

# We are **NWC**

## AMY SOLOMON '76

With high school graduation fast approaching, Florida native Amy Solomon was yearning for a change of scenery. Little did she know her journey would be set in motion by an unexpected source—a garbage can.

What initially seemed like an insignificant moment turned into fate as Solomon and a friend discovered a Northwest College flyer buried in trash. Her friend pulled it out of the trash, and it showcased the vast and wild landscapes of Yellowstone, with an invitation to attend Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming.

“Our first thought was ‘this looks great!’” Solomon said.

Her interest in the west, however, did not start with the flyer. It actually began much earlier when she was four or five years old.

In the early 50s, her parents toured the western U.S. on their honeymoon and developed an affinity for Yellowstone National Park.

“My parents had a View-Master—they’re like binoculars, but there are tiny photos on

translucent film, and when you pushed the lever, the pictures change,” she explained.

The View-Master was loaded with several photos of Yellowstone National Park, and as a child, she would peer through the glass and look at the images.

“Even from that age, I always said I wanted to go to Yellowstone,” Solomon recalled. “I just loved the idea from day one.”

Finding the Northwest College flyer was a sign she couldn’t ignore.

Solomon and four of her friends embarked on adventure out west. Leaving the sun-drenched shores of Miami behind, the five Floridians traded palm trees for pine trees and snow-capped mountains.

“When I arrived in Powell, I was in heaven.”

After announcing her decision to move to Wyoming, her parents were supportive. And simultaneously wondered what on earth she was thinking.

“They came out here, and my parents saw how happy I was,” she noted. “And then I think they understood.”

During her time at Northwest, she studied biological sciences and enjoyed taking photos and editing the yearbook.

“I learned how to develop my own photos in the darkroom, and I just thought that was so much fun.”



*Present day Amy: Amy at her favorite winery on the west slope of Colorado, Hermosa Vineyards.*

One of her standout memories was a six-week Rocky Mountain Field Studies experience on campus. Al Mickelson, for whom NWC Field Station is named, was the instructor. The A.L. Mickelson Field Station is located on Dead Indian Hill in the Absaroka Mountain Range, just off the Chief Joseph Scenic Highway.

“Uncle Mick, we called him,” she laughed. “We learned the geology and botany of the area. And that experience will always stick out in my mind. It was just a good thing for me, in terms of personal growth.”

She graduated in 1976, and despite her busy career that followed, Solomon never lost touch with Northwest College. In 2005, she joined the Alumni Association Board, dedicating her time and expertise to her alma mater.

This past spring, she wrapped up a two-year term as president of the board. Throughout her service, one of

To read other stories like Amy’s —  
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her areas of passion has been mentoring.

“Mentoring stems from my love of education,” she explained. “I am, by training, an occupational therapist, but the majority of my professional career has been in higher education as a department chair and teaching others in the field.”

Solomon serves on the Volunteer Service Committee of the Alumni Association Board and is excited about launching NWC’s new alumni mentoring program.

“I saw in both classroom and clinical teaching the growth and development of my students, and that is very rewarding to me. Now that I’m retired, I still mentor new faculty members to keep my hand in the process.”

The program, which is called TrapperPath, is currently in development and will primarily enable NWC alumni to provide career mentorship to current students or other alums. It’s set to launch during fall 2023.

“Mentoring is something that I truly love, and I hope to bring the same experience to others.”

Solomon currently lives in Lone Tree, CO, with her husband, Rick. In her free time, she enjoys scrapbooking, making cards, and traveling.

To volunteer as a mentor, contact Alumni & Development Coordinator Michaela Jones at 307-754-6034 or michaela.jones@nwc.edu.

# ALUMNI Updates

We want to know what you’re up to.  
To submit your class note —  
[nwclegefoundation.org/alumni](http://nwclegefoundation.org/alumni)

## GAYNELL WILSON '66

Retired and living in South Carolina. Shout out to great niece Natalie Bailey.

## DANIEL BURNS '93

Daniel took his degree in Science (Printing Technology) from 1993 and spent the next 22 years working in paperboard packaging. He then earned his Bachelor of Science in Occupational Education and his Master of Science in Packaging Value Chain. He’s currently a high school vocational teacher in Boston, Massachusetts.

## TANYA HAMNER '07

Tanya graduated with a degree in ag communications but took a lot of photography classes. She never knew much about photography until she took a required Introduction to Photography class. She felt the faculty in the Photography department were amazing and kept pushing her to be a photographer. Tanya is currently a PRCA rodeo photographer. She’s been selected as the official photographer for the Mountain States Circuit Finals Rodeo two years in a row. Putting her ag degree and photography courses to good use, she also teaches as an adjunct photography professor at Western Wyoming Community College, while operating her family’s sheep ranch.

## MOLLY GJERVOLD '18

After graduating from Northwest College, Molly moved back to Cheyenne, WY in pursuit of her photography career. She is now celebrating her two-year anniversary of working at the TJX Companies as a professional commercial studio photographer, located at outdoor retail store Sierra. At her job, she gets to use the skills she learned in the NWC Photographic Communications program for a variety of products, people, and dogs. Here’s to 2 years!

## BARBARA SIMON '79

Barbara’s been working as a flight attendant for EndeavorAir since 2019. She previously worked for ExpressJet, and in between flying jobs, she worked at the Forsyth County Sheriff’s Office doing booking, property and release.



## STEPHEN BLOOD '69

Stephen is returning to his first love in art, wood marquetry, which was taught to him by his father, Russell Blood, a well-known Park County craftsman. Previously, he spent years designing and crafting lights for Old Faithful Inn, The Snow Lodge, Mt. Rushmore, Crater Lake, and dozens of other projects out west. He says he’s a long way from retiring, going to his studio to work every day. Recently, he’s enjoyed teaching and sharing his art with young people.



[nwclegefoundation.org](http://nwclegefoundation.org)



*Amy as a student at Northwest College*

# ALUMNI Updates

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## PHILIP MOULTON '77

Having opened and sold four art galleries and framing shops, Philip and his wife, Brenda, moved from Utah to small town Ravenswood, WV, opening their fifth shop called Ravenswood Arts LLC. Philip recalls when a large van full of students gathered at the edge of the bluff north on 295, curious to see if he would jump off the 65-foot drop in his home-built hang glider he brought from his Las Vegas home. After setting up, hoping for a bit of wind to fill the sails, he ran off the edge, picked up just enough airspeed to avoid the big boulders that were quickly approaching, and land safely on the ground some 200 feet out from the bluff. At 68, he has chosen to stick to golf and art, enjoy the country farm life outside of town, and share the gospel with folks in the area. Northwest College was the inspiration to start multiple businesses having good guidance from the Graphic Arts staff.

## ROSCOE HILL '79

After retiring from the oil and gas industry in 2013, Roscoe and his wife relocated to South Carolina, where they enjoy many outdoor activities including kayaking on area lakes.



## MECHELLE RIVERA '18

Mechelle earned her BSN and has been accepted into the Fall 2023 DNP in Psychiatric Mental Health Program. She thanks NWC for being part of her education journey.

## JAHQUEL GOSS '21

Jahquel recently accepted an offer to join the Denver Sheriff's department in Colorado. He's very interested to delve further into his career field of choice. He also furthered his basketball career at Dominican College in New York.

## Campus NEWS

**First B.A.S. Cohort Graduates** — This spring's commencement ceremony featured some history for Northwest College, with the first graduating cohort from the B.A.S. in Professional Studies (Business). These are the first students to ever receive a bachelor's degree from NWC.

**NWC Now Offers a Second Bachelor's Degree** — Northwest College will begin offering a new Bachelor of Applied Science in Criminal Justice Studies in the fall of 2023. The degree is designed for students who are interested in pursuing a career in the field of criminal justice at the local, state, or federal level, or for those already working in the field seeking advancement. Learn

more or apply at <https://nwc.edu/bas>.

**New Student Center Currently Being Built** — Demolition of the nearly 60-year-old former student center is now complete, and college leaders celebrated the start of construction with a groundbreaking ceremony in May. The building is planned to open for the fall 2024 semester.



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## On the Cover

Northwest College alumna Zoey Bonner, '23, is a Mountain West photographer, who enjoys photographing the important moments in everyday modern life—everything from the clothing and products people use to explore the natural world, to the food that fuels their outdoor adventures. She began taking photos as a young teen when her parents handed her an old digital Canon camera. Bonner started to photograph her travels around the world and the foothills of the Rockies where she grew up. When she began her education at Northwest College in the Photographic Communications program, she fell in love with product photography. She particularly enjoys being able to create her own lighting and set up and feels it's a great creative outlet.



Upcoming  
Events

NWC ALUMNI at the BIG HORN COUNTY FAIR • August 3 • [nwcollegefoundation.org](http://nwcollegefoundation.org)

PAINT THE TOWN RED • August 25 • [DowntownPowell.com](http://DowntownPowell.com) • [nwc.edu/red](http://nwc.edu/red)

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