



NWCS
HOMESCHOOL
CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

NWCS Homeschool Extension Program Staff



Kindergarten – Jennifer Edwards

I grew up in the Spokane area, attended East Valley High School and graduated from Eastern Washington University in 2003 with my bachelor's Degree. I moved to Memphis, Tennessee in 2003. I have always loved working with children and have done so my whole life, from volunteering with the Muscular Dystrophy Association, St. Jude's children's research hospital and working in the children's ministry at my church. This love for children led me to work as a Teacher Counselor/Supervisory for emotionally disturbed youth in Memphis. This is where I met my husband. I then had the amazing opportunity to teach at a Christian Academy. I taught both Kindergarten and Pre-K 4. I had the privilege to teach for 6 years and I absolutely loved teaching there. There is such a joy in seeing a child learn and discover something new. I loved my time teaching and it was bitter sweet for me to make the decision to leave my job and stay home with my kids. God called me to stay home with my kids and homeschool. I love being able to teach my children and be a part of their everyday life. In June 2015 my amazing husband moved us back up to Spokane because he knew it was my desire to be around my family. God opened many doors and allowed us to move up here. I have been homeschooling my, soon to be 4th grader and Kindergartener as well as chasing a very busy 3-year-old around. In my free time I love to exercise, read and spend time with my family. This will be my second-year teaching in the program and my 4th year as a parent in the program. I am so excited for all that God has planned for this year. I am looking forward to an exciting year of learning and getting to know each of you!



Grades 1 / 2 - Jena Tinklenberg

I grew up in Nebraska and went to college in Iowa where I received my bachelor's degree in Social Work. There I also met my husband Michael while running cross country. Since moving to Spokane in 2011, I received my Masters in Elementary Education through Whitworth University and an endorsement in Special Education through Pacific Lutheran University. I have worked as an Autism paraeducator for the West Valley School District for three years and one year as a Behavior Intervention Teacher for Central Valley School District. My husband and I have been married for eight years and have moved six different times to four different states. We have one child, Alayna (7 months). In my free time I enjoy spending time with my husband and daughter, watching and participating in almost every sport, being outside, boating, reading,

and vegging out in front of the T.V. I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you this school year while further investigating what the Lord has created.



Grades 3 / 4 - Christy Noller

My growing-up years were spent in upstate New York. After attending Philadelphia College of Bible and earning a B.S. in Elementary Education as well as a B.S. in Bible, I moved to Ohio where I taught third grade at Dayton Christian School for three years. My husband and I met and were married there in 1997 while I was teaching, and we moved out here in 1999. We built our home in 2000 while I substitute-taught in public schools all around Spokane. We have four kids: Alex and Katie, 23, are twins and were adopted from Russia at the age of 7, in 2002. Tanner is 16 and a junior at NWC and Chloe is 14 and starting her freshman year at NWC as well. Our kids have been in public, private, and homeschool, and I have taught in all three as well. Our homeschooling years were my favorite. This is my third year with the Homeschool program and am absolutely delighted to be returning.



5th / 6th Grade – Abby Leman

Abby grew up as a missionary kid, with her parents translating the Bible and holding numerous roles in administration with Wycliffe Bible Translators. During her childhood, she lived in Canada and Colorado and had the opportunity to travel around the world for a year with her family. After high school in Texas, she attended Whitworth College in Spokane, where she pursued Elementary Education and a Vocal Performance Major, but with 3 credits short, changed it as she felt God was calling her to finish her degree in Religion. She married her husband James during her senior year of college (1999), and after graduation she pursued her master's degree in Counseling Psychology at Gonzaga University. She worked at Lutheran Social Services and The Hutton Settlement Children's Home as a counselor, house parent, and girls' Case Manager. She stopped working outside the home for a time to start a family. Her family currently makes their home in Spokane, Washington, where her husband serves as the Senior Pastor of First Free Methodist Church since 2006. She has loved doing music ministry, children's ministry, counseling, teaching voice lessons, homeschooling, raising her two boys Sam and JJ, teaching at Semper Fi, a Classical Christian Co-op, working for her church and denomination, and working at her boys' gymnastics center over the last 20 years. In her free time, she enjoys all things music, writing, reading, art, camping, sports, and movies. She began her journey with NWC's homeschool program the fall of 2016, first in Kindergarten, and then to 5th and 6th in 2017. She enjoys all the students and families immensely!



Spanish - Jennifer Huseland

Although I was born in Philadelphia, I moved to Wisconsin soon afterwards, where I lived until I was 8. My parents then joined Wycliffe Bible Translators and we moved to Peru where I grew up in the jungle. It was there that I saw the gospel on full display and trusted Christ for salvation and life. When we returned to the States, I attended Dordt College in Iowa and received a B.A. in elementary education with a minor in Spanish. I also met and married my husband Brian there. We then taught for 3 years in a one-room Christian school on the prairies of South Dakota. When I became pregnant with our first daughter, we explored missionary work. Eventually my husband was hired to teach in Walnut Creek, California. After living there for 3 years, we joined a small team going to the U.K. to plant an International Presbyterian Church. By this time, we had 3 girls and I homeschooled them while we were there. Upon returning to America, Brian got a job at Northwest Christian School as a 4th grade teacher and we settled into Spokane in 2007. We now have 5 girls (19, 16, 14, 4 and almost 2). I am excited to join the homeschool program here as the Spanish teacher. I am looking forward to magnifying God's glory in the study of language and culture. Christian education has played a huge role in my life and I am excited to get back into teaching the next generation the wonders of God's world, expanding their horizons and deepening their Biblical worldview.



Online Adjunct Math - Lisa Angle

Lisa Angle holds a B.S. from Wheaton College in Mathematics with a secondary education certificate, and a M.S. from the University of Illinois in Mathematics. She has taught math to students of all ages for more than 30 years at the University of Illinois, Seattle Pacific University, and Flathead Valley Community College in addition to her private online tutoring and home school cooperative classes. She has written five popular math texts: Basic Math, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Calculus. Using computer technology, Lisa engages and mentors students and believes that every serious student can be successful with appropriate placement and excellent instruction. Lisa lives with her husband, Jim, and three of their nine home educated children in the Pacific Northwest. She enjoys music and has been a church pianist since she was a teenager. She and Jim will welcome two more grandchildren this fall.



Math - Laura Bula

I graduated from Pensacola Christian College in 2004 with a B.S. in Mathematics Education, and in 2009 I graduated from Western Governors University with a B.A. in Mathematics Education where I also received my Washington State Teaching Certificate. In January of 2014 I completed the requirements for my Professional Teaching Certificate for the State of Washington. I have thirteen years of math teaching experience. I began my teaching career at Rainier Christian Schools in Auburn, Washington in 2004. In 2008 I moved back to Spokane and took a job at Northwest Christian Schools teaching math full time. In December of 2013 I found out I was pregnant with twins and decided that after the school year was over that I was going to be a stay at home mom. I was away from teaching for the 2014-2015 school year when an opportunity arose with the NWCS Homeschool program. This will be my 4th year teaching math with the program. I love teaching math and am excited to see what this school year will hold! My husband James and I have three boys, twins, Austin and Caleb, who are 4 years old, and Isaac who is 16 months. We love hiking, kayaking, swimming, and being outdoors.



History – Elijah Gurash

I grew up as a pastor's kid, and we moved quite a bit throughout my childhood. However, the majority of my early years were split between Fresno, California and Fairmont, West Virginia. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (Business, History and Political Science) from Northwest Christian University in Eugene, Oregon. Following that, I completed my education coursework through East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. And lastly, I obtained my Master of Science in Cultural Studies from The University of Edinburgh, in Edinburgh, Scotland. I have 12 years of teaching experience in 3 different states and am certified in Social Studies/History and Health and Fitness in the state of Washington. My wife and I have been married for 16 years and have enjoyed many adventures, including living in Europe while obtaining my master's degree. We have 3 children: a 3rd grader, a kindergartener and a 3-year-old. Our family loves to travel, hike and play just about any sport.



Literature - Melodie Workman

I grew up in Tampa, Florida in a Christian family. Education runs deeply in my blood and vibrantly through my heart. My parents were both educators and trained me with the understanding that education is not the end goal but a strong pathway to success. As I grew, I knew I was made for and called to this same ministry. I have always enjoyed taking the

complex and making it simple, seeing concepts click in people's eyes, and making the mundane and undesired into exciting and desirable. When I realized that English education was a means to reach every learner, that is was pertinent to every field of study and every avenue of life, that I could strengthen and equip young people for life using literature and composition, I knew I had found my specified calling. I pursued this calling at Pensacola Christian College where I first received my B.S. in Music Education and later received my M.S. in English Education. I taught junior high and high school English in New Mexico for two years. Then I moved to California and taught at the collegiate level for eight years. After having my second child, my husband and I decided it was time for me to take some time away to raise our own children. My son, Jude, is now five years old and attending Midway Elementary, and my daughter, Paige, is three years old. God has opened many doors for me to begin teaching at NWCS Homeschool, and I'm thrilled to be stepping back into the classroom to interact with your children weekly!



Science-Courtney Manuel

Undergraduate degree at PLU in BSPE pre-physical therapy/MAE in Education.

I have taught high school biology and general science at Foss High School in Tacoma before I took maternity leave and never returned to the public school system. I helped start up and teach a church co-op for preschool through junior high kids. I also taught at Mead's homeschool program last year and started up their secondary science program. I have a passion for science; the discovery, the problem solving the aha moment when it all makes sense. I believe in hands on learning and if a student figures it out themselves it is information not easily lost. I hope to pass on my passion for science and a confidence that they can figure it out!



Physical Education – Wendy Speer

I grew up in Sonoma County, California and had the wonderful privilege of going to a Christian school, which is where I came to know the Lord as my Savior. For college, I headed down to Southern California and The Master's University where I earned my bachelor's degree both in Bible and Behavioral Studies. While there I was able to play on the Women's Basketball team for 3 years. My senior year I had the fun opportunity to pioneer and play on the first Women's Soccer team for TMU. I also met and married my best friend and we are going on 25 years of marriage. We have four amazing children and I was able to homeschool them for 15 years. We moved to Spokane eleven years ago to allow me the privilege to continue to stay home with my children. We have been involved in sports for 17 years with all our kids, with all four playing soccer, my boys' football, girls' ballet and gymnastics, and variously basketball, track, tennis, and cross country. Hobbies would include working out, reading, and taking pictures.



Art - Rebecca Lamb

I grew up in Spokane and attended Northwest Christian from Kindergarten to the beginning of tenth grade when I transferred to Mead High School. While at Mead I took 2 art classes each semester, joined the Yearbook staff and was able to complete a semester at Spokane Skills Center for Graphic Design. After I graduated in 2007, I went on to receive a degree in both Graphic Design and Web Design from Spokane Community College. In 2010 I married my husband, Eric who I met at my home church, Crossover. We have 3 children, Micaiah (7), Selah (3) and Benaiah (2). The Lord has allowed me to stay home with our children for the past 7 years and homeschool the oldest. I have been working on freelance design jobs during that time to keep my skills up to date with the ever-evolving technical world. Art has always been a passion of mine and I am elated that God has allowed me to join this homeschool program as a teacher.



Music - Nathan Schmidt

I was born in Tennessee, but moved to Peru before the age of five. Growing up as a missionary kid in the Amazon jungle, I had a pet kinkajou and several boa constrictors. And yes, I swam with piranhas. I studied music and theatre in college and graduate school and traveled on choir tours to exciting places like Europe and Texas. I have been fortunate to do a lot of fun things, like help write a musical to perform in New York City, play the lead in a short film, be a church pianist for seven years, and write the music for my own wedding. I have a wife and four kids, all of whom enjoy music. Playing the piano for over a quarter century, I love to teach and infect other people with a love for music that gives all the glory to God.



Ruth Wagley – Program Director

BS University of Wisconsin-Madison Dietetics and Management

I have enjoyed the privilege of directing the NWCS Homeschool Program for 7 years. My husband Doug and I came to Spokane to serve New Vision Lutheran Church in 1994, a conservative, evangelical fellowship dedicated to serving God’s most vulnerable people in the Hillyard and Chief Gary communities. We homeschooled our five daughters, while ministering as a family, preschool-8th grade and each engaged a unique high school education that included homeschooling, public education, and community college experiences. I love encouraging homeschool families and supporting their needs as parents and students navigate God’s best plan for Christian education together. I enjoyed many years in the independent homeschool cooperative community in Spokane and taught the Homeschool Qualifying Course for several years. This year my life verse is: John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.



Deanna Stewart – Administrative Assistant and Registrar

BS-Business and Marketing, Eastern Washington University

Deanna Stewart, our registrar and administrative assistant, and her husband Don exemplify the multiple ways families use the Homeschool program. After working 7 years in fundraising in all the public and private schools in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, God laid it on the Stewart’s hearts to homeschool if ever given the opportunity. 9 years later after adopting 2 children, God granted them that desire. Deanna shares, “Homeschooling for 15 years has blessed and humbled our family. I find it a great honor to help families in their homeschooling endeavors with the support of NWCS.” The Stewarts have one graduate, one 12th grader and one 7th grader. One of her life verses is 1 Cor 10:31 “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”