

For Nancy '06 M.Ed. and Peter '08 M.S. MacDonald, RIVIER IS IN THE FAMILY

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“The school is close-knit. Professors get to know you and take your interests and situation into consideration.” — Nancy MacDonald '06 M.Ed.



Nancy MacDonald says she was teaching in the Nashua school system when she decided she wanted to get her master's degree. “Education has changing philosophies—I wanted to be current,” she says. “In the Nashua School District, if you have a degree from Rivier, it puts you a step ahead.”

Nancy started taking classes and found she enjoyed the program. “The school is close-knit. Professors get to know you and take your interests and situation into consideration—if I was dealing with a problem at work one week, when I came to class the next week the professor would ask how the situation had been resolved,” she says. Nancy earned her master's in educational studies in 2006.

At the same time, Peter MacDonald was working as a consultant when he noticed an opening for a database manager at Rivier. “The college environment appealed to me versus the corporate world,” he says. “The diversity of what IT does at a college is larger than what you find in private industry.” Once Peter began working at Rivier, he says he was surprised by the diversity of opinions and backgrounds of the people he encountered. “For me, the people that work here are awesome,” he says. “I love working for Chief Information Officer Bill Schleifer, and the senior management is great.”

The fact that both Nancy and Peter had ties to Rivier helped them connect when they met and began dating. “I found out he worked at a College and asked if it was Rivier, because I'd gone there,” Nancy says.

Peter says that earning a master's was a longtime goal of his, “but working 80 hours a week at places like Gillette I just didn't have time.” At Rivier, he had the opportunity to pursue his goal, enrolling in the graduate computer science program. When he earned his master's in 2008, he was promoted to Director of Management Information Systems. “My boss saw the value of someone with an advanced degree,” he says. Peter says he appreciates the opportunity to see a more rounded perspective than just the database component his previous position managed.

Both Peter and Nancy enjoy attending the events the Office of Development and Alumni Relations organizes. “We went to a Boston Harbor Cruise and a Red Sox game several years ago and really enjoyed ourselves,” Peter says. Since then, they have attended many more events.

“It's a great time, very well organized. We've met some good people,” says Nancy. “It's always a fun activity and you don't have to do any of the planning. You just get on the bus—it's worry-free fun. All alumni should take advantage of these events.”

In addition to attending a variety of alumni programs, Nancy has continued her studies at Rivier, pursuing a C.A.G.S. Her daughter, Kaylin Fitzgerald '14, attends Rivier as well, living on campus. “It's such an important part of our lives, we want to be involved,” says Peter. ■