



Alumni



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I went back to college at the age of 60 and ended up with a double major resulting in two post-baccalaureate degrees, summa cum laude, with honors in the majors, the subjects being history and Spanish. I applied to UNF for graduate school in history, hoping to have as my major professor J. Michael Francis, Ph.D. He had been a great influence on me and I took several courses from him, including Spanish paleography. With his encouragement, I embarked on a plan of research to cover the history of St. Augustine, Florida, during the Second Spanish Period (1784-1821).

But Dr. Francis left UNF to come to USF St. Petersburg and when I got the news that he was leaving, I was floored. I told my husband that the news was devastating to me. He just looked at me and said, "Go there." We had time apart before, as he was in the Coast Guard, and once spent nearly two years away from home to pursue that love of his. So he had no problem rewarding me for having held the home front with our two children, and supporting my desire to follow Dr. Francis to USFSP. My husband got a kick out of telling people that I had left him for a younger man!

The last stumbling block — a place to live that would be affordable for us — was removed when a family friend who lives in Pinellas Park rented me a room in her house.

It was a wonderful two years, with a hiatus during the fall 2014 term. I sat that term out because of having been hospitalized that summer with a life-threatening condition which happily was resolved, but put me behind on my thesis. I remained home during the Spring 2015 term, but enrolled for the last two hours of thesis, and completed and defended it.

I graduated from USF St. Petersburg on May 3, 2015 and was the oldest student graduating that day. I was intrigued by the Florida Studies program and found it to be exciting and fascinating. I took subjects that I would not have thought of (Geological History of Florida; Perspectives in Environmental Thought) and found that I could relate them to my studies of old St. Augustine. I enjoyed my time at USFSP, loving the small-school atmosphere, the fine faculty and the excellent staff and services.

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