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Father inspired to follow daughter's Dominican path

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Father inspired to follow daughter's Dominican path

When Jennifer Mac-Romero' 15 walked at Commencement on May 16, her father was in the audience with more than a proud look. He plans to follow her footsteps.

“She is an inspiration. I really envy her,” says Jaime Mac, a 54-year-old [Adult Degree Completion](#) student at Dominican whose daughter graduated with a degree in Health Science and Public Health. “She has reached the point that one day I hope to reach and surpass. They say the sky’s is the limit and she is reaching for the sky.”

Jennifer, who ultimately wants to create her own health organization and help people in need in disadvantaged countries, aided her father’s transition into Dominican. When he became frustrated that the absence of a four-year college degree prevented him from being promoted at his full-time job, Jennifer encouraged her dad to join the Adult Degree Completion program at Dominican. She brought him an application. They filled it out together and attended orientation together. Jennifer even dropped her dad off for his first adult evening class in Guzman Hall.

“I felt like a parent must feel. You are pushing them away to something new but you are very proud,” Jennifer says. “I walked him upstairs. Having to say good-bye was a hard thing to do, but you know this is the right thing for him to do.”

Jaime, whose first language is Spanish, worked with faculty members such as English instructor Robert Bradford and business communications instructor Giulia Welch at Dominican to advance his writing skills in pursuit of his management degree. He is already talking about seeking a teaching credential at Dominican or his master’s in business.

“It’s never too late to go back to school,” Jennifer told him. “It’s going to get you forward.”

Jennifer, too, is interested in pursuing her Master’s in Public Health. She has been accepted to the University of San Francisco.

When Jennifer enrolled at Dominican, she first considered Psychology and Occupational Therapy as majors. During her sophomore year it was suggested to Jennifer by term assistant professor Lynne LoPresto in the [School of Health and Natural Sciences](#) that there is a need for bilingual and bicultural public health officials. Dr. Martha Nelson, chair of the Department of Public Health and Health Services, has been supportive of Jennifer’s career path since.

So has Jennifer’s dad. They routinely had dinner together in Caleruega Dining Hall twice a week before he went to class and she retreated to the library to do homework. Sometimes they met at picnic tables on campus to do homework together.

“Dominican has not only changed us as people, but our father-daughter relationship as well,” Jennifer says.

Come commencement on May 16, it was a historic change. Jennifer was the first in her family to graduate from college. Her dad insists he will be next.