You would think that someone who has spent their entire career in banking would have a strong financial background, but that’s not necessarily the case, at least not for Bank of America’s Senior Vice President/Senior Technology Manager Michele Sweeney. “I’m a technology person.” Michele has over 20 years IT experience, with 15 years in IT Management.

That technology background, including an undergraduate degree in Business with a concentration in computers, has served her well, allowing her to move up from Information Technology Consultant with Aetna to Vice President/Senior Technology Manager with her current employer.

But, she credits the Weekend MBA Program at the University at Albany with her recent jump to Senior VP in February. “It was definitely recognized that I took that extra step educationally. My goal was to become a Senior Vice President and the MBA program gave me that extra leg up. It also helped me to brush up on financial skills that I had forgotten from my undergraduate days, as well as sharpen my management skills.”

Michele’s journey to the MBA was a long one, though, with one significant detour. “I started to take courses at night towards my MBA back in the early 1990s at the University at Albany, while working full-time. Then in 1995 I had my first child – Patrick, who will be 17 in April. I had my second child Meghan in 1998. So I put my MBA ambitions on hold. Working, raising two young children, and trying to go to school was not going to be manageable. As my children grew older and more self-sufficient I decided to pursue my MBA degree again. When I looked at the various programs offered, I decided the Weekend MBA Program at the University at Albany was a perfect fit for my schedule and the demands of my work and family."

The key for Michele, who graduated in 2009, was the program’s time table. “I really needed to get it done in a short period of time – to condense it and not drag things out.” In spite of a very good support system at home, in husband Tom and the two kids, it was hard for Michele to miss out on her kids’ games and other events. On the flip side, though, Michele said her efforts in the program set a really good example for them. “When they saw me working hard, studying and going to classes, it made them feel like they should be doing that too.”

Michele definitely noticed a difference between her MBA experience in the 90s and the one she had in 2007 – having had almost 20 years of experience, with peers who were in the same boat, made a huge difference. “I could add value to the class, as well as get a whole lot of value back from the other experienced members of the class, who came from very diverse backgrounds and had lots of experience.

You can view more about Michele Sweeney here: [Weekend MBA Program](http://weekendmba.albany.edu)
to offer. There were some really key relationships that I made and I keep those up. I really appreciated the drive of my peers to help me get it done.”

Michele also appreciated not having to sign up for classes or go get books, which helped her make the most of her time.

And now that she’s done with her MBA, Michele has a lot more time to make good use of – and she’s not wasting any of it. She will be doing college visits with her son in the near future and enjoying some of her other loves that have been on the back burner – skiing with her family on weekends, visiting Maine, walking her dog Maddy, and gardening. Michele will also be continuing her service on the Board of Directors at Parsons Child and Family Center, which she has been a part of for over seven years.

Even though Michele enjoys having her weekends back, she doesn’t plan on being out of the classroom for too long. She’ll just be returning on the other side of the desk. In April she will be guest speaker on IT management at a University of Albany class, talking about outsourcing and sharing her experiences with part-time MBA students. Is this an indicator of what direction Michele’s career plans are headed in? It just might be, she said through laughter. “Maybe someday I’ll become a professor.”

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