

English major Cavicchio balances school, bartending, and cosmetology

by Christine Kleck
staff writer

Although her two cats make for a tranquil alarm, Jackie Cavicchio knows that the rest of her day will be nothing like her wake-up call.

Cavicchio is a full time student majoring in English and minoring in Women's Studies. But that's only the start of it. She is also a hairdresser at the Hair and Nail Rage salon on West Gore Road; a Spanish tutor at the Learning Resource Center; a bartender at South Eerie Turners, and a member of the Spanish and Women Today clubs. This 22-year-old is certainly used to a busy schedule and a hectic lifestyle.

Cavicchio, an Erie native, knows what it is like to be involved. During her days at St. Joseph's she was active in basketball and cheerleading. "I was (also) involved in youth group with Father (Jeff) Lucas, who is now here at Behrend," said Cavicchio.

Cavicchio also remembers being introduced to hair styling while growing up.

"My aunt did hair and my stepmom did hair. My mom went to school for it and had all the stuff for it. For the longest time I remember getting into my mom's stuff," she said.

Continuing her busy lifestyle throughout her high school days, Cavicchio's interest in becoming a hairdresser was augmented through a cosmetology program at Central High School.

"Cosmo was my favorite part of the day. We did each other's hair and teachers and other students got haircuts at reduced rates during their free periods. Appointments were also available to the general public at a reduced cost. It was like our own salon," she said.

Cavicchio's efforts paid off as she was awarded an honor in cosmetology in high school. She then was able to use her abilities to continue her cosmetology schooling and then to get a job in that field.

"In high school I was awarded the Gold Key in cosmetology. In each discipline they pick one person to receive the Gold Key, and I got it," she said. Cavicchio hopes to get more training and to eventually train others with the latest Rusk techniques.

"I would like to do more certification in Rusk, because [The Rage] is a Rusk salon. I have been postponing this for some time because of my studies. An English major doesn't get much sleep," she said. "Once I am certified I can work at hair shows and



Jackie Cavicchio serves a satisfied customer at South Eerie Turners, where she is a bartender. Cavicchio also is a beautician at The Rage, a Spanish tutor at Behrend, and an active member of the Spanish Club and Women Today. She is majoring in English and minoring in Women's Studies.

teach Rusk in other salons."

After very intensive training Cavicchio will be able to work at the shows and exhibits to teach others the latest styles and techniques. "You are in the salon all day and you are studying all night, but I want to make time for that this summer," she said.

While Cavicchio's hard work and determination have contributed to her success, others have helped her along the way.

"My grandfather has been the most consistent father figure that I have had - and he let me cut his hair," she said. More recently, Cavicchio has found much inspiration and encouragement from the faculty and staff at Behrend.

"The professors here are very knowledgeable in their fields," she said. "Mr. (Tony) Elliot (Lecturer of Theatre) takes students to plays and Dr. (Juan) Fernandez (Jimenez, Professor of Spanish) takes students to his home in Spain yearly. They really don't have to do that - they could just teach and leave," she said. Cavicchio also commented that Dr. Gregory Morris, Professor of American Literature, is always bringing in articles from the New York Times to share with

the class relating to class discussions.

"It is nice to see Behrend faculty on the whole think of their work and their students during free time such as over spring break and even while reading the newspaper," she said. Cavicchio, a seventh semester student, encourages students to find things to get involved in.

"It is so important to get involved," Cavicchio said about the clubs and activities at Behrend. "I never knew that I would like Spanish and Women's Studies so much, and there are so many opportunities for me to get involved in those pursuits. This Sunday I will go to a Catholic Mass in Spanish and this Thursday I am going to UP to hear Gloria Steinem speak!"

As an active Spanish student at Behrend, Cavicchio has helped to create Behrend's first Spanish Club and has spent many weeks abroad in Spain.

"Behrend welcomed the Spanish Club. We have submitted the paperwork for next school year, and we have a few projects planned," Cavicchio said.

Working very closely with Guadalupe Alvear-Madrid, lecturer in Spanish, Cavicchio has been able to use her experiences abroad and in the classroom to

form this organization. "What we want to do with the Spanish Club is to make an opportunity for students who want to speak Spanish better. Ms. Alvear wants them to speak the language out of class while they have fun, too," Cavicchio said.

Visits to Spanish restaurants, Spanish readings, cultural celebrations and an "El Carnival" celebration next February are just some of the things planned for this new organization on campus.

Future plans for Cavicchio include teaching English as a Second Language, to some day marry Doug, her boyfriend of five years, and to have a family. She would also like to continue with her interests in Spanish and women's issues. But for now, Cavicchio is happy to be so geographically close to her family.

"It is nice. I don't have to wait months to see my family," she said. "I see many of family members everyday at school, the salon, or club where I tend bar."

For more information on the Spanish Club or Spanish tutoring email Jackie Cavicchio at jmc407@psu.edu.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINE KLECK / BEHREND BEACON



Jackie Cavicchio smiles for the camera during a break in the action at South Eerie Turners. With two jobs, extracurricular activities, and her status as full-time student at Behrend, Cavicchio keeps pretty busy.

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