

ALUMNA PROFILE:

Rosemary McQuaid DeRosa '69 Retires from the Academy of Notre Dame after 27 Years



For more than 50 years, **Rosemary McQuaid DeRosa '69** has been a part of the fabric of the Academy of Notre Dame. Her first affiliation with the Academy was when she entered the gates of NDA as a freshman in high school in 1965.

After receiving her degree in mathematics, Rosemary began her teaching career in the Nashua Public School System. She left teaching for a time to raise two boys eventually enrolling them at the Academy of Notre Dame. Like many parents, she would volunteer at the school helping out in the area of computer science. She, along with two faculty members, was instrumental in starting the first computer lab many years ago. In 1989, knowing that Rosemary had a teaching background, she was asked to be a permanent math substitute in grade 7/ 8 following a leave of a full-time member of the faculty. Coincidentally, that same year Lower School Principal and fellow alumna, Beth O'Connell '85, began her tenure at NDA in the 7/8th grade. Although Rosemary loved teaching 7th and 8th grade she moved to 5th grade and became a permanent member of the faculty. Rosemary has taught many subjects, but Math is her first love.

Throughout her tenure, Rosemary has worn many hats including for years being the unofficial school photographer, and, let's not forget all those days on the slopes as the Ski Club advisor.

Throughout the years, she has witnessed many changes in the evolution of the school. As a student in the high school, Rosemary experienced a faculty which consisted totally of members of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Sr. Kathryn Lawrence McGuigan was her English teacher and one of Rosemary's favorites. As President of the Academy in 1989, she was the person who hired Rosemary to teach at the Academy.

Rosemary has seen teaching methodologies evolve from rote learning methods in the 1960s to the multi-subject single teacher classroom to today's integrated team teaching model with teachers focusing in the area of their academic specializations in the middle grades. She has applauded the school for the addition of technology into the classrooms and labs. She also believes that the math REACH program has been a great asset to the school. Students are able to learn at the pace that is best suited for them. The development of this program has also allowed for smaller math classes.

She has welcomed the opportunity to teach just math for the last several years and the collaboration she has had with her fellow colleagues.

Always the consummate professional and seeing many of the pedagogic changes beginning to occur, Rosemary pursued a master's degree in Curriculum Technology which she earned in 2001. A few years later, she was recognized by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) as Teacher of the Year. Today, she, like many of her colleagues, has fully embraced technology, integrating it throughout much of the mathematics curriculum.

For the DeRosa Family, the school has also been a family affair. Not only did Rosemary have her two sons graduate from the Academy's 8th grade but also had one of her sons return to become a colleague in the school's educational technology area before taking an exciting position out on the West Coast with Amazon.

While much has changed in 50 years, never has the school forgotten as Rosemary describes, "its comradery" or the spiritual and personal linking that the school continues to share among its faculty, with students, alumnae and parents. To Rosemary, the Academy of Notre Dame is the village that has raised scores of children including her own. The school's educational values have not diminished as they continue to prepare students for life while connecting all who have attended with an unbreakable bond. The Academy's charism continues to be ever present as students and faculty embrace the special concern and respect they have for each other.

When asked what sage advice she has for the young teacher starting their career today, she quickly points to the use of technology. According to her, "new teachers today are the generation that has used technology in their own learning. They will be better prepared to continue the pedagogical paradigm shift in fully integrating technology into their classrooms. They will know the power of this technology, and best of all, how to use it to help their students learn." She continued, "For me math has to be real for children. The use of technology enables math to come to life." She concluded with one final piece of advice by saying, "Never yell at students, work with children, listen to them, respect goes both ways." You have to love what you are doing. During her time at the Academy, Rosemary has taught approximately 1,500 students.

Rosemary has made a real and lasting difference in the lives of her students and the Academy of Notre Dame. On behalf of the Academy, students past and present, and colleagues now and then, we wholeheartedly, but simply say, "Thank you, Mrs. DeRosa!"