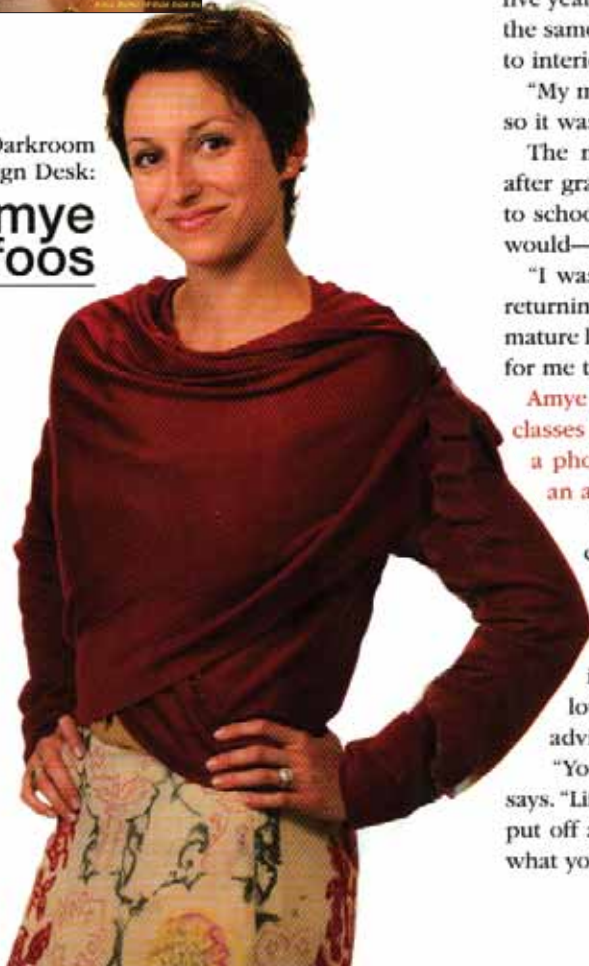




From The Darkroom  
To The Design Desk:

## Amye Charfoos



### THE CHANGE:

## Photographer to Interior Designer

**Amye Charfoos** enjoyed owning her own portrait photography business but, although successful, Amye always felt something just wasn't right. Having had achieved every goal she had set for the next five years in just two, Amye began to wonder if she would be caught in the same job for the rest of her life. Her thoughts continually returned to interior design.

"My mom's an interior designer and my dad's a building contractor, so it was kind of the table talk when I was growing up," Amye says.

The now 25-year-old Lakeview resident who moved to Chicago after graduating college quickly realized she would need to go back to school to get the job she really wanted. She knew her experience would—and should—be different the second time around.

"I was interested in finding a school that would cater to me as a returning student and I wanted my classmates to be of that more mature level," Amye says. "[School became] much more career-oriented for me than when I was younger and straight out of high school."

Amye decided to enroll at Harrington College of Design and took classes part-time for two years while continuing to work full-time as a photographer. This past May, Amye graduated with honors and an associate's degree of applied science in interior design.

"It was a personal sacrifice on my free time because I always chose to put extra time into schoolwork and projects. It was definitely a balancing act for me," she says. "But I took it all very seriously—I set up that personal challenge for myself."

Throughout her career change and years spent back inside a classroom, Amye learned that it's "really important" to love what you do. And if that means going back to school, she advises getting started right away.

"You can find a way to make your career work with your life," she says. "Life only gets more challenging. [Going back to school is] easy to put off and hard to get started, but once you do get started, you love what you're doing and you make the time to make it happen." ■ -A.M.