



Lunch with a side of sage advice

Story by Brianna (Martin) Patterson '03, M'07

In the mid-1970s, Ed Urbaniak was a basketball player and a business major at then-Findlay College, where he met Professor Ken Buchenroth, a mentor who not only attended every UF basketball game but also would become a lifelong influence in Urbaniak's professional and personal life.

"I had a wonderful experience ... driven by a group of faculty members who were superior to any other group of people I could have been exposed to from a college standpoint," he said of his years at FC.

Urbaniak graduated in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in accounting and today is president and CEO of AK Tube LLC, a subsidiary of AK Steel Corp. in Walbridge, Ohio. He recently was asked by faculty members to become involved with the College of Business at The University of Findlay as a mentor to accounting student Brian Reid, who will graduate in May 2009.

Being involved with the mentoring program is a way for

Urbaniak to "give back" to the University. With several of his five children grown and living independently, Urbaniak decided this was the perfect time to become involved at Findlay.

Urbaniak and Reid meet and communicate on a regular basis to share experiences and advice. "He'll call me and talk to me about what's going on with his company, and that's nice having someone speak to you on the same level," said Reid. "That's important. I feel like we are on the same level, even though he has more experience."

Urbaniak is quick to point out that he learns many new things from

"There's no way I could duplicate what Mr. Buchenroth did, but it's my way to take time with a student as he did for me."



Reid. He noted that college students today have been exposed to much more than students of Urbaniak's generation, which creates a learning opportunity for him as a mentor.

Urbaniak credited his own professional success to the faculty members at Findlay College, who taught him that success comes through hard work and treating people as you would like to be treated, especially peers and subordinates. He stressed that intelligence and good grades give students the opportunity to be successful, and hard work and kindness make them successful.

Through the mentoring program, Urbaniak hopes that Reid continues to believe in himself and remain true to his values, regardless of the circumstances. "Through many of my experiences and many times during my career, I wasn't myself," said Urbaniak. "It's a friendship program – not a mentoring program. He's tapping into my years of experience – my successes and failures."