

Computers just a tool for engineering woman

By SHIRLEE IDEN

Susan Sutherland says it took two years for her classmates to take her seriously.

She explained that she is the only woman in her class and the only one in her department.

In just a year, the 21-year-old senior hopes to have a bachelor of industrial engineering degree.

Susan, who lives in Farmington, is a student at the General Motors Institute (GMI) in Flint.

"Originally, I went there to study computer science, but I later decided on engineering," she said.

"Now I use computers just as a tool."

GMI is an accredited college with an enrollment of more than 3,000 students pursuing degrees in engineering and industrial administration.

Many women are now entering these technical fields.

According to SUSAN, six women will graduate in July and the freshman class has more than 200 women in it.

"You must be prepared to compete and to work very hard at GMI," she said.

"More than 50 percent of students beginning their studies at GMI drop out during the first year."



SUSAN SUTHERLAND

Susan not only did not drop out but has been active in student government and school clubs.

Her studies and extra curricular activities led to school administrators choosing her as a candidate for "Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities."

She was recently admitted to that elite group.

Susan also is the first woman to win the Robot Award, an honorary society for people who excel in student activities.

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING has been a stagnant field, she said, but is now dynamic and growing.

For Susan, going to college has necessarily meant working to earn her way.

"You can only go to GMI on a co-op basis," she said. "You go to school for six weeks and then work for six weeks."

Looking back over her four years at the school, Susan said: "At first I was scared. All the guys and the teachers kept an eye on me. After two years my own classmates took me seriously."

SUSAN HAS SIX MORE months of school and then will take six months to write her thesis.

"Quantifying the inefficiency cost related to normal line set-up" is the title of her proposed thesis.

"It will run from 50 to 100 pages," she said, "but there is no set length."

Second oldest in a family of five children, Susan hopes to get a master's degree.

"I'm deciding between management and organizational psychology," she said.

"I could go to school at night for

management, but if I go into organizational psychology, I have to go to Akron, Ohio."

If she decides to go to Akron, she will need a fellowship so she can teach part of the time to pay expenses.

"I would also like to take the professional engineering exam," she said. "I need that to be able to go into consulting."

Susan said she's not a women's liber but would encourage women to do just what they want.

"I feel if a woman has the mind to go into a field like this, she should."

SHE SAID THAT GMI is a "fantastic" school with a lot of personalized teaching.

"A large class has about 25 students," she said. "So a great deal of the studies are on a one-to-one basis, and teachers are very available and helpful."

In addition to her studies and work schedule, Susan found time to be active in student government and "a lot of sports."

She played volleyball, basketball, and softball and was a member of the Karate Club.

"The school has a gym and you can get all the equipment and sports

clothes you need, even ski boots, at no charge."

Susan was graduated from Our Lady of Sorrows High School where she was chosen in her sophomore year as "the most improved student."

At GMI she continues to do well with a high B average.

She admits she gets teased about being a woman in a man's profession.

"My counselor warned me that the teachers and students would be prejudiced against me," she said.

"But I found this not to be true. I like what I'm doing and the people I work with."

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Policewoman's job both amusing and frustrating

By MARY JO BEIL

When patrolman Harris drives down the street in a Farmington Hills scout car, there are a lot of double-takes.

Because officer Harris is Linda Harris, the only woman in the Farmington Hills Police Department. And she says she loves her job.

"I'm happy when I can help someone," she said. "And this job gives me an opportunity to help all kinds of people."

Officer Harris recalled several amusing experiences that have occurred since she joined the department.

"One time, an elderly man called the department for help. When I showed up, he refused to let me in. He wanted a man."

Officer Harris said that even small children react in this way.

"When little boys see the scout car

coming down the street, they start waving," she said. "But when they see me in it, their hands drop."

BUT THERE are times when she thinks people aren't so amusing.

"I get frustrated with people sometimes," she said. "For instance, young kids connect officers with arrests and delinquents and they say we pick on them when they have long hair. But they had mouth me because I'm a policeman."

Policewoman Harris said the answer is an open mind.

"I keep an open mind for them," she said, "and I want them to do the same for me."

But Officer Harris said her work with juveniles has still been successful.

"I think they react to me very well," she said. "And I think it's because it's easier for them to talk to me."

MOST OF her work has been with juveniles during the two years she's been an officer with the department.

"I handle run-aways and rape cases," she said, "and also cases of abuse and neglect."

She said that there is a larger number of abuse and neglect cases in this area than most people realize and blames this on citizens' refusal to report them.

"You'd be amazed at what people know but won't talk about," she said.

Officer Harris said that people should report abuses to the police or social service organizations because such information is closely guarded.

"They can call me, or the school or the public health services," she said. "The information they give us is held in strictest confidence, and the party whom the complaint is filed against never knows who filed it."

EVEN THOUGH the bulk of her work is in the juvenile bureau, there is another aspect of her professional ability of which she is quite proud.

"I'm a member of the police academy pistol team and I won the trophy for shooting in 1972," she said. "It was the highest score ever recorded."

Officer Harris said she also won the Michigan pistol championship in 1973 and 1974.

"My parents are very proud of this," she said. "My dad has pictures

of me and the trophy on the walls of his tool and die shop."

Officer Harris said she looks forward to the future of the growing Farmington Hills department and says she has her own individual goals.

"I'D LIKE to get into intelligence and undercover work," she said, "and eventually even become commander."

Officer Harris said that right now, policewomen are primarily used in the juvenile sections of law enforcement.

"But there's going to have to be an opening up," she said. "Any policewoman could put her abilities to better use but it just hasn't opened up to that point yet."

When things do open up, Officer Harris gives the impression that she'll be right there. And perhaps, one day, she'll be Commander Harris.

Linda Harris, the only female officer in Farmington Hills.

Visitor prizes America

Mrs. Lois Carraminana has returned from Madrid, Spain, to spend the summer with her family, the August C. Dorandos of Stamen Circle, Farmington.

Mrs. Carraminana has been living in Madrid for the last four years and she said her experiences there have given her a greater appreciation for America.

"I like Spain very much and the people are extremely friendly," she said, "but the country has its problems."

Mrs. Carraminana said that Spain ruled by a dictatorship and that there is no freedom to own arms or read certain censored material.

"Every country has its problems," she said, "but living abroad teaches you that you don't know what you

have until you don't have it anymore. And I find I've become very patriotic."

Mrs. Carraminana made her first trip to Spain as an exchange student from Farmington High School in 1968.

"It was then I first met my husband-to-be, Fernando," she said.

After Mrs. Carraminana graduated from high school, she attended the University of Michigan for one year where she studied Spanish literature.

"Then I studied at the University of Madrid for a year, and I later decided to make my home there," she said.

Mrs. Carraminana's husband, Fernando, serves in the Spanish army reserves during the summer and is a student at Madrid University the rest of the year.

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