

PENFIELD POST

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Deadly Trend 5A

A report shows teens are getting in more fatal car crashes on weekdays.



Good Effort 17A

The Penfield boys soccer team extends Fairport to the limit.

Future Fun 12A

A draft plan outlines the town's parks and recreation goals.



STAFF PHOTO/CARRIE ANN GRIPPO

Chiropractor Melissa O'Loughlin of Brighton adjusts her husband Ryan at her new office in Penfield's Four Corners.

Finding her path

The second of a three-part series on young entrepreneurs tells the story of Melissa O'Loughlin's search for the right career path.

By **AMY CAVALIER**

Messenger Post Staff

Melissa O'Loughlin's story is that of a young college student looking for a spark.

She recently opened her own chiropractic office, Nature's Path Chiropractic and Wellness, at 2132 Five Mile Line Road in Penfield's Four Corners.

If you had asked the 26-year-old what she wanted to be less than 10 years ago, however, she wouldn't have been able to tell you.

"When I entered college, I had no idea what I really wanted to do," she said.

O'Loughlin is one of the twenty-somethings featured in a *Post* three-part series on young entrepreneurs in Penfield.

Advice from the young entrepreneur:

Words of advice from Melissa O'Loughlin on opening her own chiropractic practice:

- Be clear and focused. Know what you want and stay motivated.
- Starting your own business requires creativity.
- Don't wait for clients to come to you. Go out and find them.

O'Loughlin never intended to become a business owner. It was her then-boyfriend's tension headaches — and how they were relieved — that set O'Loughlin on a career path she was passionate about. That boyfriend, Ryan O'Loughlin, is now her husband.

Originally from Brewster, N.Y., a suburb of New York City, O'Loughlin attended Boston College, where she earned her undergraduate degree. She started out majoring in economics. Law school crossed her mind. Then the dean

Entrepreneur is finding her own path

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of arts and science at her college suggested she take a psychology class.

"I was a psychology major all through college, but when I thought about what to do with it, nothing excited me," she said.

Then something happened that gave her that spark.

She had seen what a chiropractor had done to relieve her boyfriend's tension headaches.

She started telling him how much she agreed with the natural methods behind the practice. Ryan O'Loughlin suggested she consider a career as a chiropractor. And that's when the pieces fell into place for her.

According to O'Loughlin, chiropractic can relieve headaches, low back, shoulder, neck and knee pains.

Treatment of the spine can also assist with conditions like ADHD, allergies, asthma, autism, ear infections, immune function, sports injuries and sleeping trouble, she said.

"I realized all my life I had a different way of looking at the human body and healing," she said. "I finally found this group of people who think like me. It was the first career I could see myself loving and wanting to do full time."

O'Loughlin finished a three-year premed course in two years at Boston College. In 2002, she and her husband moved to Canandaigua so she could attend the New York Chiropractic College in Seneca Falls. In her last year, she got a job working for Susan Schliff,

Next week

■ Restaurateurs John Rebis and Jeremy Vitale think they've found the recipe for success.

a chiropractor with offices on Empire Boulevard. She graduated in 2005 and she and Ryan moved to Brighton in April 2006.

She wanted to specialize in treating children and pregnant women, something called diplomate. By August, O'Loughlin had opened up her Nature's Path Chiropractic and Wellness practice in Penfield. She has built up a client base of about a dozen people and has been doing public education outreach.

"We don't get trained in school on how to start a business," she said. "The focus of school is on making you a doctor, not a business owner and that's really scary because that's a huge part of being a doctor."

When it came to advice, O'Loughlin contacted former professor Dr. Barry Wiese. He's been in the profession for

12 years and has taught it at least half of the time.

"Many students have the ability to go out on their own right out of school, but the fear of starting sometimes overrides the potential," Wiese said. "They just need someone who can say I've been there. You've got what it takes. Now go do it. Melissa is very intelligent. She just needed to make sure it was the right thing to do and it was."

O'Loughlin admits that there are always financial concerns when owning a business. But, she said, she's staying the course.

"I try to stay focused and passionate about my work," she said, "and I have faith that if I do, things will continue to work out."

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