

LCCC grad balances school, work and family

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Get up at 5 a.m. Travel from Dallas to Nanticoke during rush hour traffic. Go to school for a few hours. Travel back to Dallas for work. Work until 7 p.m. Then go home again, make dinner, and take care of the house and family.

This is a day in the life of Rick Stritzinger, one of the students in Luzerne County Community College's Hotel and Restaurant Management program. Rick has been following this routine for the past six years in his quest for a degree - taking one or two classes a semester, working full time, and being a husband and father to his family.

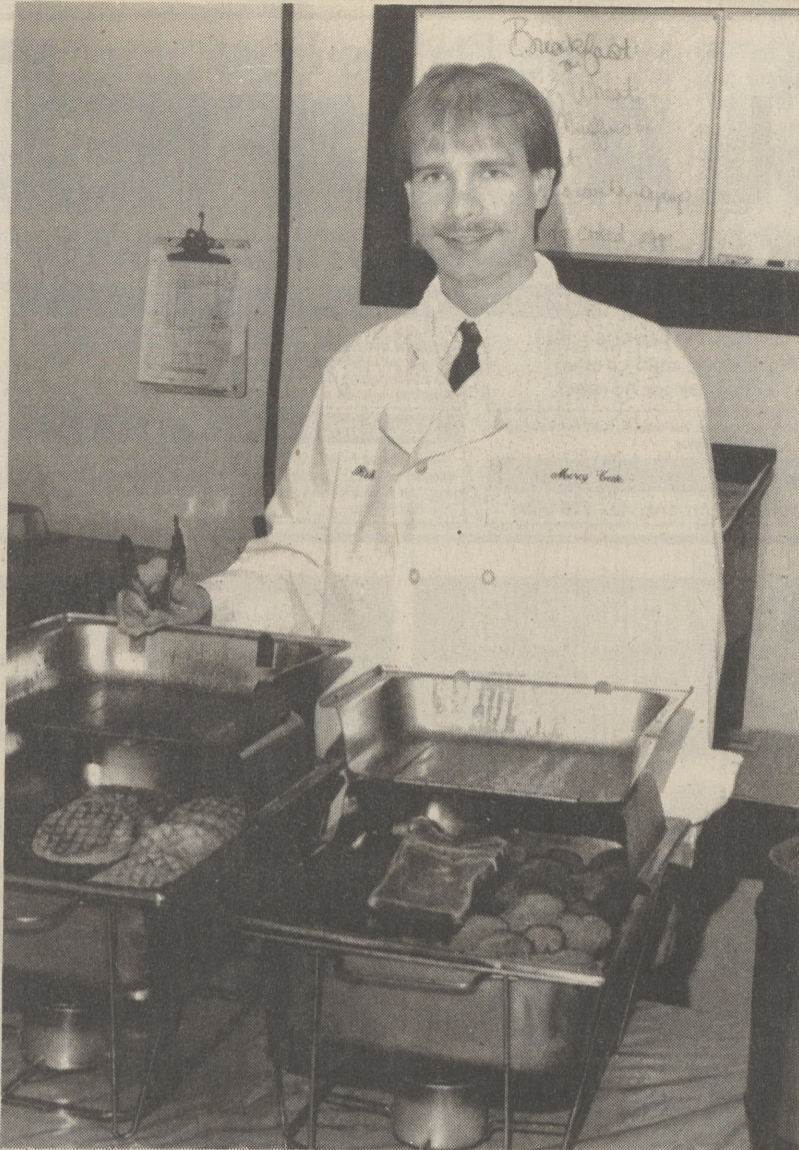
At 28 years of age, Rick is one of a growing number of adult students facing the responsibility of a full-time job and family. With the changing economy, many people find themselves back in the classrooms, either continuing their education or changing careers. Though it may be a little intimidating to be in a room full of people 10 years your junior, Rick feels that his age has given him experience not available to the younger students.

He has been out in the field and knows what it can be like, working long hours and being responsible for every little thing that goes wrong. He says that he has always been a serious student, concentrating on his work and trying to do the best that he can. His main goal is to better himself and provide for his family.

Rick's been in the business for a number of years. He started out as a dishwasher in a summer

camp when he was fourteen. His older brother was working at the camp in Rochester, New York, and recommended Rick for the job. Later, Rick took the same position at the Mercy Center in Dallas and worked his way up to cook, and finally, food service manager. He feels that working his way up through the kitchen has helped him to understand the whole process from top to bottom.

He said one of the major misconceptions that most people seem to have about the restaurant business is that it's easy and glamorous. Yes, it can be a lot of fun and rather glamorous, depending on the location, but for the most part, it's a tremendous amount of hard work and a lot of long hours, including weekends and holidays. "No matter what, people have to eat," Rick says, "so



DELICATE BALANCING ACT - Dallas resident Rick Stritzinger will graduate from LCCC with a degree in hotel and restaurant management, with classmates a decade younger. He worked full-time and is raising a family while pursuing his studies.

there will always be a demand for open restaurants."

Rick's biggest frustration is the traveling. Usually, the drive from his home to school takes 30 to 40 minutes. He spends a couple hours in class, and then it's back to Dallas for work. "I get home from work at 6 or 7, if I'm lucky. Usually, I cook dinner and then spend some time with my son, Zachary and wife, Theresa."

Family is very important to Rick. When his father-in-law fell ill, Rick and Theresa moved him into their home to take care of him. With the responsibilities of family, school and work, Rick says it can get hectic sometimes. "It's crazy sometimes, but my wife is very supportive. She's always there for me, and Zachary is pretty terrific, too."

In addition to everything else, Rick is chief cook and bottle washer at home. He does all the cooking, and even admits to sometimes experimenting on the family. "My wife leaves all the cooking up to me, so they have to eat what I make. Usually they like it, though," he says

Currently, Rick is employed as a food service manager by the Mercy Center, a nursing home for retired sisters run by the Sisters

of Mercy. Right now, he is happy in his present position and isn't looking to go anywhere soon. In fact, he would like to continue his education at College Misericordia after graduation from LCCC this month. Since the nursing home and the college are both affiliated with the Sisters of Mercy, Rick will be able to attend college for

free. He would like to pursue a business administration degree.

His job at the Mercy Center is both demanding and rewarding. One day he can be in the kitchen preparing a meal, and the next day, ordering supplies and groceries. Even with such a wide variety of duties, Rick really enjoys the time he spends with the sisters. Many of them are retired and have no friends or family around, so they really appreciate the little things. Sometimes, just saying hello or stopping to chat can bring a big smile to their face.

Eventually, he'd like to own his own family restaurant, but his main concern now is getting through school and taking care of the family. The restaurant, he says, is down the road somewhere. For now, Rick intends to stick to his plans, one day at a time. "It's hard sometimes," he said, "but in the end, it will be worth it."

Area students graduate from King's college

Back Mountain area students were among the over 400 graduates at the 1995 spring commencement held in May at King's College, Wilkes-Barre. Father James Lackenmler, C.S.C., president of King's presided.

Graduates were... John Ash, Trucksville, cum laude B.S. health care management; Nancy Gensel, Shavertown, B.S. business administration; Sherry Terescavage, Trucksville, B.A. history; Denise Eldridge, Shavertown, magna cum laude, B.A. elementary education and psychology and completed the teacher training program; David Raker, Shavertown, B.S. chemistry with certification by the American Chemical Society; Franklin Coslett, Jr., Shavertown, B.A.

criminal justice; Thomas Connors, Trucksville, cum laude, B.S. computers and information system.

Also, Leigh Ann Hostetler, Dallas, B.A. English; Cheryl Reabuck, Dallas, M.S., accounting; John Kristan, Dallas, magna cum laude, B.A. history, also received the Award of the Bishop Hafey Assembly Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus for history; Andrea Dougherty, Dallas, summa cum laude, B.S. accounting. She received the S. Adris Memorial Award for Highest Achievement presented to an adult student in Continuing Higher Education and the Award of the PA Institute of Certified Public Accountants for accounting.

Also, Meagan Wega, Dallas, summa cum laude, B.S. in biology and completed the molecular biology program. Lisa Vozniak, Dallas, B.S. accounting; Emilie Peters, Dallas, B.S. accounting; John Kasmark, Dallas, B.A. political science; Melinda English, Dallas, B.A. elementary education and completed the teacher training program; Jonathan Ursiak, Dallas, B.A. history; William Jesse, Dallas, B.S. marketing; Maureen Sheridan, Dallas, B.S. business administration; Karen Cutter, Dallas, AS accounting; John Wozniak, Harveys Lake, summa cum laude, B.S. computers and information systems, receiving the Award for Computer and Information Systems.

Earth Day poster contest winners

Recently students in the Dallas Middle School participated in an Earth Day poster contest with the theme Save Water, sponsored by the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority. Winners received savings bonds. Winners are: 6th grade Randa Shanin, first place girls; Dan Laurenzi, first place boys; 8th grade, Marcus Sowcik, runner-up and Colleen Murphy, second place.



Religious services

BACK MOUNTAIN HARVEST ASSEMBLY - 340 Carverton Rd., Trucksville, 696-1128. Pastor, Daniel S. Miller. Sunday School for all ages, 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Wed., 7 p.m., "Out of Bounds" youth service. Midweek home groups; call for days and times. Weekday prayer 6:30-7:30 a.m. Visitors welcome.

DALLAS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 4 Parsonage St., Dallas. 675-0122. Rev. Michael A. Bealla, Pastor. Morning Worship 9:30 a.m.

SHAVERTOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 163 N. Pioneer Ave., Shavertown. 675-3616. Pastors, Rev. James A. Wert, Rev. Harriet L. Santos. Music Dir., John Valda. SATURDAY: 5:30 p.m., Chapel Service. SUNDAY: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship Services. Visitors expected. Sunday study classes, 10 a.m. PHONE-A-PRAYER 675-4666.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - 196 N. Main St., Shavertown. Rev. Harold R. Baer, Jr., Pastor. Worship Services 9:30 a.m. Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month and festivals. Everyone Welcome! Office Hours: 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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