



NWCS
HOMESCHOOL
CELEBRATING 17 YEARS

NWCS Homeschool Extension Program Staff



Preschool - Madison McRae

I was born in Spokane and spent most of my childhood here. When I was young, my parents served as missionaries in Russia and church planters, while homeschooling me and my younger siblings. Seeing the power and impact of Christian education first-hand has given me both a passion for it, and a deep respect for the sacrifice and commitment it often takes. I've had the great joy of being involved in education through being an assistant teacher, tutoring, and taking an active role in my siblings' home-education. In 2016 I married my amazing husband and moved to his native British Columbia. We are so excited to be back in Spokane now with our daughter, Zoia (3). This spring I will graduate with my B.A. in Education from Western Governors University and am so excited to be returning to the Homeschool PreK program as the lead teacher! Through joining the Homeschool team last year and supporting my siblings who now attend Northwest Christian, I have been so blessed to be a part of this community.



Preschool Assistant – Abby DeVries

I have been a stay at home mom for the past 9 years. My husband Peter and I have three children Nora (9) Stella (7) and Caleb (5). As a family we love camping, hiking and hobby farming. My desire is to raise my children in a home that serves the Lord and to bring them up to have complete faith in Him and have a firm foundation to stand on when they leave home. I have been to India on mission twice. My last trip in 2019 I was honored to teach a non English speaking children's class at a pastor's conference. Here the Lord showed me the compassion and love I had for teaching young kids. Through an abundance of prayer in the last year God has led me to this job and homeschooling my three children full time this coming year. I am grateful for this opportunity to serve Him and come along side of Mrs. McRae in teaching your preschool children.



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. After graduation, I decided to move to Memphis, Tennessee with my best friend. At the time I didn't understand why God lead me to make this decision but it was the best decision I could have made and he blessed me in so many ways on my journey. I have always loved working with children and have done so my whole life, from volunteering with the Muscular Dystrophy Association for over 8 years, 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 for over 2 years. This is also 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 bittersweet for me to make the decision to leave my job and stay home with my kids. I felt God called me to stay home with my kids and homeschool (something I never thought I would do). 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 so many doors and allowed us to move up here. This year, I will be homeschooling my, soon to be 6th grader, 2nd grader and Kindergartener. In my free time I love to exercise, read and spend time with my family. This will be my fourth-year teaching in the program



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and my 6th 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 – Juli White

I grew up in Spokane and graduated from Eastern Washington University with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. My husband and I met in the EWU college ministry at our church and got married in 2005. After graduating from college, I subbed in Mead and Spokane Schools, and went on to teach for a short time as a 1st grade teacher and then a Library specialist. I then taught Elementary music and directed the school choir until I decided to stay home after the birth of my daughter. We now have three girls, ages 5, 8 and 10. While staying home with my girls, I have kept busy serving at church. I have taught Sunday School, directed both the adult and children's choirs, led music for Vacation Bible in the summer, and sang in the Worship ministry.

My family loves the outdoors: we love to go camping and travel, and we also love to swim, go for walks, and run around in the backyard. Some of my hobbies include reading, baking, gardening, and having coffee with a friend. I am so excited to be back in the classroom in such an amazing program. I'm thankful for the opportunity God has provided for me to teach at the NWCS Homeschool program this year!



Grades 2/3 – Sara Jones

I was born in Montana, but I moved to Yakima, WA when I was eight years old. I spent the rest of my childhood there with my parents and three sisters. I moved to Spokane in 1998 to attend Whitworth University. While at Whitworth I met my husband, Greg, and completed a bachelor's degree in nursing. After getting married and graduating, we moved to Liberty Lake. I worked as a labor and delivery nurse and a school nurse but gave up my payed employment to be a stay at home mom after the birth of our daughter. We have four children, Aubrey (16), Nathan (14), Dane (12), and Johanna (10). Greg and I have been happily married for twenty years.

We are beginning our tenth year as a homeschooling family and our fourth year in the NWC Homeschool Program. I have been teaching our children at home, teaching and leading children in our church's kids ministry for four years, and am excited to be back as the 2/3 teacher. My favorite way to spend my free time is with people! I enjoy going on dates with my husband, coffee and conversation with friends, hanging out with my sisters and parents, and having adventures with my kids. I read all the time (we have a Little Free Library in front of our house!), crochet, and love a good nap. I'm so excited to be back and looking forward to what God has in store for us this year!



Grades 3/4 - Christy Noller

My growing-up years were spent in upstate New York. After attending Philadelphia College of Bible and earning dual degrees in Elementary Education and 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 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, 25, are twins adopted from Russia at the age of 7, in 2002. Tanner, 18, just graduated from NWC. Chloe is 16 and starting her junior year there. Our kids have been in public, private, and homeschool, and



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I have taught in all three as well. Our homeschooling years were my favorite. This is my fifth year with the Homeschool program and I am absolutely delighted to be returning.



Grades 4/5 Nicole Wagner

I grew up in Enumclaw, WA and realized my love of teaching at a young age. I taught swim lessons through my high school years and becoming an educator seemed like an obvious next step. I attended Whitworth University and received my Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and my Teaching Certificate in 2004. After earning my undergraduate degree, I was employed as a substitute teacher for the Spokane School District and enrolled in Whitworth's Master in Education program. In 2006, I graduated with my master's degree. Earlier that same year I married my high school sweetheart. He graduated from Gonzaga and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in

the Army. We were stationed at Fort Hood, Texas shortly after we graduated. I taught 5th grade for two years and loved the experience. After two years in TX, we were transferred to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. While stationed there, we began having our own kids. At that stage in life, I decided that being a stay-at-home mom was what I desired. In 2013, my husband's military orders took him to the Corps of Engineers Seattle District Headquarters. We happily moved back near family in Western Washington. We had two more girls. I began working very part time coaching the Girls High School Swim Team at my alma mater. In 2016, we decided that leaving Active Duty and becoming a Reservist was in the best interest for our family. We knew we wanted to raise our four girls in Spokane. God opened door after door to get us here. During our last three years in Nine Mile Falls, I have mostly been a stay-at-home mom. For the last two years I have had a very small job teaching advanced math to 4th and 5th graders at Nine Mile Falls Elementary. We regularly attend and are actively involved in First Free Methodist Church. Our four girls ages 10, 8, 5 and 3 will be attending the NWC Homeschool program this year. This is our first year homeschooling. I am extremely excited to see all God has in store for this coming year.



Grades 5/6 – Abby Leman

Abby grew up as a missionary kid, with her parents translating the Bible and holding many 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 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 Se, 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 nior 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 we started having kids, my husband took a teaching job in 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 (22 and married, 19, 17, 7, and 5). I have so enjoyed teaching in the homeschool program these last 3 years. I love showing your kiddos the glory of God in the study of language and culture. Christian education has played a huge role in my life and I am excited to continue to share with the next generation the wonders of God's world, expanding their horizons and deepening their Biblical worldview.



Math - Laura Bula

I grew up in Spokane, WA, and graduated from Mt. Spokane High School in 2001, where I also earned my AA degree through the Running Start program. I then attended Pensacola Christian College and graduated 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 15 years of math teaching experience. I began my teaching career at Rainier Christian Schools in Auburn, Washington in 2004, and taught high school level math for 4 years. In 2008 I moved back to Spokane and took a job at Northwest Christian Schools teaching high school math full time for the next 6 years. In July of 2014 I had twin boys, and took the following school year off to stay home with them. Then in 2015 I joined the Northwest Christian Homeschool Program, and am beginning my 6th year in this program this year. My husband James and I have 3 boys, twins, Austin and Caleb who are 6, and Isaac who is 3. My twins are starting Kindergarten this year at Northwest Christian's full-time campus, and my 3-year-old will be in the pre-school two days a week. My husband James is a supervisor at Costco in the Valley, and has worked there for over 10 years now. We love camping, hiking, kayaking, being outside, and exploring new places.



History, Technology, ASB, and Academic Coach – Sarah Hilsen

BA Sociology and Literature, BAE Secondary English Education Minor: History, Eastern Washington University

Washington State Certified Teacher – English and History Endorsements

I am passionate about education to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus. I have been called to help students recognize their God-given potential in academics, lead with their godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the Word of God, and prayer. With Homeschool this year, I am excited to be part of the pilot program Academic Coaching for additional support for secondary students. I spent the summer in research mode, which was hard with all the libraries closed, with information on what qualities our staff can provide for students, families, and each other. I became a Washington State



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OSPI Mentor on my road of discovery to best equip this endeavor! The classes I taught last year brought so much joy and I am blessed to teach again this year!

Summer brought the Hilsen family tighter than ever. My husband Matt and my two girls at home, Lexi 16 and Ava 12, stuck out 2020 with me and all are proud to announce that we made it! The dog however refuses to go for another walk. ME?!: My favorite character is Baby Yoda, my favorite book(s) The Lord of the Rings epic, Goalcast videos make me tear up, my favorite drink is Cinnamon Stick tea, and I sometimes snort when something is really funny.



Literature and Newspaper - 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 seven years old and attending NWC Homeschool this year, and my daughter, Paige, is four 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!



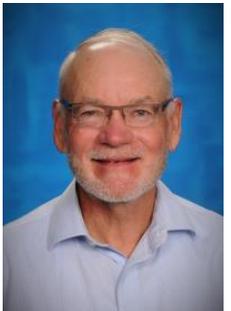
High School Science and Senior Leadership-Courtney Manuel

I grew up in here in Colbert on 30 acres to explore and run wild. I participated in every sports season available since 4th grade up until my senior year at Mead High School. I didn't grow up in the church, but God called me to Himself as a sophomore/junior in high school. I was very involved in Young Life and my youth group. It was in those relationships I learned of the value of Christian education. I attended Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma WA and received both a BSPE pre-physical therapy and 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 and teach at a church co-op for preschool through junior high kids. I also taught at Mead's homeschool program for a year and started up their secondary science program. I am currently homeschooling my 3 school age children and chasing my almost 2 year old. 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!



Junior High Science-Christina Lang

Born in Sarasota, FL and the oldest of five children, life has always been unpredictable and an adventure for me! I have five children, we are a blended family, with the oldest having just graduated Medical Lake HS last year and the youngest going into 2nd grade here at NWCS. I met my husband Justin in Alaska while I was an FCC Provider on the base and we moved to Wasilla, AK. There I worked as a Behavioral Therapeutic Asst. for the State of Alaska. I worked with all ages and really enjoyed being able to help these kids and their families. After moving to Spokane 9 years ago, I became an FCC Provider on the base again, so that I could stay home with my children and continue my passion for teaching. I obtained my CDA from the Council of Professional Recognition and after my youngest started 1st grade, I changed my focus to Religious Education. I have found such joy and growth in this position. I am excited to start this year as a Jr. High Science teacher with lessons based in our Lord's creation. Science is such an amazing way to explore and test things in our world and I am excited to bring that passion to your children.



High School History - Jack Hancock

God called me to be a teacher for His Glory over 35 years ago. My professional journey started in the public school system, however I quickly gained a teaching position at a small Christian school in Edwall, Washington. The freedom to use God's Word and to integrate the Bible with the history curriculum excited me to the extent that I never returned to the public school system. After six years of teaching in Edwall, I was employed to teach history and Bible at Northwest Christian Schools (NWCS) in 1993. During these initial years, God invested in me by challenging me to be an elder in a new church plant in Spokane while teaching middle school at NWCS. The combination of serving as an elder and in a Christian School empowered me to grow in my ability to effectively integrate the Word of God with any historical curriculum assigned to me. Additionally, I earned a Masters Degree in History to help stimulate me as a true historian. Next the Lord intervened through circumstances as I served in administration at NWCS for 22 years, while adding a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. And most importantly, God by His incredible Grace gave me a life partner Carol who encourages me every day in all that I do as I attempt to love the Lord with my heart, soul, mind and strength.



Physical Education – Tara Gelhausen

I am the oldest of eleven children in a homeschool family, and I had lots of practice teaching a variety of ages and personalities in my younger siblings. I grew up in Spokane, attended Chester elementary (public school) until fifth grade, was homeschooled from sixth grade through my sophomore year of high school, then completed AA in Liberal Arts through the Running Start program. I met my husband, Wade, at our church. We have been married for 11 years and have two girls, Nora and Elise. I was blessed to stay home with them when they were tiny, and have been homeschooling since Nora was 5. We joined a homeschool cooperative where I taught classes for four years. We continue to be involved in our church and I facilitate the nursery and help run VBS each summer (except 2020). We love being active and have participated in a wide range of sports: soccer, softball, baseball, gymnastics, tennis, and swimming, along with yoga, hiking, ballet, and fitness classes. I love getting out in nature to observe birds, flowers, and especially geology. I also enjoy cooking, coffee, reading aloud, audiobooks, and podcasts.



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Wade and I have Gonzaga men's basketball season tickets and love to attend games, but there are no games in 2020. Last year was my first year on staff at the homeschool program and it was superbly rewarding. I love coaching the students through learning skills and playing games. I am blessed and grateful to be the Physical Education teacher at the homeschool program. God has blessed me beyond what I deserve. My goal to share God's love and grace with students each week.



Art and Yearbook - 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 (9), Selah (5) and Benaiah (4). The two older kids go to the full time school and Benaiah will be in our preK program again this year. Art has always been a passion of mine and I am so blessed that God has allowed me to teach in the homeschool program.



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 10 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, Chief Gary and Shadle 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: 1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen Jesus, you love Him, and even though you do not see Him now, you believed in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.



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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 2 adult children and one 9th grader. One of her favorite verses this year is Psalm 116:1-2 I love the LORD, because He has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call on Him as long as I live.