

# onshore family *Senior bonds with family over surfing* OFFSHORE HEARTS

**H**e traveled through the barrel of the wave and felt the salt on his skin. It was then that he knew he had finally made it.

**Brycen Depass**, 12, has grown up in the surfing world his whole life with his older brother, **Hartley Depass**, graduate, surfing and his father, **Marshall Depass**, who is involved in competitions as well. He decided to give the competitive world a shot when he was 6.

"My dad runs the ESA, Eastern Surfing Association, and my brother was always surfing, so when I saw them surfing, I was like 'Man, I gotta get into this,'" Brycen said.

Brycen was determined to excel, but he knew it would take practice.

"He's really competitive and wanted to start off being very good," Marshall said. "[But] you've got to put your time in and the more time ... you put into it and practice the better you get."

Brycen's family was with him the entire way, pushing him to his limit when learning. However, they knew he would need space in order to grow.

"Brycen was probably 10 or 11 years old and could make it out, but then had a little trouble getting in the waves. We would give him that extra little push," Marshall said. "These were big waves, 8 to 10 feet and [Brycen would] have big scared eyes, and then all of a sudden, it would be okay."

Even with the encouragement from his parents, Brycen knew he had to do this for himself.

"My dad showed me the ropes at first and then I just strayed away from learning from them," Brycen said. "I think the best way to learn is to go out there and see what feels right."

Seeing his boys' dedication to surfing, Marshall wanted to help them out as much as

he could, which meant becoming an ESA leader.

"I grew up in the ESA surfing competitions. Then when my boys got older and got into surfing, they wanted to compete, [so] I said, 'How can I help out?'" Marshall said. "All of a sudden, it was the role of director."

As the years went by, Brycen continued to excel in surfing, participating in competitions along the southeast coast. However, visiting Cape Hatteras was the moment everything changed for his surfing career.

"I remember getting barreled for the first time in Hatteras up in the Outer Banks and it was crazy. I got in the barrel and came out and I was just like, 'Man, this is the real deal,'" Brycen said. "I'm actually starting to surf."

Over the course of several competitions, Brycen savored the incredible feeling of his hard work paying

off.

"The best moment is if you're in a heat and you really need a good score, and you're able to pull off a cool trick and then actually get the score," Brycen said. "It's a really good feeling to land something you've been trying to do for a long time."

Even though Brycen had been successful in competitions, he knew it would not mean anything without his family being with him along the way.

"Being able to grow up with my dad, always surfing, and then him teaching me and us passing it on to Brycen, it's a different lifestyle than people really think it is," Hartley said. "It helps bring us closer to one another and we get to talk about [surfing] all time... and do everything together."

**Story by Jordan Davis  
Designer Elise Gierhart**



**Depass**

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**A LOVE FOR SURFING:** (above) Backing off a wave, **Kobe Jones**, 12, surfs local Isle of Palms. "The Charleston surfing community is a very close and well-bonded group of people. We have a huge love for surfing outside of the water which shows in films and gatherings," Jones said; photo by a. schwinn