



“Education is a gift,” says Lisa Karst ’12, Moraine Park Technical College’s 2014 Distinguished Alumnus and the 28<sup>th</sup> recipient of the award. “As with all things, you get out of it what you put into it. How you choose to apply yourself will directly impact what you receive. That applies to everything in life – your family, job and relationships.”

A lifelong learner, community service advocate, mother and wife, Karst is the assistant vice president/regional operations leader at National Exchange Bank and Trust, in Beaver Dam. She holds a number of Moraine Park certificates, including Principles of Management, 2001; Organizational Management, 2007; and Human Resources Development, 2009. Additionally, Karst earned her Leadership Development associate’s degree in 2012.

Karst, who resides near Beaver Dam in the Town of Burnett, insists her Moraine Park learning experiences enlivened her 25-year career in the financial services industry. “When I first enrolled at Moraine Park, I wasn’t necessarily looking for a degree,” she admits. “I just wanted to improve my skills and knowledge of human relations, personal interaction and leadership. I liked Moraine Park because it offered a broader focus than other colleges, so if I wanted to change direction, my education would better serve me.”

As Karst’s education and professional on-the-job experience meshed, she leaped the corporate ladder – jumping from administrative assistant to customer service officer/branch manager, and finally to assistant vice president/regional operations leader.

“Her journey through her degree gave her a great complement to her experience in banking,” says Nicole Wiese, Karst’s supervisor. While Karst possessed most of the skills needed for advancement, those skills were further strengthened and broadened through her educational experience, according to Wiese.

Karst wholeheartedly agrees. “In the Leadership Development program I explored more about myself and applied what I learned where I worked,” she says. Karst gained knowledge and skills enrichment that boosted her personal and professional growth.

In particular, she mastered the tools and skills necessary to effectively manage staff and related challenges. “I learned the human behavioral aspects of leading people; how to facilitate employee development; conflict resolution skills; and the value of continuous learning,” says Karst.

A stellar student and role model, according to Leadership Development Instructor Mary Vogl-Rauscher, Karst attended Moraine Park while working full-time, volunteering in her community and juggling family life. Once again, Karst “put into it what she wanted to get out of it ...”

While pursuing her education, one of Karst’s daughters, Emma, was also pursuing a college degree. “It was kind of cool being in school at the same time,” Karst remembers. Today, Karst and her husband, Don, enjoy three grandchildren. Their daughters, Emma and Sabrina, are 25 and 28.

Karst, who loves her family dearly, also relishes her community and alma mater. She’s an active member of Beaver Dam Noon Kiwanis, Beaver Dam Chamber of Commerce, Church Health Services Inc. and Moraine Park’s Leadership Development Advisory Committee. In this role, Karst works with other business and organizational leaders to continually improve and mold Moraine Park’s Leadership Development program.

“I value the education I received at Moraine Park and I enjoy helping others in the program by assisting with the review of curriculum in an ever-changing business environment. Service is important,” Karst maintains. “I find it gratifying to give back to the community in which I live and work.”

Karst offers simple advice to graduates. “You get out what you put in.”