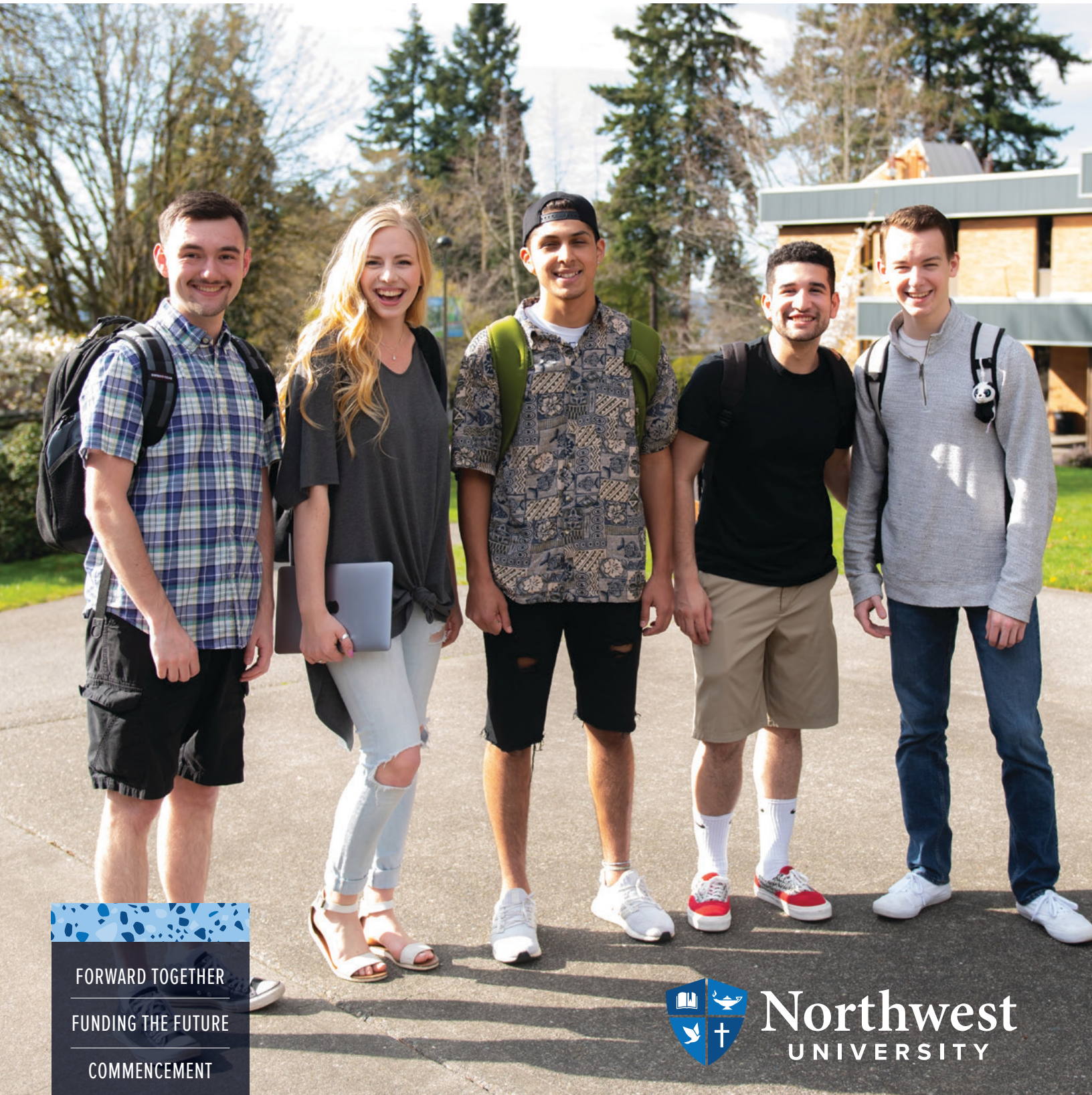


# NORTHWEST PASSAGES

FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2021



FORWARD TOGETHER  
FUNDING THE FUTURE  
COMMENCEMENT



Northwest  
UNIVERSITY



## Dear Friends

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Anyone who reads my blog knows that I have thought a lot about intentionality in the time of the pandemic. Everyone talks about “the new normal,” but for many months it has felt like an unknowable commodity.

I have long believed that a new sense of normalcy never emerges after a major disruption; it must come from decision. If normalcy has returned by the end of 2021, it will not have come about by default or by accident. *Leaders have to decide where their organization should go* and actively take the steps to get to the preferred future.

As Northwest University drives toward a return to normalcy in Fall 2021, we have not presumed that our institutional identity would automatically bounce back. Rather, we have intentionally asserted our values. *Our highest priority is to keep Jesus at the center of our community and to offer higher education in the awareness of God’s presence with us.* Following on that priority, the NU mission statement emphasizes the call of God, community, spirituality, academics, and service. We have decided to enter the fall declaring the following five aspects of our identity as a college centered on the person of Jesus Christ and his living presence in the power of the Holy Spirit—the NU Normal:

- NU is a **community of learning**, committed to excellent academic work.
- NU is a **community of presence**, embodied in friendship and fellowship.
- NU is a **community of worship**, gathered in prayer and praise together.
- NU is a **community of ministry**, dedicated to serving the needs of others.
- NU is a **community of mission** that passionately carries the call of God.

To assert ourselves as a community of worship, we’ll have a three-day “camp meeting” during the first week of school, with morning and evening services to hear from God and seek God together. During those days, we will enjoy fun group activities (such as a softball tournament) to assert our “community of presence.” Other special efforts will emerge along with regular activities to remind us of our priorities and keep us grounded in who God has called us to be as a community.

Along with these highly intentional commitments to values, we have also been hard at work with marketing consultants to identify the majors and academic programs that offer the highest demonstrated demand presently and the highest employment opportunity in the years ahead. Informed by this data, we will begin emphasizing more technology majors, such as computer science, data science, user experience design, and others. All of those majors are available this fall at Northwest University, and more will be announced soon for next year.

We have decided during the pandemic what Northwest should look like in the future, and all year long we have worked hard to pivot toward an exciting new normal that keeps our best values at the center while radiating them through new avenues to serve our students well.

Sincerely,

Joseph Castleberry, EdD  
President

*Follow Dr. Castleberry’s blog at [northwestu.edu/president/blog](http://northwestu.edu/president/blog).*



# Northwest UNIVERSITY

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## NU MISSION

We, the people of Northwest University, carry the call of God by continually building a learning community dedicated to spiritual vitality, academic excellence, and empowered engagement with human need.

Northwest University is accredited by:



# C O N T E N T S



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# **FORWARD TOGETHER**

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**“ NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY  
IS ON THE CUSP OF AN  
EXCITING FUTURE.**



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Northwest University is on the cusp of an exciting future. With the end of the pandemic on the horizon, NU is prepared to make some major moves for the good of our students, our alumni, and the global church. Many of these ideas have been years in the making, so it's energizing to see them finally come to life. Perhaps the most inspiring aspect of all is the fact that we get to move into the future unified as one community, rooted in Christ.

We've all been through a lot in the past year, but as we reflect, two things are clear: God was with us every step of the way, and the Northwest University family has been brought closer than ever before. As we navigated the challenges that came with 2020, the Lord sustained us through the generosity of donors, the prayers of alumni and friends, and the inspiring stories from our classrooms. In this moment in time, we remember not just the hardships we've faced, but the ways our God faithfully brought us through them.

Now, with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, we look to the future of distinctly Christian higher education at NU. A variety of **new majors** have been launched, and as the following articles explain, more will be launched next semester. A creative **new initiative** will fortify the connection between our capable graduates and industries that are changing the world. A **\$1 million grant** will support more ministry graduates than ever as they plant churches.

These few examples barely scratch the surface of all the exciting things happening at Northwest. It is an honor to invite you into all that we're doing. As a community, we will move **forward together** with one purpose: to further the Kingdom of God.



# Skills for Every Calling:

## Northwest University's Career Readiness Initiative

After months of development, assessment, and refining, we are finally ready to announce the launch of Northwest University's Career Readiness Initiative. For years, businesses of all kinds have struggled with the fact that some college graduates aren't fully prepared to enter the workforce. New hires with this issue require extra onboarding, which takes up precious time and money. This is a major obstacle that can hamper the effectiveness of both business leaders and graduates. **With the Career Readiness Initiative, we hope to eliminate this problem for any business seeking to hire one of NU's alumni.**

“I think Northwest University has a well-established track record of turning out students with a strong work ethic and great applicable skills,” said President Castleberry. “But last year, I decided the time had come to act even more intentionally to respond directly to employers, prepare students, and to help students market the hard and soft work skills they gain at Northwest. The faculty agreed with me, and we got busy making changes.”

With contributors from all across the university, work began on curriculum designed to equip students with everything they need for the workforce, including a way to communicate those skills to potential employers. In the near future, when a student graduates, he or she will be able to include endorsements on their resumés and CVs that will communicate to potential employers the exact skills that student possesses. An endorsement is earned by taking a series of two to four classes that contribute toward tangible, workplace skills such as “Conflict Management” or “Empathy.” In every single major at NU, skills are tailored to the industries our students are eager to join. The entire curriculum goes hand in hand with an emphasis on internships so that real-life experience can be gained before the first day in the office.

Local businesses are already excited about what this means for their hiring processes. Levi Davenport, NU’s director of Career Development and Corporate Relations, has been meeting with small and large businesses from the Seattle area for months. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. According to Levi, “Business owners and recruiters love to see that NU is equipping its students with quantifiable skills and certificates that students can include on their resumé. One business leader articulated that this initiative will ‘bridge the gap’ that employers are wanting to see in the competency and preparedness of new hires graduating from

a liberal arts institution. Every single individual in the focus groups thought that this initiative was imperative to create and include in the core curriculum at Northwest University.”

This important work aligns perfectly with Northwest University’s biblical understanding of work. “[The Career Readiness Initiative] will instill a strong understanding of the value and meaning of work: economically, personally, and theologically,” explained President Castleberry. “A faith-informed work ethic has long been understood as a huge asset for employees and employers.”

We anticipate the impact of the Career Readiness Initiative with great expectation. Our hope is that graduates will feel more equipped and fulfilled in their work and that employers will receive valuable contributions from their new recruits faster than ever. The future is bright, and NU students are poised to make the most of it.



# FUNDING THE FUTURE

*Grants from Lilly Endowment Inc. and the Murdock Charitable Trust*

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It's always a thrill when an idea begins to materialize into something real. It's even more invigorating when others see the potential of an idea and want to be a part of it. This is precisely why it's such an exciting time for Northwest University. NU recently received two significant grants: one from Lilly Endowment Inc. and one from the Murdock Charitable Trust.

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The grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., in the amount of \$999,708, will be used to establish and develop a new program called **"The Center for Thriving Church Planters."** Vocational ministry comes with a unique set of challenges, and those challenges are amplified for ministers who plant churches. The Center for Thriving Church Planters, led by co-directors Dr. Earl Creps (director of the Center for Leadership Studies) and Dr. Joshua Ziefle (dean of the College of Ministry), together with program leader Rev. Kathy Cannon, will invest

in the personal and spiritual development necessary for church planters to succeed in their important work.

For nearly 25 years, Lilly Endowment has prioritized ministers through their Thriving in Ministry initiative. Their commitment to the well-being of church leaders is inspiring, and it aligns perfectly with the mission and values of NU. "Northwest has always been involved in developing church planters, but this grant marks a new chapter in our endeavors," explained Dr. Earl Creps. "With Lilly Endowment's support we

can assist in the personal thriving of many more planters while also growing in diversity and relevance."

Specifically, this assistance will come in the form of an all-expenses-paid, two-year program for Pentecostal church planters in distinct populations (Hispanic leaders, female leaders, African-American leaders, and leaders serving in rural contexts). Each cohort group will benefit from high-level mentoring with a veteran leader, peer connections with other church planters, a retreat, a site visit experience, and more.





The Center for Thriving Church Planters will launch in September 2021. With assistance from Lilly Endowment, we hope to expand the reach and deepen the impact of our abilities to serve ministers in the Pacific Northwest.

The second grant, from the Murdock Charitable Trust, came at just the right time to assist NU in some of its other forward-thinking endeavors. In the fall of 2019, the Murdock Trust hosted a Leading Through Change conference where they invited participants to apply for a follow-up grant of up to \$100,000. Northwest University was the first school to apply for and receive a Leading Through Change grant, and in the spring of 2020 we were able to begin using these funds.

Murdock's contribution has allowed NU to begin important work in two distinct areas. The first is in **new program development**. In order for the university to thrive, the strategic

creation and stewardship of cutting-edge degrees is imperative. The first step for this portion of the grant was to hire Gray Associates to provide marketing and financial analysis of both new and existing programs.

"We are thrilled with both the reception and the implementation of this grant," said NU's provost, Dr. Jim Heugel. "Northwest has always been nimble when developing new academic programs (the technology programs in the Creatio Center are the latest example), but now we are even better positioned to develop programs that meet both the needs of our students and the demands of the marketplace."

The remainder of the grant has been designated for **institutional efficiency** in order to ensure that our systems and processes advance at a similar pace to the new programs we're launching. This task began by allocating

a portion of the grant to fund Vickie Reckow's appointment as vice president of Institutional Effectiveness. She began the work of her new position by focusing on the Registrar's Office. Building strong systems there will serve as a helpful case study in moving on to other departments.

Securing both of these grants provides a strong launching point for all that's about to happen at NU. They represent a commitment to vocational ministry within our identity as a Christian institution and to our belief that ministry can happen in any industry. We want to see pastors and churches flourish, and we also want to see strong believers making an impact for Christ in their respective workplaces. The generous grants from Lilly Endowment Inc. and the Murdock Charitable Trust will allow Northwest University to equip more students for both of those important realities.

# HARNESSING MOMENTUM FOR THE CREATIO CENTER

When Creatio studios launched about a decade ago, something special was set in motion. Talented and passionate students from across the country began to find their way to Northwest University to train for work in the music industry.

**The program quickly grew to become one of the most popular majors on campus, and graduates have gone on to become signed recording artists, sound designers for Fortune 500 companies, artist managers, and more.**

Today, Creatio has expanded into a suite of tech and entertainment degrees under the umbrella of the Creatio Center for Technology, Media, and Design. In addition to the launch of exciting new programs, the Creatio Center is experiencing a full-circle moment. This year, more than any other, we've seen Creatio graduates return to campus to share their skills and knowledge with new students. Kate Orr, one such alumna-turned-professor, is on track to be a major contributor to NU's new audio production program. She'll return to NU for the Fall 2021 semester fresh from finishing her MFA in Sound Design and Technology.



*Kate Orr, NU alumna-turned-professor, is on track to be a major contributor to NU's new audio production program.*





“I couldn’t be more excited to not only be in this community again, but also just to be at Northwest,” Kate explained. “I have such fond memories there; everybody is so kind, and it’s such a fun campus to be on.” Kate was heavily involved on campus in her time as a student. In addition to her learning in Creatio’s contemporary music industry program, Kate participated in student activities and played the lead role in many of NU drama’s productions. But it’s more than just the community that enticed Kate to return to NU: it’s her love for the industry and the work she’s doing.

“Getting a degree in recording was probably one of the best things I’ve ever done in my life,” she explained. The list of her experiences has grown to include sound design for plays and musicals, radio dramas, and even feature films.

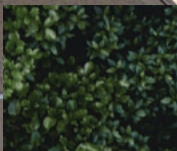
**“Everything I’m doing now would not be as effective or as enjoyable if I hadn’t received the foundational education that I got from Creatio in recording. I walked into my master’s program knowing a lot of stuff that a lot of other people didn’t know. It’s really cool to see how everything has been a building block to the next thing that I get to work on.”**

Kate’s depth of experience as a sound designer and business owner makes her a perfect fit for NU’s new audio production program. It’s clear that she is passionate about sharing her experience and knowledge back home in the program she started in. “I’m extremely excited about all of

the sound design classes because I think it’s so cool to be able to tell a story just using audio. That’s one of the biggest reasons why I’m attracted to radio dramas in the first place. It’s answering questions like, ‘How do you tell the listener that the character is in a busy marketplace with only audio?’ I’m super excited to have those really cool conversations with students especially.”

As Kate prepares for her return to NU, she knows that the work she’s doing is more than just work. “I’ve been put on this earth to love people, and that is my job,” she said. “It’s been really cool to get to know so many different people from so many different backgrounds. I’ve had some really awesome conversations with people where they’re like, ‘Why are you different?’ And then I get to say, ‘Let me tell you about Jesus.’” Kate understands the competitive industry our students are preparing to enter, and she’s a fantastic example of what it looks like to make an impact for the Kingdom of God no matter where the Lord calls you. We’re proud to have her back at NU, and we know she’ll serve our students well.

**The Creatio Center for Technology, Media, and Design has already unveiled cutting-edge programs in audio production, video production, and user experience design. In the Fall 2021 semester, students will also be able to choose from data science and computer science as degree options.**



# Strategic Additions: Optimizing



**Over the last year, Northwest University has undergone an extensive endeavor to streamline and optimize how new programs are initiated and added to our current offerings. Part of this endeavor included the creation of the Programming for the Future Committee (PFC). The PFC was formed to do a preliminary research of potential new programs and conduct a search for market research consultants that would provide data and insights into degrees that would be a good fit for future Northwest students.**

Due, in part, to a grant from the Murdock Charitable Trust, NU was able to conduct a national search for a consultant. The university entered into a contract with Gray Associates, the industry leader in market research for higher education. Gray Associates provides comprehensive data on student demand, employment, and market competition in order to provide a scorecard for Northwest University's current and prospective programs. After an in-depth data collection phase, Gray Associates held a two-day seminar with the PFC, faculty, and key administrators to review current program offerings by academic level and modality, identify potential future programs, and train attendees to fully explore and utilize the tools.

"We have learned to take a big data approach to analyzing our current and future programming to make sure that we offer programs that have a high demand and strong return for our investment and the investment of our students," explained President Castleberry.

By using these economic tools, the deans and other members of the PFC will build a process for choosing new programs that have a high value proposition and also align with the mission and vision of the university. Each program that Northwest offers is unique and so are the requirements for launching each degree. Some degrees require an additional accreditation or certification body which extends the timetable for a program launch. Others require fewer barriers to entry. Building an intensive process for launching new programs also allows for a more comprehensive marketing and communication plan leading to accurate enrollment forecasting. By taking

# the Way We Build

an informed and tactical approach to programs, Northwest University is poised to bring exciting new programs into the future, while remaining committed in our mission to preparing students to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

“I have more confidence in Northwest than I’ve ever had, and I’m more excited about our future than I’ve ever been,” President Castleberry said. And that future is already upon us. We are proud to launch the three programs on the following page for the Fall 2021 semester. We can’t wait to see how the Lord works through the students that earn these degrees and the ones that will launch in the future.



## NEW ONLINE PROGRAMS FOR 2021

### ▶ Online Master of Science in Applied Research Psychology (MSARP):

The MSARP provides advanced training in data inquiry and analysis procedures relevant to the social science and user experience fields. This two-year, online MS program will prepare students to pursue careers in the fast-growing fields of research analytics, user experience analytics, or program evaluation. Alternatively, students may also select the doctoral preparation concentration which will prepare them for future doctoral studies with a strong quantitative focus.

### ▶ Online Bachelor of Arts in Communications:

The online Bachelor of Arts in Communication provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill a variety of communication-oriented callings. Our world is significantly influenced by both the personal and mediated communication of people from diverse social, political, professional, and religious groups. We need believers who are highly trained in various communication mediums in order to engage such people in relevant ways. This major offers courses for current and aspiring leaders who seek to improve their communication skills and grow as impactful individuals in their professional environments.

### ▶ Online Bachelor of Arts in Humanitarian Leadership:

The online Bachelor of Arts in Humanitarian Leadership prepares graduates to serve through a variety of agencies and ministries focused on those who have been impacted by natural, technological, or human-made disasters. This program focuses on preparation for, immediate response to, and ongoing support in domestic and international settings. It also connects graduates who are in a variety of leadership settings with agencies that support community development, migrant and refugee outreaches, children and youth affected by abuse or displacement support, and public policy initiatives.

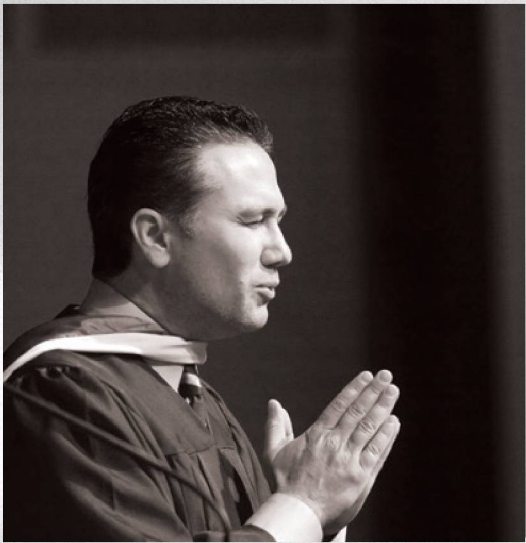
# THE EIGHTY-FIFTH Commencement OF NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY

After calling off 2020's commencement ceremony due to the pandemic, we couldn't stand the thought of canceling two years in a row. So, for the class of 2021, we broke up commencement into two days: May 8 for undergraduate students and June 5 for graduate students. From there, each college received a dedicated time slot in order to make the event as safe as possible. This allowed everyone who wanted to participate a chance to walk across the

commencement stage and celebrate with their peers and professors. Though the undergraduate ceremony was still atypical, this year's celebration was possibly one of the most joyous commencements we've ever been a part of. We expect the same for our graduate ceremony in June. The class of 2021 was faced with harsh circumstances in their final year of college, and they have prevailed. ***We could not be more proud.***







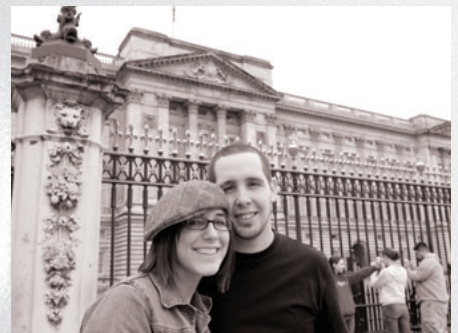




# SNAPSHOTS

## NU THROUGH THE YEARS

Do you have any snapshots from your time at NU that you'd like to share with the community? If so, submit them to [passages@northwestu.edu](mailto:passages@northwestu.edu).



# THE STRONG BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP



Anyone who is familiar with Northwest University knows that our community is truly something special. Attending a school with such a strong emphasis on faith during some of the most formative years in a young person's life is a perfect formula for long-lasting friendship. This is the case for our graduates today, and it has been for quite some time.

We know this to be true because of groups like the NU alumni who graduated in the '60s. For years now, they have reunited every summer for a time of fellowship. Longtime friends from all over the country would make the annual drive to Sedro-Woolley, Washington, to reconnect around barbecues, bonfires, prayer, and worship. Faithfully organized by Elvin Huston, the event was retired in the summer of 2019.

**“We are not in physical proximity to all Christians, but we are commissioned to share His grace and life with those whom He joins us,” Elvin shared. “I think that is what we have done over the past 18 years with the '60s alumni family and God's special grace has made it fruitful.”**

To honor this group, we wanted to dedicate these pages to memories and photos from their many reunions.

**We are inspired by the strength of their friendships and the depth of community that Northwest was built on.**







## *Gene and Mary Casper:* A MAJOR MILESTONE

Six years ago, Mary and Gene Casper were featured in an issue of *Passages* where they shared about their goals for the scholarship endowment they created in 2000: the Casper–Raybuck Scholarship. At the time, they had contributed \$53,000 by faithfully and consistently contributing what they could for years. Their goal was to reach \$100,000 for their scholarship endowment in the next thirteen to fifteen years. Now, just six years later, Mary and Gene have already reached their goal. As of 2021, they have contributed \$100,000 toward student scholarships.

**“It is a bit mind boggling,” Mary said. “I just think God rewards your faithfulness and works things out better than you can ask for.” Much of the Caspers’ success in reaching this goal has to do with their unwavering belief in what they’re doing. “We had such a great time at Northwest and enjoyed it so much,” Gene explained. “The Christian education, the things that we learned, and just the friendships that we’ve had for a lifetime; we believe every student should have the privilege to have that. We wish all of our classmates would be involved because that would just make things even greater.”**

Their enthusiasm for supporting NU students turned out to be infectious as the Caspers found creative ways to contribute to their endowment. For example, Mary, who is an accomplished piano teacher with 40 years of experience, decided that for her last year before retiring, she would ask her students to contribute to their endowment instead of

paying her. Friends and family began to chip in as well, and the scholarship money began to pour in.

When asked how they were able to maintain such a steady rate, Mary emphasized the importance of goal setting. “If you don’t have a goal, you’re never going to reach it,” she said. “Once that was set, we were pretty much just focused on that goal, and we were determined to see it happen no matter how long it took. But God was good, and we were able to accomplish it in much, much less time.”

The Caspers have already made a significant impact in the lives of many of our students. By reaching this major milestone of a \$100,000 scholarship endowment, even more students will be able to experience the spiritual formation that Gene and Mary were impacted by at NU. In thinking about their hopes for the students being impacted by their endowment, Gene shared that he hopes these students “will continue on and succeed, and that God will use them in their calling for the reason that they went to Northwest, or maybe even change their plans. That often happens.”

**We are so grateful for the Caspers’ great generosity and for their investment into the lives of our students. If you’d like more information on establishing a scholarship of your own, contact [palee.showalter@northwestu.edu](mailto:palee.showalter@northwestu.edu).**



## *Grant Hill:* SPIRIT-LED FORMATION

Part of what makes the NU experience so unique is the combination of rigorous, in-person classes and the many opportunities to gain real-life experience outside of the classroom. As a faith-based institution, it is a proud tradition to offer ministry experiences to our students. No one knows this better than Dr. Grant Hill, an NU alumnus, kinesiologist, professor, and now, NU donor. During his time as a student, Grant loved the summer ministry opportunities in between semesters. “It’s important to have all the experiences on campus, but it’s also important to get out of the community, participate in internships, and have opportunities to get out and travel. Some of my most memorable experiences were doing just that.”

The time that Grant spent on those trips was significant for him in his faith, but also in how he chooses to live his life. He looks for spirit-led ministry opportunities in everything he does. “I think what makes Northwest special is that there’s a real belief in the power of the Holy Spirit,” Grant said. “Some ministry is eternal. As you get older, too, you start thinking about what’s really important in regard to eternity.”

This thinking led Grant to return to NU, but with a different goal in mind. “I’m constantly asking God what I should do with my money,” he explained. “All of a sudden I was in a position to help, and I started to think, ‘Well, where would be valuable to put some of this money?’ I also thought,

‘Northwest is a great place. I can’t think of a better place.’” As he prayed about it, Grant felt specifically called to give toward summer ministry teams so that more students could have the life-changing experience he had. “I think it’s just a great opportunity for them,” Grant said. “A unique opportunity for them to get out and not only minister, but find out more about what their strengths are, what they want to do, and what they’re going to be doing.”

We are so grateful for Grant’s generosity toward the university with the intention of helping more students to have meaningful ministry experiences. It’s an honor to have alumni who contribute so meaningfully to the well-being of the next generation of students. We know that Grant has their best interest at heart:

**“I’M HOPING THAT I CAN BE A RESOURCE TO THE UNIVERSITY, NOT JUST FINANCIALLY, BUT IF THERE’S ANY OTHER WAY THAT I CAN BE INVOLVED. I THINK PART OF IT IS BECAUSE I’M AN ALUMNUS, AND MY HEART IS THERE. I WANT TO SEE NORTHWEST THRIVE.”**

# *the* PRESIDENT'S BANQUET

THE UNIVERSITY WITH THE  
SOUL OF A CHURCH



On Friday, April 23, we hosted our annual President's Banquet. Though this event is a fundraiser, it always serves as a night of encouragement and worship as well. Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, we were still able to host a safe event by offering virtual attendance and limiting the number of in-person attendees. Not only that, but we also raised over \$1 million for the second time in the history of the President's Banquet.

After a warm welcome from Pa'lee Showalter, director of Philanthropic Relations, and Cole Hastie, director of Alumni and Parent Relations, the night began. The 2021 Alumni of the Year award was given collectively to NU alumni who are frontline health care workers. The representative of this group for the evening, registered nurse and NU professor Ben Sterciuc, led the crowd in a beautiful and heartfelt prayer. President Castleberry followed with an inspirational speech that encouraged attendees in the knowledge that their gifts would contribute to advancing the Kingdom of God. Later that evening, the Northwest Choralons presented a brand-new music video for one of their beautiful arrangements.

The lyrics focused on glorifying God and thanking Him for His goodness. After the music, two NU students, Robert Vinje and Hannah Madsen, shared their testimonies. They both spoke of God's faithfulness and provision: how they have learned to trust Him during their time at NU and how grateful they are for the scholarships they've received.

Following their testimonies, it was evident from the thunderous applause that those in attendance were moved. With excitement and anticipation in the air, Larry Snyder took to the stage to extend the opportunity to give.

**The amount of pledges and gifts received from this year's President's Banquet totaled \$1,016,764.** We are completely blown away by such generosity, especially in the middle of such a challenging year. We are so grateful to everyone who gave. Crossing the \$1 million mark for a second time is a significant milestone, and we look forward to seeing what God does in the lives of our students as we steward this money to fund scholarships through the Opportunity Fund.



*Cole Hastie, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations and Pa'leq Showalter, Director of Philanthropic Relations.*



*President Castleberry*



*Student Testimonies, Hannah Madsen and Robert Vinje, both class of '21.*



*Executive Director of the NU Foundation and Development, Justin Kawabori, alongside faithful donors, Barry and Joan Horn.*



*A wonderful performance by Northwest Choralons, directed by Brenda Rasmussen.*



*President Castleberry and Christine Soule, recipient of the Northwest University Legacy Award.*



*President's Banquet attendees gave generously to the future and vision of Northwest University.*

PHOTO CREDIT: JAKE CAMPBELL AND GARRETT HANSON

# THE LEGACY OF DR. KARI BRODIN

Northwest University gratefully celebrates the career of Dr. Kari Brodin, who has exemplified joyful devotion to Christ, passion for scripture, and dedicated service to the church and the NU community for over 30 years. Kari leaves Northwest having served as a faculty member in Bible since 2000, a full professor since 2013, chair of the Bible and Theology department of the College of Ministry, and faculty marshal. Outside of NU, Kari is a nationally recognized coach in Assemblies of God Bible Quiz.

Her relationship with NU started in 1982 when, while earning a degree at Seattle Pacific University, Kari took classes at NU so that she could play basketball for her sister, coach Kristi Brodin. Later, Kari would serve as assistant coach, traveling with the team and mentoring athletes.



Before earning her PhD from Fuller Theological Seminary, Kari served in Student Development at NU, first as a resident counselor and then three

years as dean of women. Her concern for students continued when she moved to the faculty. She and her sister, Kristi, are noted for the many lifelong friendships they have maintained with NU alumni.

It is difficult to express the esteem she is held in by students and colleagues. She is renowned for the quality of her teaching and scholarship—recognized most recently with the 2021 Assemblies of God Distinguished Educator Award.

Dr. Brodin's legacy will continue in the NU community and the lives of those she has taught for decades to come.





## COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

**Dr. Renee Bourdeaux** (assistant professor, Communication) and alumni Maggie Bright presented “You Have To Look At Finances as a Joint Venture, Whether or Not You Have a Joint Account: Exploring Strategies Couples Use to Successfully Communicate About Money” at the National Communication Association. They also published an article with the same title in *Marriage and Family Review*. Dr. Bourdeaux also presented a teaching session, “Communicating Love In Relationships: Blazing a Trail to Better Understand Love,” at the National Communication Association, Indianapolis, IN. She was the featured guest speaker (“Using Enneagram To Create a Gospel-Centered Marriage”) for RelEngage at Timberlake Church and presented a webinar, “Christianity & Communication Studies Network Short Course: Reimagining Course Design: Adding Significance Through Supplemental Books and Faith Integration.”

**Dr. Clint Bryan** (assistant professor, English) presented “Bound to Sound”: Listening to F.Y.C. Literacy Across Ong’s ‘Great Leap’” to the national Conference on College Composition and Communication.

**Prof. Chrystal Helmcke** (assistant professor, Communications and Theatre Arts) co-presented a paper, “Image Encounter,” with Dr. Renee Bourdeaux at the meeting of the Eleventh International Conference on The Image.

**Prof. Lenae Nofziger** (professor, English) published her poems, “Sacrament,” “A Word,” and “Sacred Ground,” in *Christ and Cascadia*.

**Dr. Joseph McQueen’s** (assistant professor, English) dissertation, “Enfleshing Faith: Secularization and Liturgy in Romantic and Victorian Literature,” was nominated for the Muste Award, the annual prize for Ohio State University’s best dissertation in English.

**Dr. Eve Wade** (assistant professor, History) was a speaker for the University of Southern Mississippi’s Leadership Council’s “Knowledge is Power” series, delivering a paper titled “Black Lives Matter in Black Hattiesburg: A History of Lay Activism.”

## COLLEGE OF MINISTRY

**Dr. Blaine Charette** (professor, Bible and Greek) co-edited a book, *Spirit and Story: Essays in Honour of John Christopher Thomas*, which included his essay, “The Kingdom of the Son of Man and the Vocation of the Church in Matthew.” Dr. Charette also presented “‘Do Not Fear Those Who Kill the Body but Cannot Kill the Soul’ (Matt. 10.28): Physical Violence and the End of Life in Matthew’s Gospel” at the annual Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting.

**Dr. Bill Oliverio** (associate professor, Public Theology) is the co-editor of *Pneuma*, the journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, and recently published a significant double issue focused on global Pentecostal futures. He co-authored two editorials, “The Society for Pentecostal Studies at 50 Years: Ways Forward for Global Pentecostalism” and “The Smile Aesthetics of Pentecostal Thought in the Age of COVID” for the issue. Dr. Oliverio presented “Pentecostal Theology, and Other Ways to Know God, the World, and Ourselves” at the Assemblies of God Scholars Forum and participated in a panel discussion on Christopher Stephenson, ed., *An Amos Yong Reader: The Pentecostal Spirit* as part of the 2021 Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. He also published “The Theological Hermeneutic of Amos Yong, In the Prime of His Theological Career” in *Australasian Pentecostal Studies* and “Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue” in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Global Pentecostalism Online*.

**Dr. Joshua Ziefle** (dean) started a new podcast, “Christianity Now.” So far, it has included NU faculty guests Dr. Andrew Kaufmann, professor Lisa Russi, and Dr. Bill Oliverio.

The College of Ministry also has a new blog, [www.joshuaziefle.com](http://www.joshuaziefle.com) with Dr. Joshua Ziefle and Dr. Bob Stallman writing posts.

## COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

**Dr. Leihua Edstrom** (professor, Psychology) was a co-presenter of “Enhancing Religion and Spirituality Training To Meet Diverse Client Preferences” and a talk entitled “Revising the Ethical Principles for Psychologists” at the annual conference of the National Council of Schools of Professional Psychology. Dr. Edstrom also participated as a panelist for a CCCU Doctoral Council webinar, “Shepherding Doctoral Programs in Challenging Times.”

**Dr. Nikki Johnson** (assistant professor, Psychology) was a co-presenter of “Anti-Racist Practice as Ethical Practice: A Panel Discussion on Eliminating Systemic Racism and Implicit Bias in the Therapy Room” for the San Diego Psychological Association, Ethics Committee. Dr. Johnson also presented didactic training on “EPPP Prep” for Lighthouse Psychological Associates.

## OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

**Dr. Ben Thomas** (associate provost) was a co-presenter of “Leading a Diversity Initiative in Higher Education” and “Liminal Leadership and Structure Models” for the International Leadership Association Annual Global Conference. Dr. Thomas also co-authored “The Lived Experiences of High-Achieving Historically Underrepresented Students at Four CCCU Institutions,” which was published in *Christian Higher Education*.

## 2010s

**Diana Grimm ('15)**

It's interesting just how much has changed since graduation six years ago! I'm proud to say that because of the skills I learned through Northwest's adult evening program, I secured a role in banking where I'm proud to be more

than three years later. Even amid a pandemic, my education played a pivotal role in how to communicate in a godly and thoughtful manner. I married my longtime sweetheart in August 2019, and we are currently both working from home with our dog supervisor, Ducky.

**Alex Nasa ('15)**

My time at NU was hugely impactful for my professional career. I had professors that encouraged me, challenged my thinking, and presented ideas that helped give an idea of how to be successful postcollege. One particular class that stood

out was Intro to Human Communication. It gave me a great foundation to learn specific principles about interviewing people and how to be an effective communicator. As my college career continued, I realized that I loved talking with people and hearing their stories. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I felt led to start something and use my degree to the fullest potential. In October of 2020, I wanted to channel that into a creative platform and launched The Young Professionals Show, which is a podcast. Each episode I interview someone and get their perspective on what inspired them, how they've dealt with challenges in life, what advice they'd give, and much more. I've had so many great alumni from NU onto the show, which has been awesome. Seeing how far people can go in such a little time is hugely inspirational, especially during this busy season in life. If you are a recent alum or have an interest in joining the podcast for an episode, send me an email at [theyoungprospod@gmail.com](mailto:theyoungprospod@gmail.com).

**Elizabeth Mulherron ('18)**

Since graduating in 2018, I have moved to California to attend the Rosemead School of Psychology at Biola University where I am pursuing my PsyD in Clinical Psychology! I have had the joy of providing therapy and psychological assessment

to university students, high schoolers needing academic accommodations, in community mental health, and to youth at a local juvenile hall. I have loved getting to serve the community

and get training that integrates psychology and theology! It has been a blessing to continue my graduate studies, and I recently released on Amazon a guided journal for those working toward their master's degrees to help them stay organized and process their experiences in academia. I will be working toward completing my last few years of training, including a full year of internship where I hope to continue working with teens, children, and families, and am on track to become Dr. Mulherron in 2023. Additionally, I will continue to work on my doctoral dissertation research on mental health during the university to workforce transition—a survey which some of you alumni may have helped contribute responses to! I am forever thankful for the support that I have continued to receive from NU and can't wait to return to the PNW and serve the community there.

**Lydia (Taverne) Welsh ('19)**

I've always been fascinated by biology, but I didn't anticipate majoring in it when I began at Northwest University. Yet when a freshman science class piqued my interest, I felt I needed to dive deeper. It wasn't long before I became

a biology major, thriving on classes like cell biology and biochemistry. However, making post-graduation plans wasn't half as exciting. After considering several career paths, I decided to give scientific research a try. NU professor Dr. Tracie Delgado pointed me in the direction of the University of Washington's Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program. Through PREP, I got to work at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, where I stayed for two years with a group studying small cell lung cancer. My time in the lab was an incredible learning experience, and I was able to put to tangible use the exact scientific concepts I'd been taught at NU. Yet I couldn't help but feel that I was missing the creative exploration I had enjoyed as a student. In my free time, I began experimenting with making my own skincare products. I would comb through research papers about plant oils and test different product formulations on friends and family. Over time, I began to consider how I might be able to leverage my passion for skincare into more than just a hobby. In March 2021, I made the leap from academic scientific research to becoming a business owner, and in May—by God's grace—I launched my brand: Clērstory! I'm overjoyed to be working in a space where I can blend scientific passion with my creative interests, all while being challenged to learn new business skills. Through Clērstory, I'm focused on applying scientific evidence to create simple, effective skincare products for everyone. You can find out more about the brand at [www.clerstory.com](http://www.clerstory.com)!

# NU GOLF TOURNAMENT



September 27, 2021

## ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Despite the challenges of this year, we have been pleased to see many alumni still making major career moves. One alumni we want to highlight is Emilie McCormack ('07). She recently decided to start a podcast titled "This Changed My Life." We are deeply proud of alumni like Emilie who are using their platforms to make an impact and thrilled to see them excel.

### Emilie McCormack ('07)

This Changed My Life podcast has been a dream in the works for a long time. My hope is for people to be both encouraged and challenged. It will be a place where we talk about everything from faith to fashion, culture to coffee, purpose to parenting, leadership to love, and so much more. There's so much beauty when we share stories with one another. I believe God works through story. I can't wait to share my own story, and many of my friends' stories with you.



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## THE NU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION: *Membership Has Its Privileges.*

If you've ever thought about joining the NU Alumni Association, there are plenty of reasons to do so. It's a great way to stay in touch with NU and your fellow alumni, and it offers real benefits you can use. Joining is simple. Just complete the online form and begin your membership privileges right away: [northwestu.edu/alumni/association](http://northwestu.edu/alumni/association).

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### Take a Free Class

NU grads have the opportunity to attend an undergraduate day or evening class totally free of charge every year.

### NU ID Card

The NU ID card will provide access to a variety of benefits—both on and off campus.

### Northwest Passages

We'll send you *Northwest Passages*, a 28-page magazine that will help you stay connected with NU and your fellow alumni.

### Alumni E-Newsletter

Stay up to date on NU news and events with our e-newsletter, which comes out several times each year.

### Eagle Fitness Center

The fitness center is located in the Barton Building. As an NU alum, you have access for \$15/month for individuals or \$25/month for family memberships.

### Library

You'll have full borrowing privileges at Hurst Library. To check out books, all you need is your NU ID card.

### Hotel Discounts

Receive discounts at Kirkland hotels when visiting the campus during university events.