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My Post Experience: Jody Nellessen; the foundation for something great

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In 1972, Jody Nellessen was unsure if she was prepared for a traditional four-year college. After an extensive search, she chose Post Junior College in Waterbury, CT, a two-year institution that she hoped would be a good fit for her.

Forty years later, it turns out that Nellessen made the right choice, and she has a successful career and several lifelong friends to prove it.



“My guidance counselor was the first person that recommended Post Junior College to me,” she said. “Coming from a small town in New Jersey I wasn’t looking for a large school. After visiting the campus, I felt like it could be a very nice fit for me, so I made the decision and enrolled.”

The rest is history, and whether it was participating in the volleyball club or powder-puff football league, attending soccer and basketball games, or going sleigh riding and ice skating on Post’s pond, Nellessen made the most of her two years and says she enjoyed every moment.

“The whole Post Junior College experience was wonderful, but by far the best part was the lifelong friendships that I developed from being there,” she said.

Jody Nellessen during her time at Post Junior College.

The closest of those friendships was two women that Nellessen has been grouped with for over four decades – “The Tristate Girls”.

“I was from New Jersey, and the other two women were from Connecticut and New York,” she said. “We gave ourselves the name in school, we’ve stayed in the same states our whole lives, and it just stuck. We still see each other several times a year and have all stayed very close.”

Friendships weren’t the only thing Nellessen gained at Post Junior College, she excelled in the classroom as well, gaining a solid base that propelled her to go on to get her Bachelor’s and MBA, and boast a 34- year career with State Farm Insurance, 20 of which was in management roles.

“I realized when I got into the workforce that I learned more than I thought I did,” she said. “What I learned at Post really prepared me for my career and the rest of my education.”

When the now-retired Nellessen looks back on her accomplishments, she feels fortunate for her many successes and for the faculty and staff at Post Junior College that helped mold who she became.

“I was very lucky to have a wonderful career and it’s amazing to think after so many years of working that my education at Post really catapulted me to much of that,” she said.

Nellessen has watched Post grow and evolve over the years since her graduation, often thinking back to her days in the early 1970s, with only one regret in mind.

“I just wish it was a four-year university when I went, because I would have stayed,” she said. “That being said, I’m very proud to see what Post has become and the tremendous steps it’s taken. I’ll always be a very proud alum.”

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