

WHEN

Lucy MET Bill

Chance encounter at Riverdale Career Day leads to a lasting business partnership.

When Bill McGowan '78 spoke at Riverdale's Career Day in 1997, he was immediately impressed with sophomore Lucy Cherkasets '99. She introduced herself right after his talk on broadcast journalism and asked for his business card. With two years before graduation, Lucy knew that she was interested in broadcasting as a career and that it was never too early to ask for advice, especially from a fellow Riverdalian who was so approachable.

"It was easy to connect to an alum," says Lucy. "Having gone to the same alma mater, we could talk about our shared experience at the school. Bill was very generous with his time, and we met later that year when he invited me for a tour of the network television studio where he worked. It was a real help to me to see how broadcast worked from the inside."

Bill had excelled at sports at Riverdale. As captain of the football team he was part of the Bertino legend, leading the team for Bertino's 200th win on the football field. He stayed in New York for college, attending Fordham University and going right into broadcast news at WCBS.

By the time Bill met Lucy in 1997, he had produced nearly 700 news magazine programs for networks and production companies. After years in the business Bill realized that teaching and mentoring came naturally to him and he enjoyed returning to campus to work with students.

"I love what I do, and I hoped to ignite a spark in Riverdale students by making Career Day presentations. Everyone is always telling kids how tough things are, and I wanted to be more positive and inspire them," Bill explains.

Lucy kept in touch with Bill, and when she graduated from college, she approached him about a job.

"The job market in 2003 was a tough one. I asked Bill for a temporary assignment with his new company, Clarity Media (CMG), a firm that offers media training for professionals, and it grew into a full-time job," Lucy recalls.

Thus began a professional relationship that's lasted more than 13 years, culminating in a new business venture headed by Lucy at CMG.

CMG is expanding its career training division, which guides job seekers through the entire process, from their first cover letter to negotiating a salary.

CMG is partnering with iViewXpress, an online platform that allows job seekers to record interviews for potential employers. CMG will offer interview strategies and coaching to the site's clients, bringing career counseling expertise to video interviews.

CMG's career services are helping clients stand apart from the pack of other job seekers, and then once in the door, excelling at the job interview. Lucy and Bill trace the idea back to their years at Riverdale. As Bill notes, "Like all Riverdalians, we emerged from our high school years as independent thinkers and creative problem solvers, qualities we help our clients to clearly articulate when seeking a new job opportunity or pursuing career advancement. Bringing clarity to what makes you distinctive is a critical communications skill. Knowing how to do it can make the difference between working at something you're passionate about and just settling for a job."

"We're both hard-working and perfectionists, too," Lucy adds, "so we had a lot in common right off the bat. Therefore working together, first as teacher and student and now as colleagues, makes the utmost sense!"

Bill lives in Hastings-on-Hudson with his wife, Donna, and their three children. He enjoys golf and is an accomplished chef; he has had to abandon these two activities this spring in order to teach his three teenagers to drive.

Lucy lives in Greenwich Village with her husband, Benoit, and their Boston terrier, Charlie, who so far has not requested driving lessons.



Photo: Joe Vericker/PhotoBureau.