

Alumni Spotlight featuring Melissa Gamble



Melissa (Mayes) Gamble, 44, of Mt. Pleasant, PA, attended Westmoreland County Community College from 1999-2002, 2012-2014, and is our featured alumnus.

So what made Gamble want to attend Westmoreland after high school?

“Westmoreland offered awesome culinary and food service classes. I was probably about eight or nine years old when I decided what I wanted to do. I was ALWAYS in the kitchen with my mom and when I was younger my dad was a baker. I’m so, so much like my dad, and as they say, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. As I got older and decided I still wanted to follow my plans, I

understood that jobs would always be available in the food industry. On the other hand, my dream to own my own ice cream shop probably started at age seven. I never imagined my dreams would come true! Also, the college being close to home was important as I wanted to stay close to my family and friends,” said Gamble.

While at the college, Gamble studied Culinary, Baking and Pastry, Food Service Management, and Dietary Management. Her fondest memory was when they raised funds and took a Bus Trip to New York and also made ice sculptures.

“We ate at Tavern on the Green and saw the Broadway performance of STOMP. We got to go into the Twin Towers and it was gorgeous inside,” says Gamble.

She also fondly remembers making ice sculptures. “The ice sculptures were a project in Garde Manger class. We had to partner up and we carved them outside of Commissioners Hall (now Health and Culinary Center),” adds Gamble.

Gamble was also on the fast-pitch softball team for a semester. She had played since she was five-years-old, so quitting after high school and not playing was tough. They welcomed her onto the team, but then work got in the way and she unfortunately hung up her cleats.

Did Gamble ever have a favorite instructor?

“Chef Cindy Komarinski and Cheryl Shipley were two of my favorite instructors throughout my years there. They were fun and made college interesting. We are still in contact with each other after 25 years!” states Gamble.

Now that he has graduated from Westmoreland, what is she up to now?

Gamble shares, “With my love for cooking and baking, and after my twins were born, I stayed at home five days a week and worked weekends when my husband was home with the kids. I started baking cupcakes and decided to make a Facebook group. Within a few years, my little “Simply Delicious” group hit over 3,000 followers. We noticed in 2018 that Suzy’s was for sale and my husband said that we should buy it. I thought with three young kids I could never do it...but on June 1, 2019, we bought the previously Suzy’s Frozen Custard and merged our names. I didn’t want to change the name of the already beloved Frozen Custard shop that Mount Pleasant was known for. Fast forward six years later, we have a staff of 16 and are thriving. It’s a lot of work, long hours and devotion, but I absolutely love my rewarding job. It’s definitely a family business. My oldest son, Bryce, started working there when he was 13 (now 17). My twins, Dante and Dominic, just turned 12 and they help at the shop. They both know how to make all the frozen custard. We teach our kids that nothing in life is handed to you, that you have to put forth the work to get the reward!”

Her business has a mobile Frozen Custard Cart. They attend community events and are as involved as possible. They donate and help many local school sports teams.

Gamble credits all of her classes and instructors at Westmoreland for helping to prepare her for owning her own business. She wouldn’t be where she is today without the ones who helped her out in her academic journey.

“I’d like to thank, Andy, my husband of almost 20 years; my oldest son, Bryce, 17, who is currently a culinary student at the CWCTC; and my twins, Dante and Dominic, who joined me in my return to Westmoreland in 2012 (in my belly),” states Gamble.

In her spare time, Gamble loves watching crime shows and cooking and baking shows. Her and her twins love watching *Nailed It* on Netflix. They have movie nights all of the time. They are huge Jim Carrey and Adam Sandler fans .

Gamble encourages Westmoreland students to DREAM BIG!

