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"I was always in love with my bike. I lived on my bike; it was my world. As I got older, I was able to ride places. I grew up in Long Beach, and I did everything on my bike. Now I'm in real estate management and investment; that was much earlier than the birth of my other business, Professor Pedals, but I'm still very passionate about bike riding.

The original reason for the business, the spark so to speak, was when my son was a little over 3 and I was working with him on his little Diego bike. For some reason, don't know why, we decided to take off the training wheels. At 3½, he learned on his own to ride a bike. I didn't do much.

That kind of triggered neighbors who saw him at such a young age learning to ride a bike. They thought I was a guru. I really wasn't. He was ready, he wanted it.

I still kind of live by that idea. When we are teaching students now, the only thing that's really challenging to teach someone is interest. I can't make you learn to play mah-jongg or golf if you don't want to. If a kid has to be dragged out of the car, it's probably not going to be the greatest experience. I'm more patient than many, but what's important is that I wasn't the parent, which gives the kid a teacher-student relationship. It can be much better than a parent-child relationship, where helmets could be flying, kids could be crying, moms and dads could be screaming and yelling. It's a big deal. Sometime later, after teaching a bunch of neighbors' kids, I said maybe there is something here. I loved this idea of incorporating bike riding and teaching and helping people, so I started this more formally as Professor Pedals. We quickly expanded; at one point we had eight locations. It took a rewarding turn into helping kids and adults with special needs - autism, vision impairment, developmental issues. We had a parent of a child with serious developmental issues who wrote on our website that we did 'God's work.' I could never imagine anyone would say that. Just when we think we've seen the most unique situation, there's more. Yes, I'm still in real estate, but nothing in my life is as rewarding as this school, this service."

— Steve Finkelstein, Plainview

