



It's time
to come
home to
Southwest
Virginia
for good...

www.ReturnToRoots.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Return to Roots Brings Another Native Home

RADFORD, Va., December 11, 2007-

Return to Roots (www.ReturnToRoots.org) has helped another Southwest Virginia native to come home.

Amy Vencill grew up in Belfast, Virginia and graduated in 2002 from high school in Lebanon, the County seat of Russell County, an area rich in natural and historical significance (www.swvaonline.org/pdf/Russell.pdf). She attended Southwest Virginia Community College for two years, and went to Radford University where she graduated in December, 2006 with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, and a minor in Marketing.

After graduation, Amy immediately started job searching. She went seven months with no luck. It was a stressful time as she kept applying for positions that just “never seemed to work out.” In December 2006, she moved back home to Belfast, Virginia with its small town feel, yet progressive communities. “I needed support,” Amy said, “. . . it’s given me a chance to get on my feet. You have to have good footing before you step out on your own.” Still, the unsuccessful job search was taking its toll. “It was depressing doing nothing but applying for jobs and being shot down time after time. I contemplated going back to school, but couldn’t find any justification for that.”

Then she heard about Return to Roots through the Career Services Center at Radford University and registered on the site in early spring of 2007, applying for a position at Thompson & Litton’s Radford office. “When Amy first applied for the Radford office,” said Jan Harber, HR at Thompson & Litton, “the timing wasn’t right.” But there was something intriguing about Amy’s resume, and so Jan hung on to it.

Amy’s luck turned when position opened up in Thompson & Litton’s Tazewell office. Jan Harber didn’t know if Amy would be interested since it wasn’t Radford, but little did she know that Tazewell was in Amy’s backyard, and exactly where she wanted to be. “It was the perfect fit,” added Jan.

“This job hit at the best time,” Amy admitted. “It was the answer to my prayers. I

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love the people at Thompson & Litton. It's nice to come to work and not feel like you're going to work. I couldn't ask for a better place to be."

When asked if she wanted to stay in Southwest Virginia, Amy enthusiastically responded, "Oh, yes! It's where you grew up. It's where you're from. It's where your history is. It's snowing now, and it's so beautiful. I can't imagine living anywhere else."

Return to Roots, a unique program funded by a Special Projects grant from the Tobacco Commission, finds Southwest Virginia native sons & daughters and Returns them to their Roots for career opportunities. The program reaches out to former residents of the area through the website www.ReturnToRoots.org, direct mail and the news media to inform them about employment opportunities available in Southwest Virginia. The site links these potential employees to regional companies with job openings.

The program is managed by Virginia Economic Bridge (www.VirginiaEconomicBridge.org), a non-profit organization focused on creating an environment for economic growth in today's technologically advanced society. Virginia Economic Bridge promotes the economic vitality and external competitiveness of the Commonwealth by fostering business, industry and educational relationships between Southwest Virginia, Northern Virginia, as well as other areas of the Commonwealth.

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