UAlbany Weekend MBA Stories – Mark Boucher
Vice President of Operational Administration, The Golub Corporation

“It’s, “boo SHAY’,” he laughs, pronouncing his last name the way his great-grandfather did when he arrived in this country. The pronunciation changed somewhere along the way and Mark grew up as a ‘BAU cher’. “Then I attended SUNY Brockport, which has a lot of Canadian influence,” he fills in the blanks, “so my professors and classmates naturally called me, ‘boo SHAY’.” The antecedent stuck and 35 years later, all four of Mark’s children are proud to be, ‘boo SHAY’s.’

Mark Boucher was part of the inaugural cohort that began attending class at the University at Albany Weekend MBA Program’s Executive Education Center in Clifton Park after spending Year One at facilities in Malta. “The best place to get a cup of coffee in Malta was Dunkin Donuts,” he remembers with a smirk. “In Clifton Park, though – it was definitely Price Chopper.”

For Mark, Price Chopper has been a way of life. Graduating from SUNY Brockport in 1978 with a degree in Business Administration and a marketing specialization, Mark immediately went to work for Price Chopper as an assistant grocery manager.

Somewhat of an anomaly, Mark remains with the same company 35 years later, currently as VP of Operational Administration for the Golub Corporation, parent company of Price Chopper Supermarkets. With four direct reports and 45 indirect reports, Mark holds much responsibility for the 128 stores operating in six states, including: workforce engineering, inventory management, front end systems, pricing integrity, new and remodel store planning, and integration with the marketing team. He is set to retire from the company on March 2.

Growing up in Mechanicville, New York, Mark’s all-time peak career moment took him outside his home state to Vermont in 1990, where he and his family lived for 10 years. Serving as a zone director of operations, Mark held the arduous task of managing a 12-store acquisition from the company which primarily owned Grand Union stores. His challenge was to get all 12 stores open and operating profitably. “It was almost like running my own business,” he recalls. “I was determined to succeed.” Succeed he did and in 2000, he moved his family back to Upstate New York to Wilton where he currently resides.

If you ask Mark to admit to an addiction, he’ll quickly share his affinity for people, namely his family. Before we even touched on his experiences with UAlbany’s School of Business, Mark spent 10 minutes doting on his four children: Bryan, cum laude graduate of SUNY Buffalo and engineer with GE; Jonathan, an accounting graduate student and captain of UAlbany’s hockey team; Megan, graduate of SUNY Adirondack and pre-school teacher at North Country Academy; and youngest son Jason, currently in his third year at SUNY Buffalo as an occupational therapy major and president of his class. “But the true manager of ops,” he remarks coyly, “is my wife of 30 years, Jackie.” Mark and Jackie will celebrate their 30th anniversary on March 27.
“People are interesting to me,” Mark shares. “They are a wonderful source of additional knowledge because they’ve experienced things differently. If you’ve got your eyes and ears open, you’ll never stop learning.” Which is precisely why he sought to further his education.

After researching four schools, Marks chose UAlbany’s Weekend MBA Program not only because it afforded the most flexibility with his current job, but because of the incomparable quality of education of the SUNY system. “Look at my children,” he encourages. “We are a SUNY family.”

Finding his experience in the program challenging, insightful, and fun, Mark is one of the many alums who speak to prospects, including his eldest son Bryan. Imparting passion and determination, Mark shares that to be successful in the program, one must be decidedly motivated.

Mark’s rationale to add school to his already demanding schedule was three-pronged: the desire to teach, consult, and open the door for a possible business venture. Holding fast to his family-bred, strong work ethic and belief that people achieve when they are willing to out forth effort, Mark earned his MBA in 2006. He now teaches marketing, business, and entrepreneurship at SUNY Adirondack and SUNY Cobleskill. He guest lectures for various professors at UAlbany’s School of Business and serves on the School’s Advisory Council.

Like most choices in Mark’s life, his choice to serve as chair (and currently vice chair) of the Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation in Schenectady, came from a place of personal connectivity with a full commitment to give back in rampant return. It was 15 years ago when Mark found himself admitted to Sunnyview as a patient, suffering with multiple sclerosis. “In my darkest moment with the onset of multiple sclerosis in 1997,” Mark discloses, “a business acquaintance gave me one of those inspirational posters. The words on the poster resonate with me whenever it gets steep.”

The poster reads, “Do not fear the winds of adversity. Remember the kite flies highest against the wind rather than with it.” Indeed, Mark Boucher’s life is a testament to his mantra.

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