

SUCCESS: IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

Editor's Note: Amber Engel, director of Alumni Relations, interviewed two members of legacy families – Denise Anastasio and Christine MacDonald (Tutlewski). Perspective will feature additional legacy families in future issues.

There are many trees on the University of Wisconsin-Parkside campus; in fact, 67 species indigenous to Wisconsin. The one tree that seems to thrive most in this university climate is actually the family tree! Although the university is a mere 43 years old, that's enough time to have educated two and even three generations of students.

When UW-Parkside first opened its doors, Rudolf and June Anastasio were delighted that their children would be able to attend a University of Wisconsin school so close to home. The only disappointment was that it wasn't already here for the first two of their college-aged children, Lance and Cheryl. Cary Anastasio ('73) graduated

in 1969 from Case High School, Racine, Wis., and went straight to UW-Parkside to study life science. The following year, his sister Denise ('74) entered pursuing a degree in English. Soon after, the youngest sister, Julie, joined the family on campus earning her economics degree in 1976.

"We were first-generation," Denise said. "We never really considered anyplace else once we knew this was right here. My siblings and I always worked when we went to school. We'd try to get our classes in the morning and work in the afternoon. We didn't spend a lot of time 'hanging out' on campus, but we felt we were having a good experience."

Cary's wife, Pat, also graduated from UW-Parkside with a degree in psychology ('83). Cary and Pat were married in college and their daughter Shala was born during that time. "I remember when we were watching Cary's graduation and Shala toddled out,"

Denise recalled. "She was probably just a year or two old." Twenty-two years later, Shala ('95) returned to that same venue, this time as a graduate with an English degree.

After serving as director for health information for 10 years at St. Mary's Hospital in Racine (now Wheaton Franciscan), Denise became acquainted with the College of Lake County (CLC) through her work with CLC students at the hospital. CLC added a faculty position in health information in 1985 and Denise served in that position until 2004 when she became the dean of the Biological and Health Sciences Division.

In January 1986, Denise returned to UW-Parkside taking one class at a time to get her master's degree. Coincidentally, her brother and sister had started about that time as well. "We had no intention of doing it at the same time and we were each taking classes at a different pace," Denise



THE MACDONALD FAMILY. STANDING (L-R): ROBERT, CHRISTINE, JOHN, MICHAEL, KEVIN, CATHERINE, AND KEITH. SEATED: PATTY, JOANN, HUGH, RON, AND CAROL. IN FRONT: AMY AND MARY JO.



DENISE, CARY AND JULIE ANASTASIO

said, “but it became apparent that we were all going to be finished at the same time.”

Cary returned to campus one more time to attain his teacher certification. He is now back at his high school alma mater teaching science. Shala recalls her initial UW-Parkside experiences, “I remember as a little kid sitting on the floor and coloring during one of my mom’s classes. When I ended up here, the hallways were familiar and welcoming. It really is an amazing school,” she said. “Most significant to me was how the small classes and involved faculty motivated me to get involved in more than just academics. Professor Graffin encouraged me to be a tutor in the Writing Center and from there Roseann Mason roped me into volunteering with a grant-funded project teaching inmates at Racine Correctional Institution. Some of the people I met and experiences I had there put me on a path to law school where I did a clinical program at the same prison.”

After Shala finished her undergraduate degree, she went to UW-Madison to earn her Juris Doctor. Shala had been the deputy family court commissioner in Racine until November 2010 when she and her husband, Sam Manchester, also a UW-Parkside graduate (communication ’94), moved to New York where he is now a sports page designer for the New York Times.

Denise’s son, Angelo Sarto, also graduated from UW-Parkside (computer science ’01). At the time, his girlfriend, Erinn (now his

wife), was probably a greater influence on his decision to attend the university. They’re both graduates and Angelo has returned as an adjunct instructor in the Computer Science Department – in addition to his full-time job as principal engineer in R&D at Baxter Healthcare Corporation. Erinn (business/MIS ’00) is back on campus working toward her M.B.A.

As for that third generation – Mickey Sarto, Denise’s step-granddaughter, graduated in 2005 with a molecular biology major.

Reflecting on her experience at UW-Parkside, Denise said, “I thought I had very good professors. The English teachers had high expectations and it was pretty in-depth for an undergraduate experience. They opened up your mind to different ideas and I was able to grow so much.”

In 1976, Christine MacDonald (Tutlewski) moved with her two young children to Racine to join her parents and siblings. Her family had relocated from Michigan three years earlier when her father began working for SC Johnson. Christine was the first in her family to attend UW-Parkside. She is the oldest of 12 children. All totaled, seven children from the MacDonald household have earned UW-Parkside degrees.

The first class Christine took at UW-Parkside in 1977 was 2-D art. She claims she couldn’t draw but liked to be creative. In the end, her dad talked her out of majoring in art. She pursued Chemistry as a major because, at the time, she was working in a lab at SC Johnson. Then, she moved into a human resources position with the company and switched her major to psychology. Along the way, she started taking more English classes and finished her course work as an English major.

Christine began teaching English full time at UW-Parkside in 2000, splitting her duties between teaching and working in Learning Assistance – where she has been the director since 2009. Christine says she can remember the first time she came to campus to enroll as a student. She remembers the sounds and smells of the Communication Arts Building as she walked the D1 level hallway past the art studios. She is reminded of that first day every time she enters the building.

Christine met her husband, Timothy, when he was a student working as a bartender in the Union (now Student

MACDONALD FAMILY TREE AT UW-P:

John (’80 biological sciences) who continued at the Medical College of Wisconsin and is now an internist at Bellin Health in Green Bay;

Robert MacDonald (’88 business), vice president for commercial banking at Johnson Bank;

Kevin (’90 chemistry) who lives in Ohio;

Catherine Scoon (’84 biological sciences, chemistry minor) Aurora Health Care, manager of the remote ICU unit in Oak Creek - Catherine met her husband, Michael (biological sciences ’84) at UW-Parkside;

Ron MacDonald, (’93 Psychology, ’01 Business) works at Northwestern Mutual in Milwaukee;

and Amy MacDonald-Wojcik (’07 English) is the youngest sibling and also works at her alma mater as an adviser in the First Year Experience program.

Center). Christine was going to school in the evenings and would hang out in the Union after class. Timothy is currently taking business classes.

Their son Zachary is now attending UW-Parkside and is pursuing a degree in microbiology and bioinformatics. The two things Zachary was most interested in were genetics and digital arts and UW-Parkside was the only university that had both. “It’s so wonderful for him,” Christine said. “In his second semester he was working in a lab and now he’s doing an independent study with a faculty member. What a great opportunity to have something that’s so amazing, so close to home and so reasonable.”

Would Christine do it again? “Absolutely!” she said. “It was the best thing I ever did for myself and my family. It changed their lives and it will change their children’s lives. Our mother even has 107 credits toward her English degree. I so wish she could finish it.”