



## Celebrating the Success of Manson Graduates

January 2010

*Last year, Manson featured successful Manson graduates in the second publication of "Celebrating the Success of Manson Graduates." This year we feature six more Manson graduates who have continued their education in a variety of ways to obtain successful careers. Each alumnus featured this year is unique and has his or her own connection to the Manson School District and the Manson community. From a University Admissions Advisor to an Executive CFO for a national company, each of these graduates has made exceptional career choices. The one tie that binds all of these people is their close bond to the Manson community and the people who make it their home.*

### **ADELINA GRAGEDA: GEAR-UP Director, Eastmont High School**

Adelina graduated from Manson in 1998 and attended Gonzaga University that fall through 2002, earning a BA with Majors in Spanish and History. She earned her Master's Degree in Social Work from Eastern Washington University in 2007. After graduating from college, Adelina had the opportunity to work with Manson High School students and EWU college students, providing her with the experience and training needed for her current career. Currently, Adelina is the GEAR-UP Director at Eastmont High School in East Wenatchee. GEAR-UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Program and is a federally funded program that helps low-income students attend college. She organizes college visitations, plans monthly parent/student meetings and monitors student grades and credits. Adelina loves her job. "The Manson community holds a special place in my heart. I could not have achieved any of my goals if it weren't for all the wonderful teachers, staff and community that supported me." Adelina says she had one teacher, Ron McClure, who helped her reach her full potential and pushed her to reach her goals. They still keep in contact, and he is one of the mentors who has made a huge impact on her life. "I work with students every day and I would like them to never give up and believe that if they work hard and really want to achieve something they CAN!" She knows there are barriers and obstacles to overcome and it may not always be easy, but the end result is amazing. "I love what I do and get paid well to do it!"



### **Brett LaMar: President and GM Lake Chelan Building Supply**

After graduating from Manson High School, Brett LaMar attended Washington State University where he majored in Speech Communications and attained Minors in Business and Music in 1989. After graduation from college, Brett went to work as a sales representative for Weathervane Window Company in Kirkland until 1992. That July, Brett's mother fell ill with cancer and he was asked by his parents to return home to Manson to assist in the running of their family business, Lake Chelan Building Supply. Today Brett and his father share ownership of the business, where Brett is the President and General Manager. Brett manages the daily operations of the company including personnel, inventory, finances and purchasing. They just celebrated 30 years of business in 2009. The staff at Manson that most influenced Brett were his music teacher, Collins Loup, who always spent extra time out of the classroom to help him improve his musicianship. Brett says that Dean Morehead was a teacher who helped prepare him for what lay ahead in college, never allowing him to settle or slack in his work. "Our entire community had a strong influence on me with how they took interest in me and my talents. They truly wished the best for me, and encouraged me to push on to better things; I still see those values in Manson today!" My best advice is for kids to look forward and understand how their actions today affect their futures. "Making good, sound decisions now will greatly improve your success tomorrow," Brett states. "Also, don't give up, even if things get hard. Pushing through and finishing, even if it isn't fun, will serve you well in the future. Good luck Manson students!"



### **Jose Rodriguez: Western Washington University Admissions Advisor (2nd from left in photo)**

Jose Rodriguez graduated from Manson in 1999 and moved on to attend Wenatchee Valley College where he earned his AA Degree. Jose then transferred to Whatcom Community College and then to Western Washington University where he graduated with a BA in Education. Jose resides in Bellingham and is the Admissions Advisor for students interested in attending WWU. He presents admissions information to potential students through programs and workshops. Jose also reviews admissions qualifications and scholarship applications. When Jose reflects on his high school years, there were a few people in our community who really made a difference. One of those people was Mr. Reed, his math teacher. Mr. Reed, "didn't let me settle for the bare minimum. He encouraged me to challenge myself and to take advantage of the opportunities that were available to me." Jose is also thankful for Charles and Wilma Campbell, community members who were instrumental in providing his family with many opportunities that otherwise they would not have had. Jose hopes that Manson students will, "take challenging classes because they prepare you for classes at the university level. Don't take it easy your senior year because that could be the deciding factor in getting admitted to a university." As an Admissions Advisor, Jose truly understands the importance of a well-rounded high school education and the importance of giving back to the community that has helped serve our students in so many ways.



## Tim Miller: Executive Vice President, CFO, Treasurer TBC Corporation

Tim Miller, a Manson graduate in 1988, earned his undergraduate degree from WSU in 1992. After working in Spokane for four years, he moved with his wife to Memphis, TN, where he worked and attended night school to receive his MBA from the University of Memphis in 2001. Tim is now the Executive VP, CEO and Treasurer of TBC Corporation, the nation's largest vertically integrated marketer of tires for the automotive replacement market. The company's retail operations include over 1,200 tire and automotive service centers throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Tim's responsibilities within the company include all the accounting, legal, and IT operations and TBC employs approximately 10,000 people. Tim says that Mark Marney and Dean Morehead were teachers who had positive influences on him, but the biggest impact was the community of Manson. "I travel quite a bit and run up against business people from Harvard backgrounds, influential families and well-heeled upbringings, things that people often point to as reasons for success. In my opinion, you have to be confident in your abilities, be willing to work hard, work smart, and be grounded with a positive attitude. Manson, for me, was a place where those things mattered, a true community that cared and supported its high school." Tim remembers the whole town coming out to support the athletes at sporting events, and recalls, "Ben and Elaine Smalley were probably at every sporting event and they didn't even have kids playing." Tim remembers Manson as a town that got behind its graduates and provided scholarships. "These things along with teachers who believed in me and let me know the world was a much larger place, with lots of opportunities, most influenced my life and career." Tim has a favorite quote that he would like to pass on to Manson students: "Attitude to me, is more important than the facts. It is more important than the past, the education, the money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. Life is how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our



10% what happens to me and 90% of Attitudes." —C. Swindoll

## Nuria Sanchez: Student Teacher Secondary

**Spanish & English** After graduating from Manson Secondary, Nuria attended Eastern Washington University for five years. Upon completion, she graduated with two bachelor's degrees, one in Secondary English Education and the other in Secondary Spanish Education. Nuria was excited to return home to complete her eleven week student teaching requirements with Mrs. Teague and Mr. Morehead. Her student teaching ended this November and Nuria is currently seeking a job in either middle or high school. Ideally, she would love to divide her teaching career equally between English and Spanish. The teacher who most influenced Nuria while she was in elementary school was Mrs. Lindert.

"She must have seen a little spark in me, and I felt like she gave me that extra encouragement and confidence to believe that I could and would accomplish great things." Nuria thinks of Mrs. Lindert as a second mother. "I think if she hadn't given me the drive to pursue a better education and life, I wouldn't have tried so hard in school." Another great influence on Nuria was Mr. McClure. "Aside from his unconventional ways, he was truly interested in ensuring that I made something of myself. He was the one who pushed me into applying for the Gates Millennium Scholarship and didn't allow me to slack when it came to getting into college. Thanks to these great educators I am where I am today." Nuria's advice to Manson students is not to get caught up in doing things they shouldn't. "Manson is such a small school and town that we tend to follow what our friends do in order to be accepted. Realize that once you're out of high school a lot of these people you consider friends might not be there for you. Take the initiative and stand out from the crowd. Get an education and experience life; it has so much to offer each and every one of us."



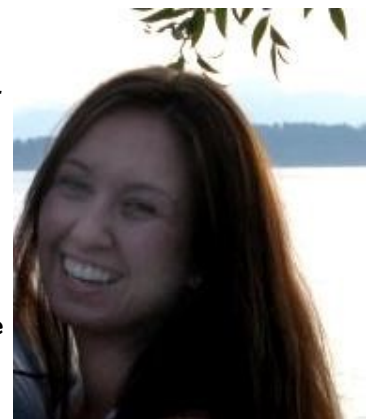
**"The Manson community holds a special place in my heart. I could not have achieved any of my goals if it weren't for all the wonderful teachers, staff and community that supported me."**

**-Adelina Grageda,  
Class of 1998**

## Olivia Libbey-Tolliver: Accountant

Olivia graduated from MHS in 2004 and attended Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA, where she received a BA in Accounting and a minor in Business

Administration. Olivia spent 12 weeks interning with a CPA firm in Seattle before moving home to the valley. She is currently a staff accountant in Wenatchee and her job primarily consists of audit and tax work. She is currently preparing for the exam to become a Certified Public Accountant. Beyond her parents and family, Olivia says Kami Kronbauer and Kevin Amsden impacted her life significantly and helped her get where she is today. "Coach K. was always willing to explain things ten different ways until I understood mathematically and she never let me stop taking math. She also had a great impact on me personally through softball, not just because of all the good times, but she also taught me the importance of being a team player, understanding the game, and having a great time in all that I did." She also adds that, "Mr. Amsden helped me within the community and FFA. He constantly reminded me about the importance of being active in the community. He pushed me to be the best leader I could be while in school. Olivia is thankful for all the experiences she had at Manson High School and those teachers who had a huge impact on her life and made her the successful person she is today."



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