

Alumni Spotlight – January 2013

Sisters Living Their Dream, Combining Love for Education and Local Business

Frontier Community College graduates Jami and Niki Roethe are living out their dream as local business owners.

The twin sisters left their full-time teaching positions and became the proud owners and operators of Uniquely Rustique in Fairfield.

“We always wanted to operate our own store,” stated Jami. “When Rustique Discount Center went up for sale, we decided this was our opportunity and thought it would be much better to start with an established business.”



When they purchased the store in 2008, it was primarily home décor sales. However, as strong advocates for education, they made the decision to add educational materials for teachers along with games and toys for the classroom. The store is a blend of home and garden décor and educational materials. Most recently, Jami and Niki have started tutoring sessions at the store for area grade school students. They currently have six students that they work one-on-one with.

Community involvement is important to Jami and Niki. They are involved in the Chamber Retail Merchants and serve as the “Go To” people for the group’s special events. They volunteer with the Wayne County’s Historical Society at the Hanna House Museum where they do cleaning and general maintenance, set up displays, staff the museum on Saturdays, and provide occasional museum tours to school groups.

Prior to becoming store owners, the sisters were teachers at Lancaster Christian School in Wabash County for nine years. Jami taught grades 2 through 6 and Niki taught kindergarten through 2nd grade. Taking experiences from their classrooms, they have published a book, “Teaching Tales: Lessons and Laughter from a Christian School”, which is available on Amazon.

Jami and Niki attended Frontier Community College and completed the Associate in Science degree in 1997. While students at FCC, they participated in the student work study program; Jami worked in the Learning Resource Center and Niki in the Records Office. “As students it was evident that both Jami and Niki would be successful as teachers,” stated FCC Assistant Dean of Student Services Jan Wiles. “Their campus and community involvement was strong then and is even stronger now. Frontier is fortunate to have them among our distinguished graduates” .

In addition to their course load and working part-time, they were volunteer tutors with FCC’s Adult Literacy Program. Both were members of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and they were both presented with the distinguished President’s Award at graduation.

Following their graduation from Frontier, the sisters attended Eastern Illinois University where they earned a bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education in 1999. They later received dual certification.

Jami and Niki are 1995 Fairfield Community High School graduates and the daughters of Jim and Susan Roethe of Golden Gate.