Verne Rupright ’76
From NSCC to Mayor of Wasilla, Alaska – You Never Know Where You’ll End Up!

You know that famous resident of Wasilla, Alaska – Sarah Palin, former town mayor and vice presidential candidate? Well, North Shore Community College has a much more local connection for you – Verne Rupright, a Lynn native, raised in Saugus and graduated from NSCC in 1976, is Wasilla’s current mayor!

While he still has North Shore roots, and is always happy to return to visit family and friends, Alaska is clearly now his home. Mayor Rupright attended NSCC in 1974, a Vietnam veteran who served in the US Air Force in the Medical Service field. He recalls that the student population then was about 30% Vietnam vets and that things were very different in those days: from smoking in the classrooms being the norm, to dealing with rioting and desegregation as he worked his night job as a Boston cab driver.

He earned an associate degree in Law Enforcement Management and Administration but the economy was poor and there were few jobs and little money to be made in Massachusetts. Rupright had been to Alaska for a temporary duty assignment on his way to Vietnam and had fallen in love with it. He decided to go there and work on the Alaska Pipeline. In Alaska he continued both his military service as well as his education. He was a US Army reservist from 1974-1992, achieving the rank of captain. He earned a bachelor of arts in justice from the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and his juris doctor from the Creighton University School of Law. The mayor spent most of his career as a defense and personal injury attorney, and has worked in a variety of public service roles both professionally and as a volunteer. He was elected mayor of Wasilla in October of 2008 and is currently in his second term as mayor of the city that has been his home for 26 years. His love for the natural beauty of Alaska, and specifically for Wasilla, is evident and he is very proud of the tremendous growth and thriving economy of Wasilla.

Mayor Rupright has many fond memories of NSCC. “I found everyone more than helpful. It was a good place and time, and it gave me the opportunity to prove that I could do it. I didn’t do well academically in high school, but when I came to North Shore I was on the Dean’s List for the entire two years. If it hadn’t been for North Shore Community College, I wouldn’t have ended up where I am. I just needed the chance, and I promised myself and the college that I would succeed.” He certainly has done exactly that.

Rupright still has a house at Northwood Lake in New Hampshire and was here for a visit this past fall. Among his favorite things when he’s back in the area: New England lobster, fried clams, and Sicilian pizza and “real subs”!

Mayor Rupright has many fond memories of NSCC. “I found everyone more than helpful. It was a good place and time, and it gave me the opportunity to prove that I could do it. I didn’t do well academically in high school, but when I came to North Shore I was on the Dean’s List for the entire two years. If it hadn’t been for North Shore Community College, I wouldn’t have ended up where I am. I just needed the chance, and I promised myself and the college that I would succeed.” He certainly has done exactly that.

Rupright still has a house at Northwood Lake in New Hampshire and was here for a visit this past fall. Among his favorite things when he’s back in the area: New England lobster, fried clams, Sicilian pizza and “real subs!”

His advice for current students or new grads regarding education and career? “Whatever your plans or dreams are, you are getting the basis and foundation for it right here. Don’t ever get discouraged, just get out there and do it!”

Alumni & Friends Social
NSCC alumni and friends enjoyed an evening of dining, dancing, raffles and fun at the Hilltop Steak House in Saugus. The October 2011 event was sponsored by NSCC’s Alumni Association and raised scholarship funds for NSCC grads continuing their education.

› Helen Haas ’99, center, takes a break from dancing to pose with daughters Debby Valverde ’73 (left) and Gail Shanahan Visentin ’70 (right). Mom and daughters all began their college education here at NSCC.

› Another mother-daughter team of NSCC grads: Frances Burke ’92 and daughter Mary Ann Petrillo ’84. Frances celebrated her 88th birthday with us at the October 21st event. For more about Frances, see alumni profile, page 2. Mary Ann is an NSCC Nurse Education grad and the Executive/Associate Director for Patient Services at the Bedford VA Medical Center.

Canines to College Day
A fun day for dogs and their humans to raise funds for college scholarships.

Bring your family AND your dog! Support the NSCC Foundation’s Believe in Lynn Scholarship Fund: NSCC invites you to Canines to College Day, a fun day of friendly dog competitions, demonstrations and dog-related shopping in support of scholarships for graduating Lynn high school seniors or residents of the City of Lynn transitioning to NSCC.

Hosted by Channel 5’s Randy Price, this fun event will feature special demonstrations by noted Animal Communicator Susan Deren, the Massachusetts State Police K-9 Unit, Reiki for Dogs, Agility Demonstration by Gorman of Fit ‘n’ Trim, as well as fun competitions like Best Pet Trick, Most Unique Tail, Best Looking Rescue Dog, Most Glamorous/Most GQ, Most Adorable, Best Celebrity Look-Alike, and Best Shake, Wag & Roll Dog!

Sunday, June 10, 2012 • 12:00-4:00 pm • Rain or Shine! NSCC Lynn Campus Lawn • 300 Broad Street, Lynn, MA

No R.S.V.P. needed

All proceeds benefit the NSCC Foundation’s Believe in Lynn Scholarship Fund. The NSCC Foundation’s Believe in Lynn Initiative supports scholarships for Lynn youth and other Lynn residents who are transitioning to NSCC, college readiness programs with Lynn schools to prepare students for college level courses, community programming through NSCC’s Public Policy Institute, workforce development partnerships with Lynn businesses and the expansion of NSCC’s Lynn campus.

If you’d like to help we are still welcoming volunteers to assist at this fun event as well as donations of raffle prizes.

Find out more at www.northshore.edu/canines2college or contact Tanara Espinal at 978-739-5527 or email tessinal@northshore.edu
Frances Burke, Class of ‘92

Frances Burke may not be the oldest alumnus of North Shore Community College, but she is among one of the most enthusiastic. Frances, who celebrated her 88th birthday at the Alumni & Friends Reunion last fall, is a true lifelong learner, holding three associate degrees from NSCC in Liberal Arts, Human Services and Gerontology, as well as two bachelor’s degrees from Salem State University.

She loves education — and not just as a means to an end. She is a veteran of World War II, where she served in the Corps as a nurse. She met her husband, who was also a Navy nurse, while they were both attending college in Lynn. They got married and had three children, all of whom share her love of learning. All have master’s degrees and her son is a professor.

Frances began her education journey at age 47 when her daughter was seven, taking one class at a time. She was immediately hooked and is now about to graduate from NSCC in English in Lynn. At 88 Frances remains self-relaxed, living on her own. She goes to mass every morning, reads three newspapers daily, goes to the library to read and get books, takes walks and enjoys her children and three grandchildren.

“Education is power,” she smiled knowingly. “There’s just nothing like it.”

Lesley Peters, Class of ‘97

Lesley Peters, accounting supervisor at the Massachusetts Auditor of State, graduated from NSCC in 1997 with high honors. A business transfer student, she continued her education at Suffolk University where she earned a B.S.B.A. in finance and graduated summa cum laude.

She has been a long-time member of the NSCC Alumni Association Board and is the alumni representative on the North Shore Community College Board of Trustees. “I am proud to serve in this capacity,” she said. “I look at you and know that you are a group of amazing women, I want to make sure that students and alumni have a voice in college decisions.”

“I came to the college when I changed careers and feel like I grew up here. I was an older student, but was made to feel welcomed. I have a deep connection to NSCC that is never going to go away,” she said.

“If first came to NSCC in 1994. I had no clue what I wanted to do, what I would be good at, if anything. Once I came to the conclusion that I was not going to be a rocket scientist, superhero or rock star there was only one thing left. I realized that education was going to be the key to leading a full and productive life.”

“Fain stopped in that first day as my first two classes were with professors that changed my life forever. Somehow, Madelyn Logan and Richard Pointicelli made their classes enthralling and the appetite for knowledge soon grew. I could not have been more blessed,” she said.

Lesley was recently the keynote speaker for the Phi Theta Kappa induction ceremony. She told those assembled, “PTK gave me the opportunity to practice leadership, fellowship and excellence.”

Pointicelli made their classes enthralling and the appetite for knowledge soon grew. I could not have been more blessed,” she said.

“One of the reasons why I continue to stay connected to NSCC is that I want to say thank you. NSCC’s Health Services department

For more information on the upcoming NSCC graduation, visit northshore.edu/smoke-free.

There were others here that she knew or met briefly who still inspire her to this day — from a woman who overcame drug addiction and turned her life around, to Marlene Butter, a NSCC grad whose incredible true story became famous in the movie Nobody’s Child. Marie was committed to Danvers State Hospital as a teen then spent the next 20 years in and out as a patient there, misdiagnosed and treated with experimental drugs. When she was finally discharged, she became a powerful advocate for good housing and support services and returned to NSCC, where she earned a master’s degree, ultimately dedicating her life’s work to improving care and conditions for those with mental illness. Donna recalls that meeting Marie and others who had overcome seemingly unsurmountable odds really “opened her eyes to possibilities.” Donna feels strongly that all of her journey has had value — the good and the bad. Her experiences have built up her faith, guided her to her vocational choices and the life that she was meant to lead. She speaks from experience when she says “we can not only overcome, but embrace, our challenges and turn them into something good.”

NSCC is proud to be smoke-free!

As of January 1st, NSCC has become a smoke-free campus! North Shore Community College is committed to creating and promoting a smoke-free and tobacco-free environment for all people who study, work and visit its campuses.

A smoke-free policy is an important investment in our students’ health and well-being. To help support those on the road to becoming smoke-free, NSCC’s Health Services department has offered free smoking cessation programs. For more information on how to quit smoking, visit northshore.edu/smoke-free.

For less of the story on how to quit smoking, visit northshore.edu/smoke-free.

Forum on Tolerance
Weaving Autism into our Social Fabric

Last fall, NSCC’s 28th Forum on Tolerance was held at the Lynn campus. The day featured a variety of speakers, including author and speaker Shonda Schilling who discussed her own experience raising a son with autism. Shonda is a mother of three and an activist, fervently working to redress the shutters of children with autism. Her talk was part of a panel discussion on how autism affects individuals, their caregivers and society. Following the morning presentation she stayed for a book signing of her recent book, The Best Kind of Different: Our Family’s Journey with Autism.

Additional speakers included psychologist Dr. Karen Levine who described the characteristics, strengths, challenges and treatments of autism as well as former state representative and current chair of the Massachusetts Autism Commission, Barbara L'Italien, who spoke about her legislative efforts to help those on the autism spectrum.

NSCC President Dr. Wayne Burrton, who is also a member of the Autism Commission, led a panel discussion and Northeast AEC presented an art exhibit of works by individuals with autism. Portions of the day’s program are available for online viewing if interested, contact Sandy Rochon, Alumni Coordinator at srochon@northshore.edu or 978-762-4000 x5481.

NSCC’s Forum on Tolerance presentations are always free and open to the public. The next presentation will be October 25, 2012 – watch www.northshore.edu for details or find us on facebook.com at facebook.com/myNSCC.alumni.

NSCC is proud to be smoke-free! In 1999, Donna Collins was in the hospital recuperating from cancer surgery and facing an uncertain future when she decided to submit a speech for consideration to be the student speaker at her upcoming NSCC graduation. Composing the speech was a challenge that paled in comparison to the struggles she overcame to complete her associate degree. Determined to graduate, Donna disregarded advice to drop out due to health problems. Fighting her weakness following the cancer surgery as well as seizures brought on by a head injury, Donna got around on her walker and hard-fought degree completion was a real accomplishment.

Donna was chosen to be student speaker at her commencement, and since then went on to obtain a bachelor’s degree, majoring in computer design with a minor in art history. She attended theological school, finishing seminary in 2009.

As a woman of multiple talents and interests, she is a Congregational church munher on track toward ordination, and works at both her own disc jockey business and freelance graphic design. Donna is enthusiastic about her educational journey and has fond memories of NSCC and the role it played in helping her to persevere and achieve.

Donna joked about her challenges that read like the script of a Lifetime movie, leaving an abusive marriage, knee problems that required her to get around in a wheelchair and two leg replacements, and cancer. She also suffered a head injury that resulted in seizures which left her unable to drive for a number of years until new medications were developed that controlled the seizures.

Donna says that before she came to NSCC, she didn’t know what was in her. She said that the atmosphere here was incredibly supportive, there were people who helped her to “see that there was so much more for her and gave her the confidence to look up and see beyond her current circumstances.” Just as a series of events brought challenge and struggle, she also encountered people and situations that inspired her, forever changing her outlook and belief in herself.

While working in the student support center as a work study student, Donna became aware of the many disabled students at NSCC. “I had a conversation with one student and that is what brought me back here – she was someone I could relate to,” she said.

Donna met people at the college who she still counts among her friends. Director of Student Life, Lisa Milso and Lesley Peters, longtime NSCC Alumni Board member and current alumni representative on the Board of Trustees. While a student here, Donna stopped in the Student Life office one day where she met fellow students Lesley and Lia who encouraged her to do the Roger’s Course. She signed up, not realizing quite what she was in for, only that it was an outdoor, all-day adventure of physical obstacles and teamwork. Despite her doubts and her wheelchair, by the end of the day she was up in the trees, doing the “Flying Squirrel”. She said she loved the support, inclusion and staff commitment she found at NSCC. “It has a very special place in my heart. NSCC is where I got my confidence and began the journey of truly becoming the person I was meant to be”.

There were others here that she knew or met briefly who still inspire her to this day – from a woman who overcame drug addiction and turned her life around, to Marlene Butter, a NSCC grad whose incredible true story became famous in the movie Nobody’s Child. Marie was committed to Danvers State Hospital as a teen then spent the next 20 years in and out as a patient there, misdiagnosed and treated with experimental drugs. When she was finally discharged, she became a powerful advocate for good housing and support services and returned to NSCC, where she earned a master’s degree, ultimately dedicating her life’s work to improving care and conditions for those with mental illness. Donna recalls that meeting Marie and others who had overcome seemingly unsurmountable odds really “opened her eyes to possibilities.” Donna feels strongly that all of her journey has had value — the good and the bad. Her experiences have built up her faith, guided her to her vocational choices and the life that she was meant to lead. She speaks from experience when she says “we can not only overcome, but embrace, our challenges and turn them into something good.”
Support 4 Students: NSCC Students Helping Each Other

Most NSCC alumni are familiar with the NSCC Foundation Scholarship Program and how important this assistance is to our students. This spring we will pilot a new way of fundraising by implementing the first ever text campaign in our college history. Entitled Support 4 Students (S4S), the text campaign will support two priority funds in addition to scholarships — the SHOC Fund (Stop Hunger on Campus) and the SAVE Fund (Short-term Aid for Verifiable Emergencies).

The SAVE Fund was developed in 2009 to address a growing concern that some students were coming to school hungry. In some cases, the students’ children were also being affected by the food crisis at home. In order to help students remain healthy and able to perform academically, the SHOC fund offers short-term emergency food vouchers which may be presented at the college cafeteria for a free meal. In addition to the voucher, the student receives information regarding community resources that they can access for long-term assistance for themselves and their families.

The Short-term Aid for Verifiable Emergencies, also known as the SAVE Fund, is another emergency assistance resource. This assistance can be in the form of a grant or an interest-free loan, depending on the circumstances. This fund helps with unanticipated expenses related to things like loss of transportation, childcare arrangements or housing — emergencies that, if not addressed, may force a student to drop out of classes. It cannot be used for academic expenses such as tuition or books.

The Support 4 Students (S4S) Text Campaign asks for $5 donations to support scholarships and the SHOC and SAVE funds. Alumni are asked to join students, faculty and staff in supporting the campaign by texting $5NSSNC to 22222 to donate $5 anytime between the dates of April 30 to May 25th. To text just use 22222 as the phone number and #S4S as the message. After responding to a confirmation text, a $5 charge gets added to the donor’s regular cell phone bill. Alumni who prefer to support the campaign by donating online may go to www.northshore.edu/giving/donate. For detailed information about the S4S Text Campaign go to www.northshore.edu/446/.

When NSCC students and Student Government Association members Nick Lovasco and Jesse Pava heard about the Support 4 Students text campaign, they didn’t hesitate to lend their support, volunteering to participate in a video promoting the effort. Nick, who is the SGA President said, “Give it when you’ve got it, take it when you need it.” The short videos will be shared with the student population via Facebook and YouTube to spread the word about these resources for people who may need it and to help promote the campaign for those who would like to help.

The campaign is just beginning but response to this fundraising effort has been very positive. Alumni Coordinator Sandy Rochon said, “Our students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends are very responsive to this campaign and helping others. If a student is facing a desperate situation that may force them to drop out of classes, we want to do whatever we can to prevent that from happening. These funds can make the difference in whether or not a student is able to stay in school, improve their circumstances and secure their future.”

The approach of text donations was selected because it offers students a way to help that is fast, easy, doesn’t involve a credit card or writing a check, and at $5.00 per donation, it is easy on their own pocketbooks. The text campaign encourages alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the college to text their donations or donate online to support scholarships and help the college offer cafeteria vouchers and funds for non-academic emergencies. On behalf of students, thank you!

New Programs

Environmental Horticulture Associate Degree

NSCC’s redesigned Environmental Horticulture program trains students for a wide range of employment opportunities in the green industry, such as landscape and golf course management, nursery and garden center operation, tree care and related occupations. Students can also prepare for Massachusetts state arboriculture licensing, pesticide licensing and hydraulics licensing.

For more information, contact us at 978-762-4000, x1530 or bheath@northshore.edu

Sparked by Creativity, Collaboration

Bold, inspiring art and literature by NSCC students

NSCC’s Spark 2012 magazine again breaks new ground with its showcase of outstanding literary work, fine art and multimedia by NSCC students. To be included, students’ submissions are rigorously judged by a panel of NSCC faculty, staff and fellow students. Spark 2012 features painting, poetry, illustration, essays, photography and, new this year, video. The magazine, itself, is a collaboration between NSCC’s Student Life Office and the college’s Marketing Communications Department.

For more information, contact 978-762-4000, x5445, or mnelson@northshore.edu

Spring Events

Career Night! New professional development courses start this summer

Attendance continues to spike at NSCC’s free Career Nights, sponsored by NSCC’s Division of Corporate & Community Education. The latest Career Night, held on Wednesday, May 9, featured presentations on the latest professional development and career training courses, as well as resume-building tips from North Shore Career Center staff.

Find out more about short-term noncredit career training to sharpen your professional skills this summer. The next Career Night is scheduled for late summer.

New Programs Fall 2012

Environmental Horticulture Associate Degree

NSCC’s redesigned Environmental Horticulture program trains students for a wide range of employment opportunities in the green industry, such as landscape and golf course management, nursery and garden center operation, tree care and related occupations. Students can also prepare for Massachusetts state arboriculture licensing, pesticide licensing and hydraulics licensing.

For more information, contact us at 978-762-4000, x1530 or bheath@northshore.edu

Calling All Entrepreneurs: NSCC Starting New Programs Just For You!

Have you always wanted to own your own business? Turn a hobby into a career? You can learn how to turn your dreams into reality through a new program beginning this fall at NSCC.

Small Business Management-Entrepreneurship Credit Certificate Program

The Small Business Management-Entrepreneurship credit certificate program is now accepting applications for Fall 2012. Coursework will offer the knowledge and skills needed to start a new business venture, contribute to a growing enterprise, identify new business opportunities, and/or successfully operate a small company. Students will learn the components of running an entrepreneurial venture, including planning, using technology to interpret data for informed business decisions, and ways to effectively respond to dynamics of the small business environment.

For more information, contact 978-762-4000, x5445, or mnelson@northshore.edu

Veterans & Community Career and Benefits Fair

More than 50 companies and service providers, including Raytheon, Comcast, Dunkin Donuts and Staples, were on-hand at NSCC’s Veterans and Community Career & Benefits Fair earlier this May. Presented in collaboration with the North Shore Career Center, the North Shore Workforce Investments Board and Salem State University, the spring 2012 Veterans and Community Career & Benefits allowed present or former military service personnel and their families, as well as the general public, an opportunity to meet representatives of “veteran-friendly” companies, agencies and programs, learn more about the post-9/11 GI Bill, and veterans benefits.

For a complete list of companies attending the fair, visit www.northshore.edu/news or NSCC’s Veterans Facebook page at facebook.com/myNSCC.veterans

New Veterans Education Benefit Announced

Know a veteran interested in returning to school? The new Veterans Retraining Assistance Program may help. Learn more about the new VRAP benefits for unemployed veterans at http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/other_programs/vrap.html

For further information on NSCC Veterans Services contact Kristine Babcock at kbabcock01@northshore.edu or call 978-762-4000, x 4187.

Spark 2012 is available online now at www.northshore.edu/spark
Summer is Coming! Courses at NSCC for Grades 1-12!

If you are looking for activities for your children, we have fantastic summer programs at the college! Starting July 9th on our Danvers campus, your child, grades 1-5 can come four days a week, mornings, afternoons, or all day to Summer of Discovery! At our Beverly campus at the Cummings Center, send along your 6th-12th grader for courses in babysitting, computers, acting, and more at our North Shore Academy. Check out our website at http://community.northshore.edu/sod/

Thank You!

Many thanks to all who donated to the Annual Fund as well as to those who still intend to – it’s not too late! NSCC students need your help. This year’s scholarship applications and requests for assistance hit record numbers. We are very, very grateful to all of the generous donors who help to keep the NSCC Foundation Scholarship program growing and allow us to help hundreds of students every year – thank you!

Liberty Mutual Alumni Savings

Join the many NSCC grads who are enjoying savings on their home and auto insurance through Liberty Mutual’s NSCC alumni affinity program! To get a free quote call 1-800-225-8281. Identify yourself as a North Shore Community College alumnus to take advantage of the Group Savings Plus offer and find out how much you could be saving!