

MARY KASTER

Over the eighteen years that Mary has been at UW-Whitewater, she has had the opportunity to work in several different offices on campus. Prior to working for the State of Wisconsin, she was in banking, working as the bank manager for Pioneer Savings & Loan. Her husband owned and operated G. Stuart's Men's Shop in Whitewater and Fort Atkinson. When they adopted their daughter, Mary cut her workload down so she could spend more time at home with her. After working for a year with the Department of Corrections, Mary accepted a position in the Health Center. She was in that position for a year when another opportunity presented itself and she moved to the Admissions Office. She spent twelve years in Admissions, then a year in Financial Aid and a year in the Cashier's Office. In 2005, a full-time position became available in Residence Life and Mary slipped back into the full-time work routine.

Mary and her husband, John, reside in Whitewater. Their daughter, Micki, is twenty-one and living in Milwaukee. She is a stylist, working for Carezza Color Cutting Experience in Brookfield. Keeping Mary and John company at home is their eleven-year-old cat, Skittles. Since they have sold their stores and their daughter is out on her own, Mary hopes that she and John will have more time to travel. They recently spent some time in Colorado and she plans on carving out more vacation time in the future. For now, her great passion is sewing. Whether it is clothing, quilts, or crafts, she enjoys being able to create with her sewing machine. She is looking forward to having more time for that interest, as well. John is now a manufacturing representative, which requires extensive travel during various times of the year, so Mary does get some time to herself. However, she points out that his new line of work allows them to spend more holiday time together and that is something new for her after the retail life.

Mary's job duties include working with the budget—reconciling accounts, paying bills and doing what she calls the “credit card shuffle” (making certain that all finances are in order). She is in charge of the payroll for 110 Resident Assistants, 150 miscellaneous student office staff, and is the backup for all Residence Life student payroll. She supervises promotions – the graphic arts and marketing projects for Residence Life, and she also dons the hat of equipment manager. One of her biggest responsibilities is coordinating early arrival of students prior to the beginning of a semester and organizing the hall opening day process for the return of all residence hall students. During the summers, Mary assists the Resident Services Coordinator with camps and conferences, generating the invoices for these events.

What does Mary like about her job? Everything! She says she is very grateful for the job she has and it is a nice change for her. She enjoys all aspects of her job and considers it a great challenge. According to Mary, “it's all of my past jobs rolled together, and then some.” She is happy to have her own office and to be working with many different types of people. She is the clerical support person on the Residency Hall Advisory Board for the new dorm that is going up. She also represents Res Life at the “meet & greet” sessions for the Plan-It Purple and Friday on-campus days. She cheerfully notes that working with students keeps her young.

What she likes most about UWW is that “it's small enough to care, but big enough to matter”. She points out the personal touch of a smaller campus and the noteworthiness of so many of the programs offered here. Mary thinks the changes being made on campus are great and show that UWW is working hard to recruit and retain students, reaching out to more students in a larger geographic area.