

Stamford Florist Finds His Niche in Teaching



Stu Spitz is a graduate from the University of Bridgeport's IDEAL Program and a Stamford resident.

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Stuart Spitz came to a realization as he was getting ready to take over his father's flower shop. He didn't want to be a florist. He wanted to teach.

"My wife suggested it because she knew I loved being around kids," said the Stamford resident. "Plus, I had already taught classes to people who came to work at the shop."

That's when he took the money he was going to use to buy the flower shop and brought it to the [University of Bridgeport](#), where he earned his bachelor's degree through the [IDEAL Program](#) (an

accelerated adult program). He later went on to earn his master's degree to teach from Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y. and is now a full-time special education teacher at the Eagle Hill School in Greenwich.

"I had such a positive experience attending school that it taught me to appreciate education that much more," he said. Today, he brings everything he learned to his own classroom of fourth and fifth graders, to whom he teaches writing, science and math.

He says he was not a "straight-A-student" when he was younger, which has given him some perspective on working with kids.

"I really love trying to make kids understand and I find gratification when they do," he said.

As he reflected on becoming and being a teacher, he joked that if someone would have told him 10 years ago that he would have abandoned his already-mapped out career as a florist to become a teacher, he would have never believed it.

"I would have said, 'It's Mother's Day, I have to make 100 flower arrangements!' It's been a long road of hard work and late nights of writing papers, but it was worth it."