NERDC Welcomes Two New Staffers

UFIT

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Two new faces joined NERDC recently. We are proud to welcome aboard Elizabeth Villardefrancos to Accounting and Walt Rivenbark to Network Services. Both joined NERDC in August--Villardefrancos working full-time as a senior fiscal assistant, and Rivenbark working part-time as a student assistant while going back to school for a Master's degree.

Villardefrancos balances end of month reports, and helps users with password problems and other questions about their accounts. These duties are very similar to what she did while working for Consolidated Electric Supply in Miami. For five of the nine years that she worked there, she managed the company's support desk. Prior to managing the support desk, she was responsible for data entry.

"On the support desk, I set up phone lines for communication between the 60 office branches and helped users with system problems and passwords. Kind of like what I'm doing now," Villardefrancos said.

Villardefrancos enjoys her new job at NERDC.

"I like working with Sandra (Bass) and Queen (Smith). We have a good time and still get our work done. As long as you get your work done and get here on time, you can laugh and have a good time."

She and her family are also glad to be in Gainesville--and away from Miami.

"I moved to Micanopy because I wanted to give my kids a better life."

While living in Miami, the Villardefrancos family survived hurricane Andrew.

"It was an experience. We were lucky no one got hurt. But we had damage to the house and had to rebuild some. I wouldn't want to go through that again."

"I like Gainesville. People are very polite. People seem to be a lot more courteous here. I'm happy I'm working here. I enjoy it. I'm glad someone gave me the opportunity to join the University."
Unlike Villardefrancos, Rivenbark is only new to NERDC, not Gainesville. A native of Gainesville, Rivenbark joined the Network Services team as a student assistant.

Rivenbark comes to us with a wealth of business and computing knowledge. Prior to beginning employment with NERDC, he started his own business, E-Audit. The company, which he helped start in January 1998 and left in April 1998, audited electronic commerce sites to make sure that consumers could trust a Web site.

Prior to E-Audit, Rivenbark worked as a CPA for KPMG Peat Marwick from August 1996 to January 1998 as a financial and computer systems auditor. While he enjoyed the Information Systems work the position required, he lost his desire for accounting. "Accounting got rote to me. I loved the information technology side, though," he said.

After he left E-Audit, Rivenbark faced a career turning point. He decided to go back to school and learn even more about the field that fascinates him, computer technology. Currently, he's seeking a Master's degree in Decision Information Sciences.

He chose NERDC because of its reputation.

"I knew that NERDC is the place to work in Florida for networking," he said.

He currently works with NERDC's Network Services section to help make connections for any installations on the Wide Area Network. "I do whatever they need me to do," he said, laughing.

The best thing about working at NERDC? All the learning relates directly to what he's studying in the classroom.

"I love my job here. It's a 100 percent learning experience every day. I even enjoy reading my textbooks now. I never would have said that about accounting."

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