

Mach's sabbatical: not just all play

Syndee Mady
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

a two-term sabbatical in a combination of hard work and relief, English teacher Sue Mach returned to her job in Rook Hall in time for the start of the school year. Mach, who has been teaching at Clackamas Community College for nine years, spent a year off tending to her 10-year-old daughter Nora, who had a brain tumor and underwent surgery. "It's a good thing I was on sabbatical," Mach said. "Around the year, she was falling a lot and I didn't want to go down to the hospital or go to the park ... I had an inner ear infection and I took her to the doctor and they did an MRI and thankfully a slow-growing, benign tumor was found. The doctors at Doernbecher Hospital were able to

remove the build-up of spinal fluid, but the tumor itself was in a difficult position to maneuver.

"It's in such a place that they can't remove it, so they're just going to leave it in," said Mach. "If it becomes a problem again, they'll probably have to radiate the tumor ... but so far it's working—she's doing really well now."

During the unexpected crisis, Mach somehow managed to complete the first draft of a play she wrote called "The Lost Boy," which was inspired by the tragic events of Ashley Pond and Miranda Gaddis.

"Just having had a child, I was more affected by [the case] than before," she said. "Oh my God; that just must be such a horrible thing to have to go through as a parent."

Mach thought it in poor taste to write about the two Oregon City girls, but heard about an old case that emulated the media frenzy that surrounded the local case and decided to pursue the prospect.

"It's about the first child kidnapping for ransom in this country," Mach said. "The only way that [the father] could respond to the kidnappers was answering the personals in the newspaper, so the newspaper got a hold of the story and it became a huge media event."

According to Mach, two brothers were playing in the yard of their upper middle-class home in Germantown, Pa., in 1874. It was close to the Fourth of July and the kidnappers tempted the boys with the promise of fireworks. Both boys went with the kidnappers; they sent the six-year-old boy into the store and abducted four-year-old Charlie Ross.

"The kidnappers began to write a series of bizarre letters to the father, who was a business man," said Mach.

Due to the recession that was going on at that time, the father was in debt and unable to meet the ransom demand of \$20,000.

"He could have raised the

money, but the police were saying 'Don't give in to this guy; don't give them the money'—so, long story short—he never got his son [back], never found a body, never found anything," said Mach.

In addition to writing plays, Mach mentors inner-city kids and helps them develop theatrical talent in playwriting, acting and production in a program called the Haven

Project. Mach plans to workshop "The Lost Boy" over the summer and said the play "will probably be produced in conjunction with [the Haven Project] at some point."

Mach has five or six plays to her credit. Her most frequently performed play, including two performances in New York, is called "Monogram," about Portland playwright Hazel Hall.



MACH

Part-time mom, student, volunteer, honored at graduation

Karen Hill
FEATURE EDITOR

standing student, an inspi- rations, overcame hardships success at CCC, demon-



strated leadership, academically successful—student Sonia Thomas possesses all of these qualities and as a result was honored with the Student Profile award.

"Sonia has been a leader in her program," said Becky Carnahan, one of the two staff members who nominated Thomas for the award.

"She called me to get all the graduation information so she could share it with [students in the Accelerated Degree Program (ADP)]," Carnahan said.

A participant in ADP, Sonia Thomas was able to earn her AAOT in business while only attending classes one night a week and on Saturdays.

Margie Gibler, a coordinator for ADP, nominated Thomas for her ability to accumulate 120 credits while occupying a full-time job,

attending college full-time and supporting a family, as well as managing to maintain a 3.97 GPA and take a leadership role in Phi Theta Kappa (PTK).

ADP is designed specifically for people who need to work during the day and don't have the time to attend courses several nights a week. In order to cover the adequate amount of material with limited classroom time, the students take classes which integrate two or more courses. For example, the writing and speech classes are combined; students write papers and present speeches on the same topic, in an attempt to minimize their amount of research.

In addition to the accelerated education Thomas was able to receive through the program, she also appreciated the shared goals and camaraderie she experienced

through the program.

"It's a wonderful program because you make very close friends, since you're all taking the same classes together," said Thomas. "They're serious students who know what they want."

Thomas will be graduating from Clackamas next year with an AAOT in business and a certificate of supervision. The certificate involved taking additional classes in human resources, communication and budgeting.

"[The supervision certificate] is a good foundation for being a supervisor in a department," said Thomas, who currently works as manager of childcare resource and referral at Campfire USA, "so that I'm a halfway decent boss."

Volunteering has always been

a high priority to Thomas. She has volunteered as an AWSEM group leader and as a campfire leader for many years.

"That's why I joined PTK," she said. "Community service is very important to me."

Thomas plans on using her business degree and certificate at her current job, while also hoping to be able to work in a position as a career and college counselor.

"I think it's important for people to be empowered and encouraged," said Thomas. "The skills that I've learned at CCC will make me better at that."

Thomas will be attending Marylhurst in the fall to work towards a bachelor's degree in business and leadership and a certificate in training and development.

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