



Celebrating 50 years of NU Trailblazers!

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Entrepreneur and Problem Solver: Tina Christiano '83



"I was raised by a single mom who instilled in me the confidence to stretch limits and break barriers," says Tina (Judd) Christiano '83. "She was always encouraging me to venture to places where women weren't visible, so I was more than intrigued when Norwich opened their doors to women."

The first time Tina stepped onto campus was her first day as an excited, yet terrified student. Everything was new to her, especially as a member of the Corps of Cadets. Routines included being waken at the crack of dawn and impromptu inspections. She was part of the Fire Brigade, hosted a radio show on WNUB. Tina had the good fortune to find a mentor in Professor Hall Buzzell, who encouraged her when she felt overwhelmed.

Tina's experience at Norwich helped drive her, as she later built a successful company providing problem-solving solutions in manufacturing. She is the owner and CEO of Secondary Solutions Inc., a multi-million-dollar business with more than 100 full time employees, 75% of which are women. "I have been referred to as intimidating, direct and honest," says Tina. "Getting doors opened took plenty of prying and pushing, but determination was in my corner."

The resiliency that Tina learned at NU was vital during the economic downturn that followed the Covid-19 pandemic. "My team was dependent on me and giving up was never an option," Tina said. She navigated the pandemic challenges by securing new industry certifications which expanded the types of services her company offered. Tina then shared her model for success with other women-owned businesses so they could overcome similar obstacles. In recognition of her efforts, Tina was named the 2020 Woman Business of the Year by the South Carolina Small Business Administration.

With a successful business and a team of strong, pioneering women, Tina's mother would be proud, as is the Norwich University community. With her NU experiences, Tina Christiano has created a legacy for the women who will follow in her footsteps.

Records documenting women's history and experience at Norwich are available through the University Archives. <https://archives.norwich.edu/>