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ForsythBusiness

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MARKETING



Nancy Ruff, left, taught Debra Moore, center, who taught Amanda Mathis. The three women teach together at South Forsyth High School.

Photos by Jennifer Sami Forsyth County News

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A true team approach

Trio of teachers taught each other

By Jennifer Sami
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Debra Moore started her teaching career about 17 years ago, about the same time Amanda Mathis was working on her handwriting.

Now, the two women teach marketing at South Forsyth High School, along with Moore's former college professor, Nancy Ruff.

"I feel like both of them are co-workers at an equal level," Moore said. "It really doesn't feel like Dr. Ruff was my teacher or Amanda was my student. It just feels like we're a team working together.

"It kind of surprised me that it feels so normal, but I think it's just because we have the right people working together."

Though Moore has been at the school for 13 years, this is the first year the three "generations" of marketing instructors are teaching together. In fact, it's the first teaching job for Mathis, 22, a recent grad-



South Forsyth High School Juniors Kelsey Rudd and Joye Rouillier look over statistics on text messaging in Forsyth County with teacher Debra Moore. The statistics are being used for a marketing project.

uate of Georgia Southern University.

Getting to work with Moore, she said, is why she came back to teach in Forsyth County.

"She's the one that inspired me to go into marketing education," Mathis said. "She built this program so well that

I knew I could learn the most from her. She's taught me the ropes ... anything I need help with, she's been able to help me.

"It's everything I thought it would be. It's wonderful having her as my mentor."

Just a month into her teaching job, Mathis has already

begun recruiting students to the Future Business Leaders of America and DECA, a high school marketing organization that encourages the development of business and leadership skills.

Being a part of the busi-

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some additional veterans in five years, said he lives next to VA is a big inconvenience," lot better," Tate said.

FROM 1B

Teachers: Three share ideas, assignments

ness- and marketing-g geared organizations, she said, was a huge part of her high school experience. The program, she said, also gave her a competitive edge in college, where she said she was more advanced than her peers.

All three teachers work together with DECA. Mathis said she was worried about being the youngest of the instructors, but Ruff said her colleague contributes just as much experience, especially around social marketing.

"Social networking is such a big part of marketing today," Ruff said. "It's been very helpful to have three generations, or three age groups of teachers, because we all have different experiences and I think that makes it beneficial to students ... and we make a great team because of it."

Ruff, who taught high school before her years as a professor at the University of Georgia, returned to the prep setting last year at Forsyth Central. She's excited to be reunited with her former pupil.

"She was one of my star students, somebody that definitely stood out in the crowd years ago, and I knew she had built such a wonderful marketing program here, so it's just very exciting," she said.

"We really do admire one another and we're compatible as far as teaching and working, so it makes it a very enjoyable place to work."

Through the marketing program, students get to work with local businesses, developing business



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Left, Amanda Mathis goes through marketing information with seniors Farina Irani and Cosette Scutt. Right, Nancy Ruff fields a question during her introduction to fashion marketing class.

strategies, advertising materials and demographical research.

Moore's program is the largest in the county, with students receiving top honors at state and international competitions.

Ruff credits Moore for the DECA program, but Moore said the program might not be here had it not been for her former professor's lasting impression.

"Some of the things she shared were things I really remembered and have learned throughout my whole career," Moore said. "Some

things you forget after you take the test, but the things she taught were very relevant and were things I'm still using."

While the three stay busy in their classrooms, they make time for daily lunch in a makeshift breakroom. The three share ideas and assignments, as well as guest speakers.

"Everyone contributes something different," Mathis said. "It's been really neat to see the interaction that we all have and the connection that is there."