who he met while attending MBA, presently live in Calimesa, CA, with their three boys. MBA is proud to recognize Michael Davidson for his life of service to mankind, and his dedication to transforming the lives of others.