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People

DRVN 101 owner earns awards for business

Joanna Michaud
staff reporter

Nicole Bisconer, 32, said she loves driving and being in a car. So much, in fact, that she decided to start DRVN 101 Driving School in March of 2006.

"I was already a licensed drive instructor and I just decided this was what I wanted to do," Bisconer said. "The kids come in excited because they are going to learn how to drive. It's great to have a job where people are excited to see you everyday."

Bisconer, a Brush Prairie/Orchards area resident, attended Battle Ground High School and graduated from Summit View High School. She said she attended Portland Community College and obtained a two-year Business Management degree. Bisconer said she had considered transferring because she wanted to learn more about being an entrepreneur and starting her own business, but she said nothing in the advanced degree curriculum was about starting a business.

Aside from reading any and every book she can find about driver's education and teaching driver's education, Bisconer also continues her business education by reading self-help books about people who run their own businesses and any other business knowledge she can find.

Bisconer, who is now the vice president of the area for the Professional Driving School Association, recently received a Business Excellence Leadership award from the Clark County Target Zero traffic safety task force, through the Vancouver Police Department.

The task force's goal is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries caused by impaired drivers to zero by 2030.

A second award, this one from the Vancouver Business Journal, was also awarded to Bisconer because of her work



NICOLE BISCONER, owner of DRVN 101, said the fact that she enjoys driving in cars so much is one of the reasons she decided to open up her own driving school.

with DRVN 101. She said this award was more of an accomplished and under 40 award that looked at business growth within the last five years.

"I wouldn't have gotten these awards if it wasn't for DRVN 101," Bisconer said. "If it weren't for the people at the driving school and all the parents practicing with their kids, together we all made this business great."

Besides instructing at the driving school, Bisconer said she tries to have DRVN 101 participate in safety fairs. She said they have a video they typically like to show at the safety fairs that describes how to avoid an

accident and what to do if one is inevitable. She said they also try to be involved in the Every 15 Minutes program, which aims to display the tragedies of drunk driving.

Bisconer said DRVN 101 has a pair of beer goggles that they have students wear sometimes and drive through some cones in order to show them how impaired their driving is when intoxicated. DRVN 101 also does a driver's education class at Prairie High School and Battle Ground High School. Safety fairs DRVN 101 has participated in include events at Living Hope Church, Heritage High School football donation event,

and at the Grease Monkey in Battle Ground.

When she isn't instructing new drivers, Bisconer is a wife to husband, Chad, and a mother to her 2-year-old daughter, Chandler. In her spare time, Bisconer said she plays in pool tournaments. She said she goes to a tournament in Las Vegas once a year and to tournaments in Lincoln City that are held twice a year.

"We had a pool table at my house when I was a kid and my dad really got me into it," she said. "He passed away when I

It's great to have a job where people are excited to see you everyday."
~Nicole Bisconer

was 21 and it was kind of my way to deal with his death. I would go and play pool and practice for hours."

In 2006 and 2007, Bisconer said she won tournaments in Lincoln City in the team events. Bisconer placed fifth in a Seattle pool tournament, and said she usually ranks somewhere in the top five in the individual competition. Bisconer said she just enjoys the fun of playing pool and meeting all kinds of new people.

"I usually do well enough to pay for my trip," Bisconer said. "It's just fun to see how I rank."

DRVN 101 is located at 11701 NE 95th St., Suite D, Vancouver. Bisconer can be reached there at (360) 892-6988.

Bisconer wished to express her sincere acclamation of her success to WSU's Small Business Development Center and its director Janet Harte.