

Career Services director makes magic

Stacey Simmers
Capital Times Staff

He's the director of Career Services, but he does much more than arrange interviews between prospective employers and seniors. He's also a magician, devoted family man and serious professional. His name is Karl Martz. Martz--not Marx.

Every day he comes to work to help

PROFILE

students prepare for life after college, Martz said.

"It's very satisfying when I help people and they come back to tell me they got a job," Martz said.

One such example is Chris Fetterman, who graduated in January.

"Karl helped me write my resume so that it sounded professional," Fetterman said. "Then he made some phone calls to a friend of his in a company I interviewed with and let him know how interested I was. I feel that I owe him a lot."

Fetterman now works for ITT Teves in Virginia as a manufacturing engineer trainee.

Alumni with jobs aren't the only people grateful to Martz. His co-workers appreciate him, too.

Steve Backels, coordinator of personal counseling, works in the same office as Martz.

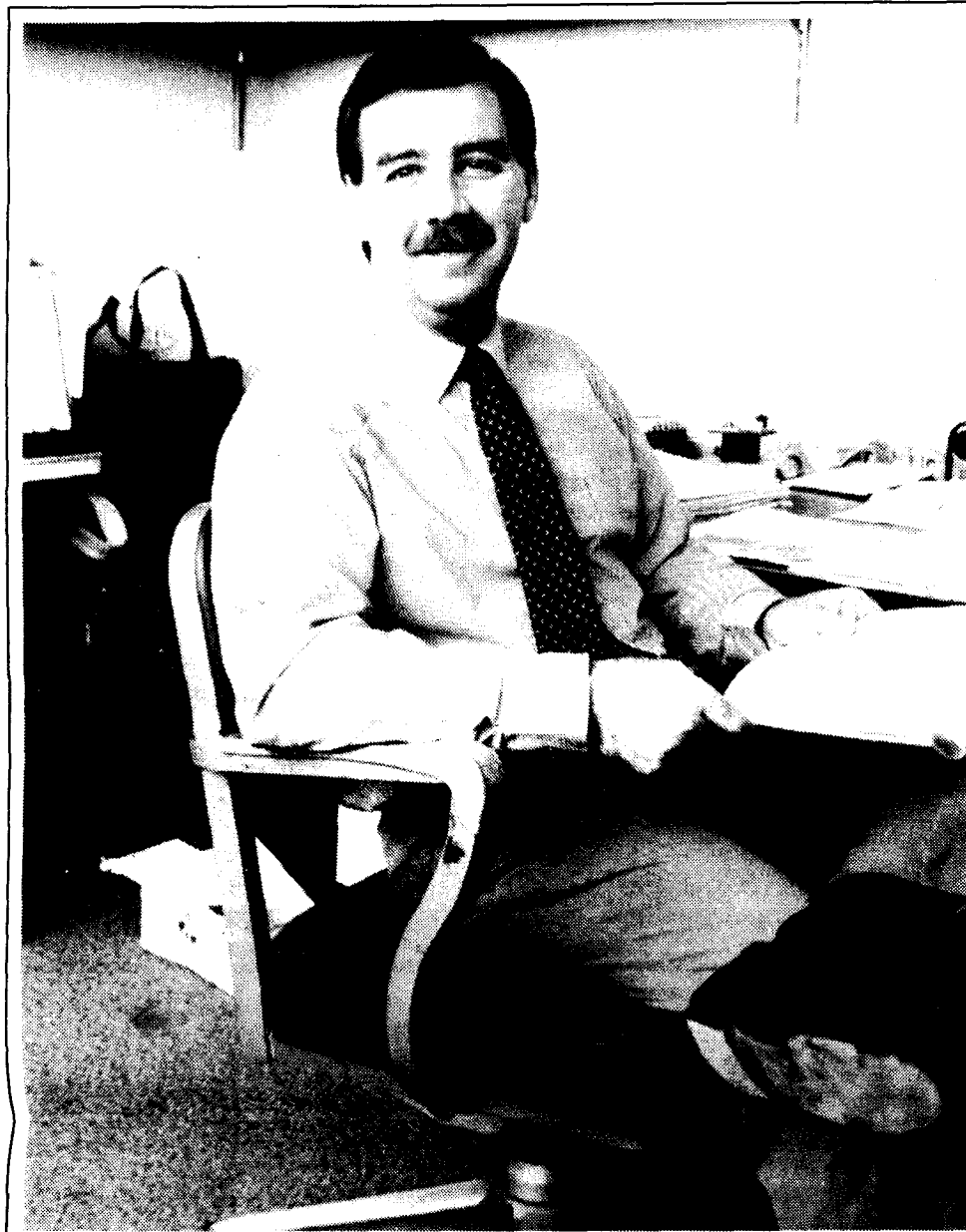
"Karl's a good guy to work with," Backels said. "When something's going on in the office, we know where he stands."

Backels said Martz is truly student-oriented.

"He really wants to help the students," Backels said. "He is very outgoing when it comes making contacts that'll help a student."

But his desire to help other people doesn't stay at work.

When Martz was the director of career services at the Central Pennsylvania



Karl Martz

Photo by Elin Marcel

Business School, he rode his bike to work every day because his family had only one car.

"I wanted my wife to have the car for

the kids," Martz said. "So as long as the roads weren't icy, I went on my bike."

Martz said his family is central in his life. And his wife, Marylou, director of health services at Penn State Harrisburg, supports that.

"When we are invited to go anywhere, the first thing Karl wants to know is if the kids can go too," Marylou said. "We have declined a lot of invitations because the kids weren't invited."

While he runs the Career Services Center, updates the Career Services library, and holds workshops that help

students prepare for interviews, Martz is also completing the master's program in training and development. He has a bachelor's degree in political science from Texas Lutheran College.

All this work might cause some stress, but Martz said he relieves any tension while playing racquetball every day in the Capital Union Building.

With a slight build, and only 5' 7 1/2" tall, Martz may not look like a very aggressive player. But appearances can be deceiving.

"I've watched him play," said Ron Heggs, a senior majoring in structural design. "He has no mercy for his opponents."

Marylou said she won't play with him because he hits the ball too hard. But racquetball isn't his only release.

"I'm a magician," Martz said, his brown mustache curling above a proud smile.

He said he learned from magician Dan Kamin, who stayed with Martz when he performed in the Gallery Lounge, nearly nine years ago.

"I started with sponge balls, and learned everything I could," Martz said.

He is now a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. The organization that gives him access to new tricks, shared between magicians. Martz uses his new skills to perform in magic shows at community functions and private parties. Most of the work is done gratis.

"He just likes to perform," Marylou said.

Recently Martz had the opportunity to combine his strong work ethic with quality time with his children--Jennifer, 12 and Matthew, eight. Together they built a new house in Harrisburg, Martz's hometown.

"Everyone helped with something," Martz said, his brown eyes shining with pride.

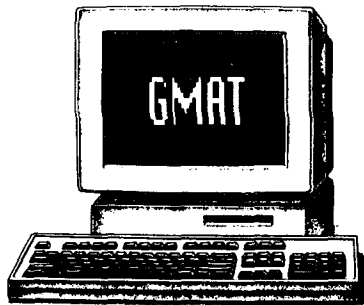
Martz and his son painted the interior of the house.

"Our builder was so fascinated by how fast and how well Karl did it, that he asked Karl if he would paint the house being built behind us," Marylou said.

Back on campus, this student-oriented man sits in his office, decorated with his children's drawing, waiting for students to take advantage of his knowledge.

"I like to help people," he said.

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