

Father and Daughter Pair Up for Business

By Amy Parkhurst

Shannon Roldan remembers meeting her dad's clients when she was a little girl. She and her mother would be in the kitchen, baking cookies, and would greet Dave Gilliland's clients as they walked through the door and to his home office.

Roldan, now 30, works with some of those same clients. "They come into the office and say, 'I remember you,'" said Roldan, who recently received her CPA and works with her father on Main Street in Mukwonago.

Gilliland started a business as a certified public accountant in Mukwonago in summer 1982. He recognized the need for a CPA in Mukwonago, and began working from his home.

By 1985, Gilliland had moved his business to the Main Street location and has been there ever since.

Roldan graduated from Mukwonago High School in 1996 and went on to get her bachelor's degree in horticulture from University of Wisconsin-Madison. After she graduated, she worked in sales for a year but didn't feel like it was a good fit.

"My dad was looking for someone to take over an open position in his office at about the same time I was looking for something different," Roldan said.

Gilliland had one requirement for his daughter, however — that she take some accounting classes. Roldan began taking classes at Lakeland College part time while she worked for her father.

"I realized I was good at accounting, and I liked it. My dad and I were really getting along, so I just continued taking classes."

She earned another bachelor's degree in accounting and, on the Fourth of July, got her CPA scores back.

Roldan - who promised her father in 2002 that she would work for him for at least two years — has now been with him for six.

"It's something I never would have thought would ever happen," said Gilliland. "It's great having her here."

Roldan agreed that the two have a good working relationship. Being related allows them flexibility with their schedules and vacation times and provides a relaxed environment.

The benefit, said Gilliland, of working with a CPA, is that CPAs are held to higher standards and a code of ethics. They are required to take five full days of seminars each year to continue their education, and there is client confidentiality.

"Coming here, where we have two CPAs, people will always be working with one of us. There's no working with a secretary or assistant," said Gilliland.

Although Roldan says she's been in school for her "entire life," she says so with a smile, because she's happy to be where she is.

"At first, I didn't want to go back to school, but I just plowed right through it. I was more focused at that point. ... I like what I do," said Roldan.