Ryan Dockett ’91 learned to sell magic at Assumption. The management major met the love of his life, Kerry Haughey Dockett ’92, on campus, where he also discovered his passion for working in the entertainment industry. Two decades later, Dockett, Kerry and their two daughters live just north of New York City, and he commutes into the city for his job as vice president for national sales for Disney Theatrical Productions. He sees Disney magic happen every day from his office eight floors above the New Amsterdam Theater, where audience members emerge completely enchanted by their on-stage-live encounters with Mary Poppins.

“I’ve been with Disney almost 16 years now,” he says. “I’ve worked in sales for many Disney segments – Disney Cruise Line, Walt Disney World, Disneyland and Adventures by Disney. With Disney Theatrical, I get to see where the magic meets the road. I’m selling something that’s going to be ingrained in someone’s life. They’ll always remember the experience of seeing a live show.”

Dockett worked in national sales for Wyndham Hotels and Resorts before joining Disney in 1997, when he joined the sales team that launched the Disney Cruise Line. Promoted to his current position earlier this year, he oversees every aspect of ticket sales to attract theatre-goers of all ages to the magic of Disney’s productions on Broadway, which include Mary Poppins, The Lion King and Newsies – The Musical.

In spite of the global strength of the Disney brand, selling tickets to live entertainment still presents challenges. “When you mention the Disney brand, people have certain expectations,” Dockett says. “Every day, our challenge is to exceed those expectations. Also, everyone has an iPhone, and there are a lot of distractions for the entertainment dollar. We have to appeal to a wide audience. Disney shows are not just for children. Adults make up a huge percentage of our audience.”

Dockett is no stranger to the importance of capturing people’s attention and marketing entertainment on a large scale – skills he honed as a student at Assumption.

“As a sophomore, I ran the entertainment committee on campus,” he says. “We brought in a lot of concerts, guest speakers and even developed a speaker series. I moved into student government in my junior year and, as a senior, served as president of the Student Government Association. I was involved in a lot of campus activities, including Siblings Weekend and Spring Fest Weekend, before it was disbanded. I think the fireworks we set off helped to contribute to its end.”

As an undergraduate, Dockett juggled academics and the demands of his many cocurricular activities. “My classroom experience was fantastic, and I also had the opportunity to apply what I learned,” he says. “I was exposed to everything from reading contracts to business law. Having the opportunity to apply what I learned in the classroom as I learned it broadened my horizons as a student.”

A native of Lowell, Mass., Dockett applied to Assumption for three reasons.

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“The Catholic tradition of the Assumptionists, the low faculty-to-student ratio promised one-on-one interactions and the size of the Assumption community, which enabled me to get involved in a lot of different kinds of opportunities,” he says. “My experiences really laid a lot of foundational groundwork for where I am in my career today.”

The support of his professors, an internship at the former Centrum (now the DCU Center) and the network of successful Assumption alumni also provided Dockett with a springboard for realizing his professional aspirations. In gratitude, he and Kerry give back to the College as members of the President’s Council and serve as class agents.

“The general philosophy of the Assumptionists and the faculty helped shape my character and further define the person I have become. Fr. John Franck, A.A. ’70 is still in our lives, and I also keep in touch with classmates and with Bill Sutherland ’76. He’s been a great mentor and gave me my first job, with Collette Travel.”

Dockett knows there is no magic to finding that first job. Determining career goals, getting professional experience, seizing opportunities and actively networking are vital parts of a process that starts long before graduation.

“My advice to today’s Assumption students is to get involved on campus,” he says. “That’s what got me to where I am today. Look for opportunities to apply what you’re learning and get an internship. We recently hired one of our interns in our sales department into a full-time job. Also, network with classmates and alumni. Assumption has alumni with great careers.”

Bryan Dockett ’91

By Elizabeth Walker

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Working the Disney Magic