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Cruising in a career

Jacquelyn oversees fun events on yachts for hire

August 18, 2007

BY KIERA WIATRAK

Jacquelyn Carden's booming career began by accident.

While working in sales for a cruise line in Hawaii that provided day events and evening dining cruises, an overwhelmed cruise director asked Jacquelyn to take over planning one night a week.

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"I remember kind of thinking about it like I didn't know if I could do it," Jacquelyn says. "It was interesting, kind of scary, but kind of exciting."

"I don't know if I'd have gotten here if that one moment hadn't happened," she says.

Eventually, the cruise director left and Jacquelyn took over as project manager.

Jacquelyn moved back to Michigan, where she grew up, in 2001 with her husband and two kids after living in Hawaii for 10 years. Now, Jacquelyn is the director of cruise and event operations for Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters, which hires out their two yachts, Infinity and Ovation, out of St. Clair Shores for corporate and social events as well as weddings.

After leaving Hawaii, she was able to rediscover the same encouraging working atmosphere in her home state.

In Hawaii, "everyone there is on vacation, so it's a really positive place to be," says Jacquelyn, 37, of Southfield. "Here, everyone's planning some celebration, so it's a positive place to be."

At Infinity and Ovation, Jacquelyn works closely with clients to oversee the development of the events. While making sure specifics are tended to can be stressful, Jacquelyn says watching it all "coming to life" when the event transpires makes it all worth it.

"For (the clients) to get to that point where it all happened like you said it would, it makes you feel good," she says.

Even though she always hopes for the same satisfying result, according to Jacquelyn, each event comes together differently, which is why she never gets bored.

"I'm very impulsive and restless, so I like a lot of change," she says.

She pointed out that the business is constantly changing.

"I think there's a lot of room for us to reinvent ourselves because the industry does," Jacquelyn says.

But for Jacquelyn, the one thing that will never change is her family's ties with water. Her husband used to be a captain. The two met on a

cruise ship.

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Their kids love almost anything involving water, whether it's swimming, tubing, water skiing or something else.

"I'd say they're both pretty much water babies," Jacquelyn says. "They're usually barefoot and wet."

Kiera is a Farmington Hills-based writer. Reach her at wiatrak@wisc.edu.

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 You can get on board and book an event with Jacquelyn and Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters by calling 586.778.7030.

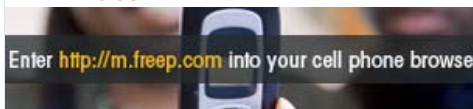
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