



Oliver's Annual Newsletter Issue #3 -

Dear Family & Friends,

Another year has passed with COVID, and it seems like the end of COVID is right around the corner (I hope). At least it looks like we've been able to adapt to the ever-changing climate, and we've started to go out more but also play it safe with the newfound vaccines and ever-growing experience navigating COVID. Alas, while the entire world was still in global lockdown, a lot happened in the Collins household. Here's just a snippet of what happened during 2021:

- Started a new job at DoorDash
- Vacationed across the country (in six different states!)
- Adopted a dog
- Moved Jessica across the country
- Passionately degraded my golf game

I've learned from reading in Elementary school that picture books are always king when reading. So I've tried to include as many visuals scattered throughout this newsletter to help make this read less dull.

I'm hoping you'll enjoy this read. As always, I'd love to hear from you, what you're up to, and any feedback you might have about the newsletter. Feel free to reach out to me at olivercollins29@gmail.com. I'm always looking to reconnect with old, new, and soon-to-be new friends. And, if you're in the Seattle/D.C. area, I'd be more than happy to meet up in person too.

Happy New Year!

Travel

Since the start of COVID, I've been lying low when it comes to traveling. However, after being locked up at home for almost a year, I've decided to start traveling again. So, in early February, I flew out to Honolulu with nine other people (two more later joined) and rented two homes for a month in beautiful Kailua. We all worked remotely, getting up anywhere between 5 AM and 8 AM to do our day jobs and then surfing, hiking, and exploring the entirety of Hawaii after work. It was arguably the best two and a half weeks of my life, and I made so many friends along the way. Hopefully, I'll find some time to do something similar this upcoming year.

Soon after returning, I went on several trips with both family and friends. A group of eight or so guys I regularly golf with started our first annual golfing trip.



Hawaii Group

along the trip.

Only two weeks later, I traveled back to LA for a work trip, and then a month later, I went with Jessica to visit some friends and make a trip down to SD for a morning to see the sea otters and grab brunch. After being to LA a handful of times, I still am amazed at how large the city is and how many different things exist across southern California.



Our housemates in Hawaii

We packed two cars with our clubs and some beer and trekked to Bend, Oregon, for three days of golf. Towards the tail end of the trip, I was more eager to go back home than to hit my next tee shot, but it was fun getting to try new courses and hang out all together outside of Seattle.

Next, I flew down to LA to take a train ride back up to Seattle with my family. We rented “rooms” in Amtrak’s Coastal Starline and got to see the stunning views of California’s coast and the PNW throughout a three-day train ride. While my dad was not a fan, it was good quality time with some great food, company, and views accompanying us



After Jessica moved out to DC for work, I've been finding myself traveling back and forth to see her. DoorDash has a tiny office in DC, but I've made it work and have slowly started to reacquaint with old friends. DC is a beautiful city with an abundance of things to do — which neither Jessica nor myself have found the time to do yet. I plan on spending more time in DC this coming year, but I can't wait to visit all of what DC has to offer.

Work

After about a year at Store No. 8, our project and team slowly transitioned over to Walmart's larger organization. This transition meant that our processes slowed down, people moved to different teams, and our project roadmap continuously shifted with the ever-growing politics playing a prominent role. A couple of months into this transition, Walmart had extensive layoff sessions, which demoralized our organization beyond relief. Half of our org had left or had been displaced within three months.

After preparing for interviews and looking for my next role, my mentor at Walmart, Yi, who had just found a job at DoorDash, wanted me to come with him on his team. I applied for the role, interviewed, and received my offer in early February. A month later, I joined the team.

I was hired as a software engineer — specifically a backend engineer — to work on DoorDash's gift card service. I wasn't on that project for very long before I transitioned over to the Shipping team. Shipping is a new vertical within DoorDash, where we partner with dozens of famous merchants across the U.S. and enable these merchants to ship their products nationwide. Shipping is a very new and extremely exciting project to work on.

Unfortunately, after joining the team, we lost a few engineers. So it ended up being just myself and my mentor Yi working on the entirety of the MVP only a couple of months before our deadline. Thankfully, with a bit of patience, we could complete the project and launch the new service to the 20+ million customers at DoorDash. A few months later, we hired two more



engineers to join our team (Jason and Dinesh) and launched a follow-up service with many new features, including schedule ahead, merchant education, and accurate shipping etas. We launched that a month ago and have many more new features in the pipeline.

DoorDash has been the most fast-paced environment I have worked in my career, and I've learned a tremendous amount in the eight months I've been here. I'm thankful I get to work with some brilliant people, can work cross-functionally, and see many different aspects of DoorDash's business.

Aside from DoorDash, I finished my fellowship at DS4A, helped win an election for Mikie Sherrill in NJ-11 through Bluebonnet Data, and have been in-and-out of working on multiple startups/projects. While DoorDash has been keeping my hands full, I'm hoping to find some time this year to get more involved with Bluebonnet, expand on one of my new startup ideas, and take on more volunteer/networking opportunities across the country.

Family

After a long-fought battle with Prostate cancer, my father passed away early morning on August 13th. He had been progressively getting worse month over month since the beginning of COVID, and in the middle of July, he became very ill. His brother flew in, and we all took time off from work to spend time with him before he passed. While it was a sorrowful time, we were lucky to have all the family and support around us to help with the healing.

One of the things we did to help with the healing process was getting a new dog. When my dad became severely ill, our neighbor got a new dog named Riley. Riley was only a few months old and would constantly bark in the morning, and my mom fell in love. She told my dad before he passed that we were getting a new dog, and so when he did, I



Señor Choppy & Frost



Picking up Señor Choppy



Mom meeting Señor Choppy

decided to get her a dog that was just as lovable as Riley. Señor Choppy has been such a rascal but loves my mom to no end and has been great company for her. They are always traveling together to new parks, going for car rides, and even having Pupachinnos together. Unfortunately, even though I brought Señor Choppy home, he doesn't want anything to do with me and actively avoids me. So it's a work in progress, but we'll learn to get along soon enough.

Besides my father, everyone in the family has been ok. June entered her Senior year at Kamiak and has applied for Job Corps — a program to train graduating seniors for the workforce — and several other job placement programs across the country. Adam graduated from UW with his Bachelors in Atmospheric Sciences and got a job from Google as a software engineer (which he'll be starting in March 2022). And my mom is still working in the Mukilteo School District as the Attendance Manager for the district. She has also been traveling the world to meet up with friends & family since my Dad's passing. Finally, Abuela had surgery to remove her Colon cancer and another surgery to patch up her Stomach almost six months later. She's doing great but requires a lot of TLC from her grandchildren.

Jessica has also been doing well. She graduated from Yale earlier this year, started her first full-time job as an Associate at Kobre & Kim (a Law firm), and moved out to Washington D.C. We've also been going on lots of trips together in-and-around Seattle which has kept us exceptionally busy. We've been spending a lot of time together which each other's families, visiting each other across the country, and having many Facetime calls, but we have a lot in store for 2022.

Activities / Other

After another year of spending time at home, my hobbies have stayed relatively the same. I'm still golfing year-round, playing tennis, and hanging out with friends. However, I did start listening to podcasts, playing chess, and writing more frequently, which have all been great hobbies I've acquired over the year.

I'm still trying to golf at least once a month, which has helped me improve my golf handicap by over 10 points over the year. I've played at a handful of courses in the Seattle area, but my "home" course right now has to be the Lynwood Golf Course. While Harbour Pointe is by far the closest golf course and the most beautiful course I've played on, you can't beat the \$15 super twilight discounts in Lynwood.

I've also upgraded my PC to play games online with some friends. However, I've only started to dabble with new games this year, so I'm looking for some recommendations. My go-to games right now are Phasmophobia, Left for Dead 2, and War Thunder. It's been an excellent way to have fun during the pandemic and get closer with many old and new friends.

When I'm in DC, I often walk the mile or so walk to the DoorDash office. Instead of listening to music, I started listening to podcasts. My favorite is No Stupid Questions. Although I find the title quite misleading, I find the hosts insightful in answering some questions that most people don't have, but most of us are curious about. Listening to podcasts has also made me realize how popular podcasts have become over the past couple of years. Still, I'll continue listening to more podcasts and am always open to more recommendations.

I'm going to start looking into a few new hobbies this year to see if I find a secret passion. So let me know if you have a hobby that is easy to start/join during COVID or if you're looking for a friend to join your club!

Conclusion

2021 has to be one of the most challenging years in the past couple of years. However, the best part is that there were still many ups and made it together to the end of the year.

As a yearly tradition, I'd like to revisit my goals from last year and see if I could hit them. My goals last year were:

1. Read 25 biographies this year (five of which have to be biographies)
2. Become more organized and structured at work by documenting projects in an exclusive location (using Notion).
3. Take better care of my body by going to the doctor once a year, Dentist twice a year, Optometrist once a year, and Chiropractor once a year.

While I lacked in the reading portion, I'm glad I could complete the other two goals, and I hope to continue my goals for the following years.

After spending time in DC, I get to visit many museums. None of which I get to see more often than the National Portrait Museum. Only two blocks away from the DoorDash office in DC, I get to go in for a quick 5-10 minute walk for lunch, in between meetings, or right before work. It's been so great to learn about so many different people — many of which — I sadly hadn't heard of. Because of this passion for individuals and their life contributions, I want to spend some time this year reading about what makes successful people tick and how they work best. Therefore, a few of my goals will revolve around this specific topic.

Nonetheless, my goals this year are:

1. Study and take the Series 65 & 7
2. Build & establish a network in DC
3. Read ten biographies of past leaders
4. Develop and lead the Learn & Grow program at DoorDash
5. Study for the GMAT and score 650+ by EOY
6. Shadow three inspirational leaders and learn what makes them great operators

I'm hoping 2022 is better than 2021, but regardless, I know it'll be one for the books! I'm excited to see everything we'll accomplish this year.

Happy Holidays

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Oliver".