

JULIE RIDGEMAN

Situated on the top floor of Heide Hall, Julie commands a good view of the campus and enjoys her location in the Communication Department. She has been employed by UW-Whitewater for nine years, beginning in September of 1999, all of those years in the same department. Prior to UWW, Julie worked for ICC Data Processing in Jefferson. She was employed there for fourteen years, serving as their administrative assistant. In addition to her job at UWW, she picks up part-time work at the Johnson Creek Outlet Mall.

Julie's job duties in the Communication Department include working with major/minor changes for students, assisting with the paperwork related to academic advising for the department, and the all-important budget work for that department, as well. She assists over thirty faculty members with work requests that come in throughout the semester. She helps prepare the department portion of the timetable and works hard to maintain a smooth and efficient workflow within the department.

Julie's family is an integral part of her life. She and husband, Tom, have been married for twenty-three years and they live in Jefferson. Tom is a tool & die maker at Dresser Industries (Waukesha Engines) in Waukesha. Their son, Chad, is currently residing with them, along with his girlfriend (Keeley) and their son (Jayden). Jayden will be a year old on New Year's Day. Julie's daughter, Kayla, is seventeen and she attends Lakeside Lutheran High School. Chad is busy looking for a good job and will hopefully find something in this tight economy. Kayla is active in volleyball, basketball and track, so Julie and Tom spend a lot of time following her sports activities. Julie readily labels herself a "bleacher mom", but seems to be quite happy in that role. Having their little grandson close to them is a nice benefit. Not to be left out of the family picture is their twelve-year-old yellow lab, Tori, who Julie claims is "spoiled rotten." Since she smiles as she relays this information, we are fairly certain Tori holds a coveted spot in the family circle.

Among her interests, Julie says she loves to bake and cook. She enjoys the outdoors and outdoor activities. She is a big fan of camping and hiking, and she and Tom make the rounds of the Wisconsin state parks between May and October. She happily conveys that Tom recently purchased a Harley and the two of them have fun going out on rides during decent weather. Now that they have this new acquisition, Julie says they will probably combine their riding with their camping expeditions.

We asked Julie what she likes most about her job in the Communication Department. Her immediate response is "the faculty and the students." As Julie succinctly states, "it feels good to come to work and know that you are helping someone, faculty or students." What she finds attractive about the campus is the fact that it is close to home (just a short commute), UWW has a great administration, and she likes a smaller campus. The size allows people to get to know each other more easily – faculty, staff and students. She also likes the fact that, while it's compact, so much is available on campus – food, entertainment, etc.

As for the recent changes that have been occurring across campus, Julie believes all are very positive changes and are needed to maintain enrollment and to keep students coming back.