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NU ALUM BECOMES PHOTOJOURNALIST FOR NORTHWEST MINISTRY NETWORK

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By Alayna Wood

Photo From Alycia Scheidel



Northwest University alumnus Alycia Scheidel is the first photojournalist to work with the Northwest Ministry Network.

This experimental position will give Scheidel the opportunity to take a three-month trip to Africa starting in April. Future opportunities and projects will largely depend on the success of Scheidel's trip.

During this short-term volunteer assignment Scheidel will be traveling to Ethiopia, Egypt, Botswana, Swaziland and Cameroon. Her job, while there, is to help missionaries on the field learn to utilize social media in a way that will help market their ministries and connect with home churches and organizations in the U.S.

"A lot of times there is a disconnect between people at home who are supporting the missionaries," Scheidel said. "If churches and supporters don't know where their money is going, if they don't have tangible evidence of how it is being used – or that their ministries are not expanding – then that makes them not want to donate as much.

"Whereas, if they do see a picture or if they hear firsthand accounts of what is happening in those ministries, then that makes them want to support them more and give their money and their time," Scheidel said.

Scheidel said she feels that this opportunity has been a total "God thing" with the right doors opening and the right connections being made.

Scheidel learned about the opportunity after a neighbor introduced her to Bill Shaw – a missionary to the Congo who is from Port Orchard, Wash. Shaw then referred Scheidel to Carie Jorgenson.

Jorgenson works as the Assistant World Missions Director for the Northwest Ministry Network as well as serving as NUMA: REACH Director at NU. Scheidel's position with the Northwest Ministry Network is facilitated through Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM).

Jorgenson dreamed of creating a media team to help the missionaries supported by the Northwest District of AGWM learn about utilizing social media in their ministries. With Scheidel they hope to make this dream a reality.

In addition to assisting missionaries with marketing and social media, Scheidel will collect data and information, take photos and write stories that will be used in missions magazines and publications in the district.

Scheidel's dream is to be a journalist in Africa, covering conflict and investigative journalism for major publications such as *National Geographic* and *The New York Times*.

"I do believe that a lot of change can be brought, and it all starts with spreading the word and informing people about the issues in our

world," Scheidel said.

Scheidel said she feels her experiences at NU, and the people she met, helped her receive this opportunity and equipped her with the necessary skillsets to pursue her dreams.

"Every opportunity I have has been because of people I have known," Scheidel said. "You should treat everyone that you meet as if they will be someone who will make an impact on your life."

She is currently living in Duvall, Wash. and has been working as a rock-climbing instructor at Stone Gardens, in addition to working as a freelance writer and photographer. She has photographed a few weddings and written for organizations such as The California Rice Commission.

In her free time, Scheidel said that she has been climbing mountains and preparing herself for her next big adventure working for the Northwest Ministry Network.

Scheidel graduated in May 2013 with a degree in Communication and an emphasis in media. She also served as a writer for *The Talon* during her senior year. Eventually, she wants to pursue a master's degree in political science, history, or communication.

To learn more about Scheidel and keep updated on what she is doing, you can view her blog here:

<https://ascheidel.wordpress.com/about-me/africa-2015>