

Daniel Ryan Carr

Strategic Writing

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Feature Story

Headline: Big dreams take big plans

The smell of freshly ground, fine artisan-roasted coffee beans waft heavenly through the air as Jill Speiser sips on her cup while reading the book of Daniel. Speiser is not at Zera Coffee Co just to enjoy the coffee beans, nor is she there to study up on her next class exam.

Speiser is a student at North Central Texas College in Corinth who is looking to become a teacher in the future, but that's not why she is at Zera. Jill is at Zera to study for her bible training program at Denton Bible Church.

"I am involved in the Bible Training Center for Leaders program at DBC," Speiser says. "The purpose of BTCL is to equip you on how to study the Bible and teach it to others. It also helps you with your **personal spiritual life.**"

The website describes the program as "a biblical, systematic, portable and comprehensive approach to providing the foundational equivalent of a good **Bible college or seminary education.**"

The program will allow Speiser to pursue her passion by going into the mission field.

"Currently, I would love to become a missionary in France, and I hope to be there this summer," Speiser says. "That will give me a feel for if I am actually prepared and if I would make a great missionary. Afterward, if I love it and I want to continually seek out missions, then I will do this other program called Missionary Training Institute."

The Missionary Training Institute will meet on Sunday mornings and there will be a three-month period where Speiser goes to Tijuana, Mexico to learn the language. However, Speiser has been to France before, helping out with a children's camp for two weeks that became a little difficult.

"I helped out with a bilingual children's camp, and that was a week long, so I was basically like a counselor," Speiser said. "That was interesting because I chose the oldest students that were there."

Thinking that they would know the most English, right? That was false! They did not really know English so I only had two other girls that could actually talk to me – so that was great.”

Speiser has not always lived in Denton, but that has not stopped her.

“I am from Denton, Texas,” Speiser says. “I was born in Denton at Denton Regional Hospital. I moved all around. I went to elementary school in Oregon, then in North Carolina, then in Seattle, and then back in Denton. So, I have basically grown up here. Though, technically, we moved to Krum because my parents wanted a smaller school system for us and because my parents were involved with Denton Bible.”

At Krum, Speiser participated in activities that would prepare her for her future.

“I was also involved in yearbook for, was that two years?” Speiser says while laughing. “Yes, two years. And I was just a normal person on staff until my junior year when I became the senior ad editor. I created all of the layouts for the senior templates. I was also very involved with the Student Ministries at Denton Bible. I was a student leader my junior and senior year of high school. But I also attended classes at Denton ISD’s Advanced Technology Complex for Education and Training. I was able to be an intern at elementary schools. As an intern, I was basically a student teacher who observed classes and helped students with any questions that they had. And I think once a semester, I had to come up with my own lesson plans. If you do the program for two years, you get this thing called ‘Teach Denton’ when you graduate. If I come back to teach in Denton, then I would be moved to the top of the hiring list.”

The classes she took at the ATC launched Speiser into a future in education.

“At NCTC, I am getting my basics,” Speiser says. “I am doing general education and core classes. I will graduate NCTC with an associate degree in teaching and then I will transfer to TWU to get my bachelor’s degree. Once I get my degree in education, I can come back and show them the certificate I got when I graduated high school. I chose TWU to transfer to because it has a virtual classroom. Basically, it’s kind of like a Wii game but it’s not. It has student profiles, and you can go in to this classroom area that looks like a little mini movie theater screen. You can make them have like different challenges and disciplinary issues that you have to deal with.”

It may seem like Speiser's future plans are all over the place, but she knows exactly what she is doing.

"I wanted to get experience in my job field that I am interested in rather than go to a four-year university, pick a major, and later change it," Speiser says. "So, I plan on coming back to Denton ISD – that's the plan at least."

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Appendix

Media Outlets to send this to:

- www.bibletraining.com – because this is the website for the BTCL global program
- Krum News and Denton Record-Chronicle – because she is from this area
- Denton ISD Communications Department, Krum ISD Communications Department – because of the ATC
- NCTC Communications Department, TWU Communications Department/ School Newspaper – the colleges she is attending/plans to attend
- All four Denton ISD’s High School Student Newspapers (to advertise the ATC to students)

Promotional Tweet: Local students utilize district resources to prepare them for big futures #BigPlans

Pulled Quote: “I wanted to get experience in my job field that I am interested in, rather than go to a four-year university, pick a major, and later change it,” Speiser says.



Photo 1 Caption: Speiser and friend, Megan Armstrong, take a break from studying to laugh at funny videos on YouTube.



Photo 2 Caption: Speiser prepares for her upcoming BTCL class by going through the book of Daniel.