Seven children support Mom’s PhD dream

By Chantal Van Reau

With seven children of her own, Angela Mandich had the biggest challenge of her life – to operate the vacuum cleaner. But she says she learned how to do it again, and today, she is an example to her family.

The 36-year-old mother, who has a PhD in Kinesiology, says she was able to support her family because of the Canadian Occupational Therapy Foundation, which paid for her education. The foundation also helped ease her financial strain.

A key part of her success was her own experience. Since 1974, she has been helping children and their families.

For Mandich, who obtained a Doctor of Philosophy in Occupational Therapy in 1997, has taught at the School of Occupational Therapy since 1997. In 2000, she completed a Masters in Occupational Therapy, which was the first of its kind in Canada. She is now teaching in the School of Occupational Therapy.

In her first year of the program, she says she “really helped me get through it.”

Mandich’s advice for parents who want to go back to school is simple: “You set your mind to what you want to achieve, and you will overcome any obstacle you meet along the way.”