Pam Anthony ’90 is a rising star in the health care world. In just seven years, her company, Restore Rehabilitation, LLC, has grown out of her basement and into 14 states and Washington, D.C.

Ironically, the Salisbury University alumna came to the school undeclared.

“I went in that summer before for my orientation and we went to the luncheon, and all the tables were full and my parents and I needed seats,” she said. “Nobody was sitting at the nursing table, and Dr. Susan Battistoni was the representative from the Nursing Department there. Without that happening and her being there to offer encouragement, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

After graduating from Salisbury University in 1990 with a B.S. in nursing, Anthony was immediately hired and thrust into the grind of the workforce due to the nursing shortage of 1991. It was a formative experience.

“As a 22-year-old kid, I was working nights and weekends and holidays,” she said. “Salisbury had a great program and I loved it, but nothing could prepare you for the politics of the workplace. We were all sort of naïve and trusting, but the politics in this particular hospital were difficult.

“There was such a shortage at the time that I had a job lined up several months before I graduated. Because I was not happy in this environment, I knew I had to make a change.”

After leaving the hospital, Anthony interviewed at Resolve Rehabilitation. It was there that she would meet her new mentor, Nancy Chadwick.

“She was the only job interview I ever went on,” she said. “I’m thrilled I went to nursing school and there’s so much you can do with a nursing degree, but even growing up, I liked the whole business aspect. To me the company was a perfect fit. I got to use my nursing degree and my nursing education, and got to mix it with business. It was a perfect match for me.”

When a larger conglomerate bought out that company several years later, Anthony was motivated to finally start her own business, Restore Rehabilitation.

“I was very lucky to have three great bosses over 15 years that taught me different aspects of this industry,” she said. “I was briefly working for a small family company that didn’t have the same business philosophy – I didn’t think that they treated their people as well as they should have – and a dear friend of mine asked, ‘why do you keep helping everybody else build their companies? Why don’t you just do this on your own?’”

Restore Rehabilitation specializes in medical and vocational case management, meaning they work with people who have been injured at work.

“When someone files a claim, the insurance company hires a nurse to help that injured worker get what they need to recover and get back to exactly where they were before they got hurt,” Anthony said. “Even normal, educated people have a difficult time maneuvering today’s health care system, so you take somebody who’s had a devastating or catastrophic injury and they need to find an orthopedic surgeon, or where to go for an MRI or where to get their prescriptions refilled or filled. We’re there to be the coordinator so they get all the medical services that they need.

“Starting this business, I felt like I could use my nursing degree and I was still helping people, but I wasn’t doing hands-on care or doing shift work. I was still affecting people’s lives in a positive way.”

Begun in 2006, the company now boasts more than 130 employees.

“In the economy of the last seven years, I feel very, very lucky,” Anthony said. “Today, the most important things for my company are that people are happy working here. I want people to enjoy coming to work. It’s a really simple philosophy, but if you have really good people and you take really good care of them, then they produce a really good product. That’s how we’ve naturally grown.”

Anthony had high praise for her Alma Mater.

“I love Salisbury,” she said. “I think it’s a great school. I went on college tours to places that were bigger than the city I was from. Salisbury, to me, was the perfect size – it wasn’t too small, but you still knew everybody and it felt safe. You got to have a good mix of interests and a cross section of being able to do a lot of different things.”

When asked for advice for her fellow alumni, Anthony kept it simple.

“Follow your dreams,” she said. “When I first went to the bank to get a loan to start my own business, I thought it was the best idea in the world, but not everybody always agrees. You just have to find another way. Soak up knowledge, give back to people and treat people well – that’s what’s important. That’s my philosophy.”