

Patti Darkow

Higher Education, Mathematics, Chemistry
Part-Time Math Instructor,
Forsyth Technical Community College;
Math Tutor, Math Advantage;
Math Tutor, Sloan Academics
Winston-Salem, NC
Clemmons, NC



Comparing math to a puzzle just waiting to be solved, Patti Darkow always had an affinity for the subject. In high school, she took a particular interest in geometry, and that's when she knew she wanted to someday teach math. Obtaining her BA in Secondary Education with a Major in Mathematics and minors in chemistry and computers at the University of Akron, Patti began substitute teaching in Gaeta, Italy at a secondary school for families in the US Navy.

"I really enjoy math, and I also enjoy working with children," Patti noted. "These two facts together just made becoming a math teacher inevitable. I adore watching students discover the concepts that have been giving them difficulty."

Throughout the course of her career, Patti has continued to teach in some capacity while raising her four children, which is a job in and of itself. She taught part-time at the University of Akron for many years. She has substitute taught, held both short- and long-term subbing positions, tutored students who were unable to attend school due to medical issues and terminal illness, and was a classroom teacher in both part- and full-time capacities. In fact, she taught math and computer science at Coventry High School in Akron, from 1986-95, at the same school where her brother was also a math teacher. Relocating to North Carolina, she taught middle school math at St. Leo School and middle and high school math at First Christian Academy.

Since 2000, Patti has been working part-time at Forsyth Technical Community College as a Math Instructor while simultaneously tutoring students in math at Sloan Academics and at Math Advantage. She also volunteers at Winston-Salem Street School, which is privately supported by area churches, giving high school students a last chance at earning their diplomas.

"Today there are many problems with our educational system," Patti said about what it's like working in the field today. "As a tutor, teaching children on a one-on-one basis, it is much easier getting to know the child and their needs. Even as a classroom teacher it's essential to know each child and to care about them. It can be frustrating to know what a child is going through, knowing that you can't improve his/her home situation. But it helps the child to know that there's someone that does care. Then I pray for those students."

Patti has been on textbook committees, curriculum development committees, and has served as a technology implementation coordinator. She's designed programs to assist students in passing proficiency tests, and has prepared students to take college entrance exams. She's also written a program to help middle school students balance a checkbook and work with money, and has written several presentations for various math curriculum.

Teaching Sunday School and Vacation Bible School since she was about 16-years-old, Patti also enjoys acting in community theater and enjoying quality time with loved ones. As part of a big, beautiful family, the mother of four whose ninth grandchild was born just before Thanksgiving.