

Kym McNicholas: A St. Vincent Legend

By Analise Silva

A car accident throwing a wrench in her career and sending her back to the Bay Area, Ms. McNicholas learned early on that her employment might not follow a straight path. Now an Emmy Award-Winning Newscaster, Ms. McNicholas admitted that things did not always go her way in high school. Discouraged early on by her public school math and science teachers that it was “OK to struggle (in these subjects) because women don’t usually go into STEM careers anyway,” McNicholas said that it was Ms. Donovan’s support and encouragement to not write in a formulaic style, but to embrace writing from the heart, along with Mr. Deshazer’s countless hours explaining new concepts after school that she learned to fight for what she believed in. That’s not all, McNicholas accounts all of her confidence that has given her a journalism career to these St. Vincent teachers as well. “I would not be where I am today if not for St. Vincent’s,” Kym admitted.

Her successful time at St. Vincent led McNicholas to Sacramento State University, where she had originally planned to become an athletic trainer for the 49ers. However, by “opening (her) mind and heart, and not listening to how other defined success,” she eventually ended up taking a producing job at a tiny KFTY in Santa Rosa. Despite peers calling Internet video a joke, McNicholas pounced on a new online show called “Talk on Stocks.” Thus becoming a pioneer as a video business/technology journalist whose job was to cover the reemergence of Silicon Valley from 1998-2000. Realizing this was not a permanent position, McNicholas took action. “I spent the next 48 hours gathering data on every publicly traded energy company across America, their press contact information, their analyst information, their key vendors and customers, and when I had a list of nearly 1,000 companies, I hit send to the News Director,” McNicholas shared. “Within 5 minutes he called me and offered me the ability to work there, although he didn’t know what he was going to do with me. I arrived before the woman who was hired for the initial job could arrive, and I had to fill-in for the run-throughs. I proved myself after spending every waking hour between the time I got the offer and those run-throughs, learning everything I could. They ended up splitting the job between the two of us. When the contract for that show came to an end, I told my agent I felt like doing sports. He said there was no way because I didn’t have a video resume reel doing sports and I had never done sports before. But I used to be a trainer for sports teams throughout high school as well as a stats girl and I was immersed in sports having grown up with two brothers, a dad.” In other words, the confident St. Vincent alum had fought hard for her spot and was not going to give it up.

Then landing a spot on a bigger new broadcasting station, McNicholas was still not satisfied. To this day she is restless and always looking for innovative ideas that would help improve her job and those around her. With St. Vincent’s a big part of the foundation of her career, McNicholas “thanks her lucky stars” to have transferred to St. Vincent de Paul her junior year, and come in contact with those who believed in her. Kym McNicholas’ attitude toward the SV community encompasses those who are lucky enough to experience it: St. Vincent’s has a place for everyone, and everyone will find someone here that believes in them.