

ANDY PETERSON

Twenty-five years on campus and Andy Peterson has come full circle. When he started working at UW-Whitewater, his office and the Computer Center were located in Hyer Hall. He was helping the Financial Aid Office transition from a home-grown packaging program to a more sophisticated system. He assisted Wayne Lindgren whose office was then located in the southeast corner of the second-floor area set aside for Financial Aid, in the Andersen Library building. Now, twenty-five years later, it is Andy who occupies that same office area, with windows overlooking the Andersen courtyard. He smiles at the memories along the road that brought him to his current position and office space.

Andy grew up in Whitewater and pursued his degree at UW-W. By the time he had reached the spring semester of his junior year, he was told he would have to declare a major. So, he took a long look at the classes he had already taken. Noting that most of them dealt with computers, he set his sights on a degree in MCS. He notes that all but one of his classes involved using computer punch cards. He laughs as he remembers “the good old days” when students lined up in the hallway of Hyer in order to use the punch card machines to complete their assignments. Andy received his Bachelor of Science degree in MCS (with a History minor) in 1983. In January of 1984, he was employed at UW-Oshkosh and was helping that university convert the academic side of the house off of computer punch cards. Later that year, he secured employment at UW-Whitewater and began working to move the administrative side of this university off of the punch card system. For seventeen years, his office was located in McGraw, until his area of iCIT was moved into the Andersen Library building. His department underwent several name changes: Computer Center; Computing & Information Technology; Technology & Information Resources; and now, iCIT. Each name change reflected a change in the technology utilized on campus.

Andy and his wife, Sandy, will be celebrating their seventeenth wedding anniversary in December. They have a sixteen-year-old son, Joshua, and a daughter, Chelsey, who is fifteen. Outside of work, Andy’s life is filled with family-oriented activities. He and Sandy devote much of their time to their children’s activities. Andy has been involved in Scouts and Little League. Both children play tennis and Chelsey has been involved in ballet for about eleven years. He says that he and Sandy are life-time members of the Edgerton PTA and grins when he mentions that he lives in the suburbs of Newville. Joshua became a licensed driver in May and Chelsey will soon be taking classes to go after her license. Rounding out the family are the two male Shih Tzus – Fred (10 years) and Frank (6 years). Family is a primary focus for Andy and they all enjoy traveling on family vacations every summer. Andy notes that those vacations usually run about two weeks and they try to visit a national park on each vacation. They have been to every state east of the Mississippi, and a total of 44 states.

Andy’s job duties have changed dramatically over the years. He is currently a network specialist and his job includes keeping the campus network up and running. He has seen a great many improvements over the years – a lot of changes in the hardware. He maintains the Level 4 video conferencing room in the library building, which supports the distance learning programs. He assists Gene Mueller with back-up phone and telecommunications work and he works with the Enterprise back-up system to back up data for all campus servers. Andy also interacts with UW System on a regular basis and has been recognized by his System peers for his work.

There are a number of things Andy likes most about his job. He enjoys the learning environment into which he is immersed. The interim duties he has performed for the Level 4 classroom has given him opportunities to mix and mingle with students. And, he likes helping people – helping them succeed

with their jobs. As for UW-W, Andy thinks it's a beautiful campus, and appreciates the fact that it is a small campus and the people can get to know one another.

We asked him if he had any special or specific memories of UW-Whitewater. The one that seems to stand out for Andy is when Old Main burned down. He was in elementary school at the time. On the drive to school in the morning he remembers going down Main Street and seeing the ruins of the building. The fire trucks were still on the scene, putting out the last of the fire. "The one thing you don't ever hear much about," he states, "is the fact that the charred ruins left a smell that hung around for months." He says he will never forget that smell.

And what about all of the recent changes that have been occurring on campus? Andy notes that he has seen constant change since the time he came to campus, so it is something that is ongoing and good for the growth of the campus. He seems to be quite happy with his life and his work, and being a part of UW-Whitewater.