



The Whole Wide World

From Harvard Law School, to executive suites at multi-national corporations, to the mesquite forests of Texas, to ice sculpting for major league teams, and to school yards in Iraq, Northwood alumni can be found anywhere and everywhere. A degree from Northwood University opens the door to a world of possibilities.

“Northwood made me do it,” says **Captain Daniel King, '04, BBA, Florida**, Management/ Banking & Finance. Northwood’s Code of Ethics drove home the message it is everyone’s responsibility to make the world a better place. King had passed it in the atrium many times, but with his busy schedule never took time to read it. When he finally stopped to look it over, it resonated deeply. The one part of the code that stays with him is the part about respect, “We will treat all others with consideration for their circumstances and with thoughtful regard for their value as human beings.”

All the teachers, faculty, but most of all the diverse student body at Northwood, made him think about everyone as an international community. The entire time he was at NU, King was introduced to people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. He became friends with people from every place you could point to on a world map. This piqued his interest in global issues and initiated his drive to travel and see first-hand some of the things he had only heard about.

It was the teachings of Mr. Edward Howell that most made him try to look at the



Captain Daniel King

world as a whole. Howell would have the class present a topic of international business each week. As the weeks went on, King started to realize how everything one does has a global impact. He came to the conclusion that we have to not only be cognizant of the effects of our actions, but we have to try to actively participate

and strive for a positive outcome for everyone.

Days after graduation, King was on a plane to Africa. He spent two years as a Small Enterprise Development Volunteer with the Peace Corps working in a small city named Segou in Mali, West Africa. During his free time he tried to visit as much of

the continent as possible. Upon finishing his Peace Corps term, he made the decision to join the Army and went to Basic Training in February 2005. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant soon afterwards. His first job was as an Executive Officer of an Advanced Individual Training Unit at Aberdeen Proving



Captain King & Associate

Grounds, Maryland. He was deployed to Iraq in early 2008 on a twelve-man Military Transition Team as their Logistics Trainer and is currently working out of an Iraqi Combat Outpost on the outskirts of Bi'aj located in the Nineveh province. Heading back home in March 2009, King plans to transition back into civilian life in the United States of America.

The Peace Corps was one of the most rewarding experiences of King's life. He was encouraged by friends, family, Northwood staff, and returned Peace Corps volunteers to become involved. His memorable moments while working for the Peace Corps are numerous and range from hilarious to life altering. He has been in meetings discussing the future of Segou, visited AIDS victims, and watched the entrepreneurs whom he consulted with rise and fail. He even had to go to court once for his pet monkey "Bobo Tiga," who apparently bit an old man, who filed a complaint with the police. He spent time without electricity or running water, and dealt with language barriers and cultural differences in a strange land. All of these experiences have made him a better person overall and

broadened his horizons greatly.

As a member of the Mustang Military Transition Team, King lives, works, and trains with the Iraqi Security Forces. As the Iraqis try to maintain security in the area, the terrorists try to disrupt and intimidate the local populace. This has led to the village of Bi'aj being used as a battlefield for both sides. Through educational initiatives, King's company is winning hearts and minds one-by-one. The mayor's office and the local government of Iraq representatives have become very receptive to them and have begun to aid their mission. The demeanor of the average citizen has also changed dramatically. In the beginning the Americans were largely looked at as another occupying force. Now with each patrol, more children line the streets, smiling, waving, and asking for soccer balls. Their parents come with concerns about security and cooperate in efforts to rid the terrorists from their area. Overall the situation has improved and great gains in stabilizing the region are being made.

King's company's education initiatives are just part of a multi-part plan to influence the people of Bi'aj and help them feel

like there is an alternative to the constant violence plaguing this contested and strategic border region. The educational initiatives include supplying children with school supplies we in the United States take for granted such as notebooks, pens, paper, and pencils. The group is renovating schools so learning can take place in a comfortable, safe, and clean environment.

If King could pass on one message to his fellow alumni and current students at Northwood University, it would be to "try and

give something back you have received as far as accessibility and opportunity. Someone has laid the groundwork for you, so you should be able to lay the groundwork for someone else. In the long run it pays unexpected dividends."

Thank you, Captain King!

In her senior year, **Tonya Long, '05 MI, BBA**, Banking & Finance MI, decided to go to law school. A member of the Mock Trial Team, she found the courtroom competition to be uniquely stimulating and it



Tonya Long at Harvard

piqued her interest in a legal career. With a great GPA and LSAT score, Long was encouraged to apply widely and set her standards high. She was optimistic about her chances, still when Harvard sent its acceptance letter, “I was in shock!” she says.

But Long is a determined young woman with specific goals, and even with Harvard knocking on her door, law school would have to wait. Deferring admission for two years, Long signed on with Teach for Americorp and accepted a position in a special education classroom along the Texas/Mexico border.

It was an eye-opening experience. “Immigration wasn’t the issue,” she notes, “People crossed the border all the time. What was interesting was the blend of cultures—the intermingling of Tex/Mex lifestyles and language.” People could switch from English to Spanish seamlessly, even in the same sentence.

Teaching special education brought both challenges and rewards. On the first day of classes, a 17 year-old girl went to the board to show what she knew about arithmetic. She could write the symbols, + - x and /, but had no understanding of their application. After a year in Long’s classroom, the young woman could not only name the symbols, she could actually apply the processes. “This isn’t like TV and movies, the skills

we are able to teach these students are small gains, which will affect the quality of their lives in the long term,” says Long.

Now in her first semester at Harvard, Long is pleased with the academic preparation she received at Northwood. Tonya Long is a remarkable young woman and we are proud to have her in our illustrious body of alumni.



Matthew Cooper in his chef’s regalia

Matthew Cooper, '08, BBA, Flint, MI, Management, owns IconIce, a business providing ice sculptures throughout mid-Michigan. When the National Football League, the Detroit Redwings, or the Pistons need an ice sculpture, they call Matt and he delivers.

Cooper learned his craft early on. A friend who was the executive chef at the Hyatt Club taught him the basics, but Cooper’s natural artistic talents are what make his sculptures stand out. He wields his magic to coax unicorns, trophies, baseball, company logos, and more to reveal themselves from within the 300 pound blocks of ice. There is more business than he can handle and often turns customers away.

Cooper’s degree from Northwood has been very beneficial. “I owned a restaurant when I was younger,” he says, “but was just not prepared. Northwood gave me a great business foundation I can apply to every part of my work. It is a well rounded education.”

In addition to running IconIce, Cooper serves as adjunct faculty

at Mott Community College in Flint, Mich., where he teaches culinary arts, including baking & pastry, as well as restaurant and organizational management.



An icy unicorn

William Bogert, '05, BBA, Cedar Hill, TX, describes himself as a ‘serial entrepreneur.’ After a successful corporate career, Bogert was ready to heed the call of entrepreneurship. Northwood’s emphasis on leadership and real business preparation stood out when Bogert looked for the right educational and philosophical fit to complete his degree.

Owner of Unique Mesquite, a high-end residential and commercial woodworking and furniture design and manufacturing firm, Bogert has had fascinating projects and customers. The firm had a client in Los Angeles who was a *Lonesome Dove* fan. This client wanted a one-of-a-kind desk reflecting the ruggedness, hardship and beauty of the Old West. As the desktop was being milled, a bullet and a nail from the 1870s were revealed. At the client’s request, barbed wire, a rattler’s tail, a scorpion, and a Texas Ranger’s badge were also embedded in the desktop.

Bogert created a legend about the desk. Desks are where work is accomplished—work can be hard, it can be daunting, but perseverance and faith will help get you over hurdles. Perform as if you are 10 feet tall and bulletproof. Ultimately you will succeed.

This desk and its legend are symbolic of Bogert’s life and personal philosophy. His clients often become lifelong friends. “Monetary satisfaction is not my motivation. True wealth comes from within. We are only on the planet so long and we must learn to heed the journey our faith calls us to take,” he comments.



William Bogert, owner of Unique Mesquite

Insets: Scorpion, snake rattles, Ranger badge, barbed wire, a bullet, and an old rusty nail inlaid in desktop

Michael Witte, '06, MBA, Director of Energy and Climate Change, The Dow Chemical Company, addresses cutting edge issues—energy and climate change. He enjoys the challenge of developing and implementing strategy to address two very complex and interrelated issues. Working with a team of highly trained business professionals is rewarding and facilitates the broad learning of Dow's business and its role in the broader global economy.

Witte interacts on a daily basis with experts from all parts of the globe, including Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America. A key to implementing Dow's strategy is

through advocacy efforts. Teams in Washington, Brussels, Ottawa, and Beijing all contribute to what Witte believes is sound, practical policy and strategy.

Witte comments that he uses a great deal of what he learned at DeVos in his role at Dow. The program's focus on finance and its role in business is very important. Having a solid understanding of finance is essential in today's marketplace and helps to enhance one's business acumen. He notes that the MBA program at Northwood provided the opportunity to learn essentials of finance from practitioners in the field. In addition, he notes that studies of organizational

Michael Witte's career takes him all over the world.

strategy with **Dr. Fairbairn and Busby** helped build a core foundation in his understanding of how to construct and implement sound business strategies.

We're very proud of the five alumni featured here. Their careers are varied, but one thing they have in common—they bring The Northwood Idea to the whole wide world.

■ *Linda Mathieu*

