

Feb. NTSP Newsletter  
Interview with Amber Gossett  
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“Don’t give up, no matter what happens. Even when you get to the end of your rope, make more rope,” says Amber Gossett when she told me both of her trials and her triumphs.

Amber’s mother single-handedly raised her and her two siblings while working three jobs and helping Amber through many hospital stays for her congenital heart condition. Amber says of her mother, “She did everything ... and she managed to love us and care for us.”

Neither of her parents has a college degree, making Amber a first-generation student, but Amber’s mother exemplifies someone who gives of themselves completely. Amber says, “Everything I am is because of my mother.”

Coming from a single parent, no college degree family is not all that makes Amber a non-traditional student. She also waited 13 years for her “right moment” to return to school. And returning to school as a non-traditional student wasn’t easy. “The world’s not the same anymore,” she says of returning to school and facing a lack in support systems, age-restricted dorms, and the need to relearn study and time management practices. All this, plus she has bills and people dependent on her.

But Amber “made more rope.”

Two years ago, Amber lost her job and she, “knew in that moment if I didn’t continue my education, I would always be the person getting the pink slip and never the person creating the personal wealth, success, and stability that is the goal for my life.”

Amber is also inspired by the unique stethoscope she wears as a nurse in training. She says, “It symbolizes a dream deferred.” A friend who didn’t finish her degree to become a medical professional, realizing that she wasn’t meant to follow that path, gave Amber the stethoscope telling her, “I want you to have this stethoscope because I feel like you’re going to go back someday.”

When Amber lost her job, she pulled out that stethoscope and dusted it and her dreams off to return to school. When she wears it, it is a reminder to her that, “for the first time in my life ... I am in the right place and I’m where I’m supposed to be ... following my dream.”

Amber says, “I felt truly called to [nursing] because it’s not something you can do for the money. It is not something you can do for the accolades. It’s something you have to do because your heart is in it.”



As a nursing student, Amber is “exhausted all the time,” but she serves in many more ways. Her minor is Spanish because “an underserved portion of the population can’t get the same caliber of medical care because they don’t speak English.” She runs the non-profit organization Metta Vhavana Photography that receives money and dog food that goes directly to the Jacksonville Animal Shelter and that offers low-income families the opportunity to capture precious memories in photographs. And she relishes her time with her significant other.

Amber ran out of rope, but she continues to make more rope, and along the way, help others to make rope as well.