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Lacey Adkison and her father, Marion Adkison, traveled different paths but they are both aiming for the same goal, a degree from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

ABAC Classroom Home to Both Father & Daughter

Lacey Adkison had no choice. She felt it necessary to give a nudge to the student sitting in front of her in the history class at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College because he was talking too much. Especially since that student happened to be her father.
“She gave me a little punch in the back,” Marion Adkison said. “I started laughing because I knew she wanted me to hush up.”

Lacey, 21, and Marion, 52, are in their eighth semester together as ABAC students. It was Lacey who challenged her dad to return to the classroom after he had talked about it for some time.

“She was the main reason I came back,” Marion said. “She told me to ‘put up or shut up.’”

After being away from ABAC since the early 1980s when he took classes toward a business degree, Marion climbed into the car with his daughter, and they car-pooled the 30 miles from their home in Rebecca.

Early on, they had some classes together but now Marion is enrolled in the Diversified Agriculture bachelor’s degree program, and Lacey will graduate in May with her associate degree in nursing.

What’s it like seeing your father walk across campus with a backpack?

“It’s always been funny,” Lacey said. “The funniest time was when he was my good friend’s lab partner. That was something.

“The worst part was when he started back on the computer and had no idea about Microsoft Word. I showed him how to use it and then told him ‘you’re on your own after this.’”

Despite being a few years older than most of them, Marion feels accepted by the other ABAC students. In fact, they turn to him for advice.

“I guess it’s because I have been out there for a while,” Marion, who finished his associate degree in business last summer, said. “I worked for Kelley Manufacturing and did some farming. But this is my job now.”
If grades are any indication, Marion is doing a great job at his new line of work. He has a 3.58 grade point average on a 4.0 scale and has an “A” in every class so far this semester.

“It’s difficult,” Marion, a 1979 Turner County High School graduate, said. “Some of this stuff I wouldn’t have had to crack a book on when I was here in the 80s, but now I have to study. I wanted to prove a point that even though I’m older, I can still do the work.”

Lacey was the valedictorian of the 2010 Turner County High School senior class. She admits that the nursing classes are rigorous. But there’s a reason for that.

“I’ve always wanted to do nursing because I love helping people,” Lacey, who has a 3.71 GPA, said. “To survive in these classes, you have to have the ‘want-to.’ If you’re in nursing just for the money, you’ll never make it.

“ABAC is known for the quality of its nursing program. Anyone that graduates from this program is going to get a job.”

Marion says the Diversified Agriculture degree will give him a “wide open” future when he completes his course work in 2015. He will have plenty of options ranging from equipment to chemical sales.

Two other daughters are a part of the family, Amanda, who lives in Alexandria, La., and Mindy, who works at South Georgia Banking Company in Ashburn. Of course there is also the wife and mom of the family, Celi, who Lacey calls “the real worker in the household.”

With Lacey deep into her nursing curriculum and Marion spending most of his time in the Agricultural Sciences building, they don’t have any classes together anymore. Since he’s one of their classmates, some of Lacey’s friends now call Marion by his first name. But for Lacey, he’ll always be dad.

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