



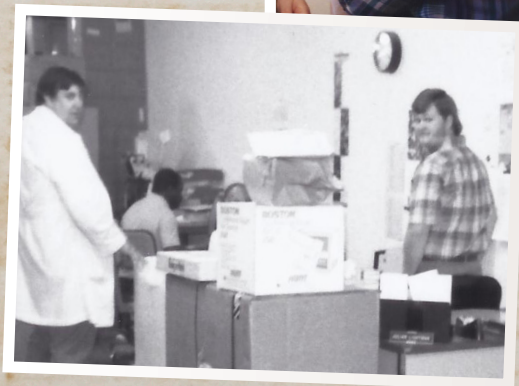
# MedStar St. Mary's Hospital

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## Then and Now

*As part of our hospital's 100-year anniversary, we are taking a look at Then and Now by highlighting a hospital associate who has been a valuable part of our history in each issue of The Pulse.*



While attending Frostburg State, Donald Sirk worked during the summers and on holiday breaks at St. Mary's Hospital in the Purchasing Department (now Materials Management). He unloaded trucks and stocked shelves. During the summer between his junior and senior year of college, Paul Barber, the vice president of finance at the time, encouraged Don to take as many computer courses as possible. Donald joked, "I wanted to spend my senior year taking basket weaving." Instead, he would graduate with a major in finance and a minor in computer science.

When Donald was hired full time in Data Processing in 1983, he shared a 9 x 10 office in the old hospital with Paul. His desk was made out of a piece of plywood with 2 x 4s as legs. "I spent the first year reading stacks of documents," said Don, all at the encouragement of Paul who pushed Don toward becoming proficient in computers. It was in the late 1980s when the hospital purchased its first PC. From that first PC, to Keane and First Coast then Cerner and Electronic Medical Records, Don has led our IT Department as we've become one of the most technologically savvy hospitals in the state.

Having worked at the hospital for 30 years, Donald says he's stayed for a whole host of reasons. "I work with and for a great bunch of people," he said. "At both the Administrative and Board levels, there's always been recognition that IT was the future," said Don. He also takes pride in the fact that, "we started out with sheets of paper, and now have an entire electronic system."

For more than 15 years, Donald also served as the Employee Representative. "It was rewarding," said Don. "We're fortunate to have an Administrative team that is engaged in the problem solving process - associates really do have a voice."

Although he has many professional accomplishments, his greatest "joy and reward" is his daughter Randi. Don and his wife, Renee, recently watched Randi graduate from West Virginia University.