

Craig Nelson
Class of 1981

Craig Nelson is known as someone who approaches life with both enthusiasm and a strong work ethic. After graduating from Wa-Hi, Craig attended Oregon State University, where he was a walk on with the track program, earned a scholarship and successfully participated in the 800 meter run in the Pac 10. He was the track program's most inspirational athlete all four years of competition. After graduating, he worked for Precision Cast Parts in Portland before moving home to work for Nelson Irrigation Corporation in 1989.



In his work as an engineer and now co-president of the company, he is credited with 21 U.S. patents and has designed products that are used world-wide. He has personally toured hundreds of local students around the Nelson plant, showing them the manufacturing operation of a thriving business in their own community.

His personal and civic involvement in Walla Walla includes coaching youth sports, serving on the Providence St. Mary Medical Center Board for eight years and volunteering with the Blue Mountain Community Foundation.

In 2005, while helping coach Garrison Middle School track, he saw the need and opportunity to upgrade the school's outdoor track. He helped raise more than \$150,000 for the project and spent long hours working on the construction site so that both students and the community could benefit.

Letters of reference praised him for the quiet support he gives others, his devotion to the community of Walla Walla, and his willingness to take on projects and do a "top notch job." He was nominated by his wife, Mindy, and children, Luke, Bailey and Madison Nelson. In summing up their nomination, they said "you must be careful what you ask for around Craig...you might just get it!"

Craig chose two of his high school coaches as his most inspirational staff: Al Sievertsen, wrestling, and Ron Huntington, cross country.



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Carol Minnick Santa

Class of 1962

Carol Minnick Santa has dedicated her life to learning – her own and that of countless others. A 1962 graduate of Walla Walla High School, where she was active in everything from academics to athletics, Carol continued her own education at Whitman College, Purdue and finally Temple University, where she earned her doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Psychology in 1976.



In 1978, she was hired by Kalispell (MT) Public Schools and took over a grant project that became Project CRISS, a professional development program designed to help all students read, write and learn more effectively. Her hard work and initiative helped grow CRISS from its humble roots to a thriving international educational consulting business with the vision of creating independence through student-owned strategies. Then, in 1996, she co-founded the Montana Academy, a fully accredited high school for troubled teens.

Carol has a long-standing involvement with the International Reading Association and was elected to major leadership positions by the more than 60,000 members of the non-profit group. Her resume shows that she is a prolific writer and researcher, with her work spanning such subjects as educational philosophy, classroom management, leadership and quantitative data.

Alan Fastrup, a colleague from the International Reading Association, praised her “outstanding international reputation earned through her many significant contributions to...the reading and literacy community” and said “she has an excellent record of professional success.”

Former classmate and friend Judy Chamberlain Holloway said she is amazed that “at an age when most of us are retiring, Carol still travels the globe promoting superior teaching skills and advocating for children.”

Carol says the staff members who figured prominently in her life were high school teachers: Donald Kamp (Math), Robert Schweger (Drama) and Elizabeth Kirkman (Latin/Grammar).

Daniel J. Reid

Class of 1974

Dan Reid probably never imagined that he would be known and praised for community advocacy in his hometown nearly 40 years after his graduation. His life path took him to Western Washington University for his undergraduate degree and then to the Seattle area where he established a successful real estate practice and worked as treasurer for a major construction company.



Dan returned to work as General Manager for Opp and Seibold Construction, Inc. in 1991 and has become a tireless community servant and leader, according to his nominators. A long-standing Rotary Club member, he helped lead the effort to organize volunteers and contractor support for the Fort Walla Walla Picnic Shelter that was donated to the city of Walla Walla. He has taken an active role in the Blue Mountain Community Foundation from 2005 to the present and currently serves as Board President. Other groups and organizations which have benefitted from his involvement include the YMCA, Youth Baseball, Borleske Parks and Recreation, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and the Walla Walla Public Schools Facilities Task Force.

Nominator Kathy Ketcham praised Dan for his work with the Trilogy Recovery Community, an organization dedicated to helping youth stay clean and sober, while supporting family members in the recovery process. He was instrumental locating a home for the program, volunteered hundreds of hours in work parties and organized more than 20 subcontractors to donate time and materials to renovate the structure. Kathy said he worked with youth “one-on-one during work parties...and quickly became friend and trusted confidante to many of the parents and family members.”

Sister-in-law Hali Myers, who coordinated his nomination, has seen so many examples of Dan’s generosity and kindness over 30 years that she claims “it is embedded in his personality to be helpful and humble.”

Dan chose his high school English teacher Richard “Dick” Poole as his most inspirational staff person who continued to engage his students whenever and wherever he met them – even 20 years later.