



# WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Insider Profiles

## Magic Touch



"Living an illusion in the best city in the world."

In the past decade, [Josh Norris](#) reveled in the D.C. nightlife scene before finally making the leap to being a full-time magician. Whether he was bouncing at Cafe Citron, waiting tables at Chi-Cha Lounge, or bartending at Tom Tom, Norris developed a secret knowledge of the best nightlife spots in town, all while setting the stage for his career in magic.

Today, Norris, who has been acknowledged as one of D.C.'s "best performing artists" by Washington City Paper, is set to conjure a livelihood he only dreamed of in Capitol City. In his words, he's "living an illusion in the best city in the world." After graduating from the University of Maryland in 2005 with a business degree, then working at a tech consulting company for a time, Norris finally decided to "give magic a shot for one year and see how it goes. ... After two months, there was no looking back."

To date, he's performed over 2,000 live shows, including one at Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder's home, where the whole team came out to celebrate and watch Norris perform.

Norris attributes his success to his parents. "They always taught me to go after whatever it was I wanted in life," he says. "I think a lot of parents don't allow their kids to pursue their dreams; instead, they encourage them to 'get a job' and 'have a backup plan.' But my parents supported and encouraged me and never once told me to 'get a real job.'"

It's a good thing, because not only is Norris now doing what he loves most, but he's also finding there's a big demand for his talents. As a professional magician, Norris performs primarily at corporate events — for the likes of Deloitte, Booz Allen Hamilton, Lockheed Martin, Philip Morris, Barclays and Hughes Network Systems — as well as at high-end social events, all under the name Max Major. Using his gift to inspire children of all ages, Norris also performs volunteer shows for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the American Cancer Society and Ronald McDonald House.

"Magic is my passion," says Norris. "It's what I've known I wanted to do since I was 10 years old. Now, I get paid to do what I would do for free."

Fortunately, Norris started his company, [Interactive Magic](#), in "one of the best cities for startups." Norris loves what a networking town D.C. is. "Striking out on your own is something people really support here. As soon as you mention what you do, someone almost immediately mentions who they could introduce you to."

And more than that, D.C. is a place you can really call home, says Norris, who's lived here all his life.



Spirit of brotherly love.

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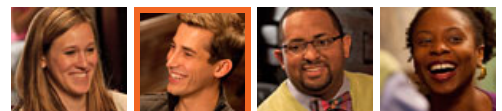


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"Despite being the nation's capital, it really is a small town, and there's a strong sense of community."

In addition to weekly performances at Madhatter, Norris also presents shows every week at the Hotel Helix near Logan Circle, his favorite neighborhood in D.C. "It is full of life — [it] has a vibrant social scene and some incredible food."

When he's not performing magic, Norris can be found at [Tryst](#), "an incredible coffee shop in Adams Morgan," or at [Mandu](#) in Chinatown after a show. "Not only is this one of my favorite restaurants in the city, but they also serve a full menu very late, which is rare."

One of Norris' favorite things to do before heading home is to drive by the monuments of the National Mall at night. "It's incredible how a city so full of life and congestion during the day can be so deserted at night," he says. "The monuments have an entirely different feel, and there's something calming about the stillness of the city at night."

[Check out Josh's D.C.](#)



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