



# EAGLE EYES

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## ERS STUDENTS FEATURED AT CONFERENCE

*by Brian Hansen, Student*

"Work Now and in the Future" was the theme of the conference four Eagle Rock students and Garth Lewis, Instructional Specialist in Career and Service Learning, attended in October. I had the privilege of being one of the four students; the others were Catie Hart, Ame Yniguez, and Paul Ritzie.

Eagle Rock students are such important voices in education today that the "Work Now and In the Future Conference" paid \$2000 to fly all five of us to Portland, Oregon, to participate and make our presentation. Service learning was the theme of our presentation but, as usual, the teachers at our workshop wanted to know about all the different ways we approach education at Eagle Rock. With the exception of a few minor glitches in the slide show, our presentation went smoothly. Judging from the extremely positive evaluations and the inspired faces that left the room that day, we had done our job.

Besides being presenters, we were also participants in the conference. We attended other workshops and learned a lot about how education reform was being implemented in public schools. I left the conference with a good feeling in my heart. 3,000 people attended that conference. 3,000 people were taking an active role in improving education.

The conference wasn't all work. We also went to the beach and hung out in Portland. The rooms in the hotel we stayed in were huge. The girls had the best view of the city from their balcony.

The learning didn't stop at the conference. There was an important learning experience waiting for us in the Portland Airport as well. Coming out of the gift shop, Catie Hart and I stumbled upon a man dying of a heart attack. There were already three people around him trying to get him to breathe, but they didn't know CPR. I wanted to help, but I don't know CPR either. I think I am going to learn it now, though. The paramedics soon arrived and began administering CPR to the man, but it was too late, and he died.

The most unfortunate thing was that the man who died had attended the conference. His death was a serious

## TWO NEW ERS GRADS HAIL FROM FORT COLLINS; EVENT MARKS A FIRST FOR EAGLE ROCK

*by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development*

Both December graduates, James Masters and Mike Roark, came to Eagle Rock from Fort Collins. James came to Eagle Rock as part of ERS 2 in January 1994. Mike entered Eagle Rock in May 1994 as part of ERS 3. James' long-range plans are to earn a Ph.D. in philosophy and teach philosophy at a university or college. Mike's plans include work with the California Conservation Corps.

These two graduates bring the number of ERS graduates to 14.

The December graduation was a first for Eagle Rock in terms of the dual diploma participating districts in Colorado agree to consider offering to students who have met Eagle Rock's graduation requirements. In the past, Eagle Rock staff and the graduating student have traveled to the district to do a second Presentation of Learning for a team convened by the district. Every student presented for a dual diploma in this way has been awarded one by the participating district.

This trimester, a team from Poudre School District in Fort Collins came to Eagle Rock to witness the Presentations of Learning the graduates made for the Eagle Rock community. "I think it made a tremendous difference," commented Judy Gilbert, Director of Curriculum. "They saw Presentations of Learning in the context of this community. In the past, we have had to alter the graduation POLs because they are not given in context."

The result of this first? Both students were awarded a diploma from Poudre School District as well as Eagle Rock, and both have been invited to participate in graduation ceremonies at the Fort Collins high schools from which they would have graduated.

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reminder to me to live life to the fullest. You never know when you're going to go. I want my life to have meant something. I want to make my mark on the world and be able to die knowing that I have made a difference.

I will never forget that trip.

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## INTERNS BRING RICH EXPERIENCES TO EAGLE ROCK

*by Lois Easton, Director of  
Professional Development*

This year's interns come from all over the U.S. and bring a wide variety of experiences to their own learning as well as their work with students and staff at Eagle Rock. As part of the professional development effort, interns are engaged in preparing themselves for whatever they will do next with young people: teach in public or independent schools, participate in service organizations, lead wilderness trips, or return to graduate school. Their work at Eagle Rock is their "practice," and they engage with students in a variety of ways—in classes, intramurals, activities, and community events.

Here are this year's interns:

Tazamisha Alexander, Social Studies, California, BA from the University of San Francisco

Clayton Cooper, English, Missouri, BA from Colorado College

Mary Beth Cote, Art, Massachusetts, BFA from Rhode Island School of Design

Anne Crook, Foreign Language, Tennessee, VA from The American University

Jason Cushner, Mathematics, California, MA from Colorado College

Skye Delano-Nuttall, Delaware, BA from Princeton

Shawna Hedlund, Environmental Science, Minnesota, BA from Colorado College

Becky Manchester, Life after Eagle Rock, Colorado, BA from Colorado College

Peter Smith, Service & Operations, New Hampshire, BA from New England College

Jackie Wind, Professional Development Center, New York, BA from James Madison University

Jackie Wind is leaving to be married, and Clayton Cooper will replace her in the Professional Development Center. Linde Lisbona from Minnesota, a graduate of Colorado State University, will join the intern cohort in January to help out with the Wilderness program.

Not an intern though having much the same experience as an Eagle Rock intern, Michael Flynn from California, with a BA from San Francisco State University, is working as an adjunct faculty member in the Human Performance Center.

## FIRST "ALL WHO DARE" AWARD PRESENTED TO ANN FOSTER

*by Judy Gilbert, Director of Curriculum*

The first "All Who Dare" award was presented to Ann Foster, Director of Research for Poudre R-1 School District in Fort Collins and a faculty member at Colorado State University, on Friday, December 13, 1996. Ann was one of the first liaisons between a Colorado participating district and Eagle Rock and has been a consistent supporter of Eagle Rock in a variety of ways.

She has screened students for admissions, recommending those who most closely fit the Eagle Rock profile, and shepherding them through the admissions process. She has served on Presentation of Learning panels every trimester. She has also served on the Eagle Rock Professional Development Advisory Board, seeking to improve the opportunities Eagle Rock offers to educators around the country.

Ann arranged the first ever on-site dual diploma review process (see the story about this trimester's graduates).

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, JANUARY, 1997

#### MALE

16	Caucasian	2	Caucasian/Lat.
6	African American	1	Caucasian/AfA
8	Latino	1	Cau/E. Asian
2	Asian	1	Cau/NA
		1	Cau/AfA/NA

#### FEMALE

15	Caucasian	2	Native American
2	African American	3	Caucasian/Lat.
2	African	1	Caucasian/AfA
8	Latina	1	Cau/AfA/Lat

#### GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

1	Arizona	1	New Mexico
15	California	4	New York
28	Colorado	1	North Carolina
1	Delaware	2	Oregon
2	Georgia	1	Rhode Island
1	Illinois	1	Tennessee
7	Massachusetts	3	Texas
1	Michigan	1	Virginia
1	New Jersey	1	Wisconsin

## INTRIGUING CLASSES HELP STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE MASTERY

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

Visitors to Eagle Rock often comment that they would like to go to school here, as students. Some staff feel that way, too. "A good sign," commented Judy Gilbert, Director of Curriculum. "If our classes are intriguing, hands-on, experiential, and oriented to a variety of learning styles, we are doing our job right. If they are interdisciplinary so subjects that are often taught in isolation make sense to students, we're doing what we should. And if they are challenging and offer students the opportunities to succeed, we're on the right track."

Here are examples of classes that appear to do most of these things, according to the course descriptions in the Fall 1996 catalog:

### **The Human Body**

This is a fully integrated course that encourages learners to explore questions and interests regarding the human body in any manner they choose. The instructors have a background in art, writing, science, literature, and mathematics. We will draw upon the resources of others to include fitness, history, or service. The student is responsible for designing an investigation or several investigations in an area of personal interest. We recommend that the students develop a strong, polished portfolio of their learning on an ongoing basis.

### **Mas Espanol**

Are you frustrated because you know a little Spanish? Do you like to talk in class and work in groups? Mas Espanol is the class for you. With an emphasis on speaking and communicating in Spanish, we'll also take a more in-depth look at Latin America and its people. You'll greatly improve

your language skill as well as your critical skills and enhance your English skills. You'll have the opportunity to gain credit in Foreign Language, Geography, Celebrates and Understands Other Cultures, Works Cooperatively with Others.

### **The World Through Myth and Art**

Join the realm of Gods and Goddesses! Experience history and geography through fun and exciting stories. Investigate the regions of your mind and the world, as well as the regions of your ancestors. Compare Luke Skywalker to Hercules. Learn the symbols of your dreams and use them to create your own mythic visual images. Illustrate and paint your interpretations of ancient myths, build three-dimensional sculptures of legendary figures. You will have the opportunity to earn credit in the following areas: Literature, Composition, Art, Geography, History, Celebrates and Understands Other Cultures.

### **The American Dream**

"Sharing the best within each other—this we can call the 'American Dream.'" Why do people immigrate to the United States? Through literature, history, current events, music, art and language, this class will open your eyes and surprise you as issues of immigration and Hispanic influences in the United States are explored. The American Dream is a fun and interesting class for anyone interested in the changing world around them! Possible credit in American History, Geography, Literature, Celebrates and Understands Other Cultures, Works Cooperatively With Others, and Composition.

### **It's The End of the World As We Know It. . .Or Is It?**

This class will survey a variety of environmental problems, giving students a chance to see how they impact all of our lives. Students will explore the current importance of the issues, how they evolved into a problem in the first place, and the scientific importance behind them. Possible credit in American and World History, Environmental Science, Composition, Speech Communication, Civics, and Physical Science.

### **Touch the Future**

This course is for those who want to develop their teaching and communication skills by interacting with groups of 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. Elementary school students from Denver, Loveland, and Estes Park will come to Eagle Rock each week for a half-day outdoor education experience. Eagle Rock student counselors will be trained to lead montane ecology hikes and facilitate team-building activities. This is a wonderful opportunity to touch the lives of your younger brothers and sisters. Possible credit in Environmental Science, Service Learning, Career Exploration, Human Performance.

Courses are "vehicles" for students to demonstrate mastery of competencies that are required for graduation. These competencies are based on the Colorado Content Standards. "What makes our system work," commented Judy, "is that we have great freedom in designing classes so that students have an opportunity to learn and demonstrate mastery of competencies. Our unit of credit is not the course; it's the competency that students can demonstrate through a course. We can create learning experiences that work."

## THE PLAYGROUND WE BUILT

by *Catie Hart, Student*

We arrived on a sunny day in September. Classes had just started the day before and everyone still had the beginning-of-the-trimester enthusiasm. The site in Lyons where a playground would soon exist (so we were told) looked plain, rocky, and barren. We really were starting from scratch with an idea that would seem overwhelming to some, but to us—the “Think Globally, Act Locally” class—it symbolized something that we would take pride in, now and 30 years from now.

“Well, let’s get started,” said Garth, our service learning instructor. None of us knew exactly what that meant, but we soon found out. An hour later, plans were being studied, and measurements being laid out. After just two days of classes being in session, our playground was well under way.

Throughout our time building the playground, there was a plethora of learning experiences to be had. Geometry was everywhere. We needed to know how to figure volumes of cylinders so that we could order just the right amount of concrete. Knowing all about angles was crucial so that our playground would be perfectly “plumb,” or, to put it another way, not crooked. Shapes were more important than I ever thought they could be. There were triangular and trapezoid shaped

decks, cylindrical slides, and pyramid roofs. In order for our measurements to come out right, we needed to have a full understanding of what all of these shapes meant. One of the big questions was, “How can we put together one trapezoid and three triangle decks to make one big one shaped like a perfect hexagon?”

We also had a wonderful opportunity to learn about civics and how local government works. We worked with many of the Lyons town officials on the project and, therefore, had the chance to discuss local government with them. We learned about collaboration, how to work together and how incredibly effective it can be. Being able to participate in this hands-on project enabled us to learn many skills that will help us throughout our lives.

Six weeks later on October 18, 1996, we cut the ribbon on our beautiful, perfect playground. Little kids ran to be one of the first to try out the town’s new slides. All of us on the construction crew of the playground walked away that day with so much more than we started with when we first saw that empty site. We had an overwhelming feeling of satisfaction. We also had an in-depth understanding of many aspects of geometry and a full understanding of how local government works. All-in-all, it was one of the most memorable experiences for us, and a landmark in the history of Eagle Rock School.

**Eagle Rock School**  
(Continued)

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**Alison Trattner**  
*Language and  
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**Bonnie Vavra**  
*Business Assistant*

**Bob Van Der Wege**  
*Learning Resources  
and Information*

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS: SHOULD THEY BE A PART OF THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

by *Michael Moon, Student*

*Editor’s Note: This article appeared in Volume #7 of “From Under the Rock,” Eagle Rock’s student-produced newspaper, October 11, 1996. It is reproduced with permission of the author. It engendered considerable discussion among students and staff, a discussion which continues at Eagle Rock.*

During the last staff meeting, the subject surfaced as to students not completing their homework for class. This then led to a discussion about proposing academic standards as a new non-negotiable. The issue is very controversial and has staff on different sides. Some staff feel that one problem is some students

have not been handing in their work on time or even at all. After the Wilderness retreat and ERS 101, a few students haven’t quite possessed “the drive” to get the work done. It seems they feel that since they have finished the first part of their “initiation,” it is a downhill coast to graduation or until they’re ready to complete their assignments. The meeting also included ideas about how to motivate students to get their work done.

Alison Trattner (Language and Literature Instructional Specialist) is one of the staff members who feels Eagle Rock should incorporate academic standards in the non-negotiables: “These are not standards WE impose on the students to torture them; they are standards the students committed to fervently upon entering Eagle Rock.” She asks: “Why do we place more emphasis on Healthy Life Choices than on Intellectual Discipline?”

See “Academic” - Page 6 -

## INSIDE AN EAGLE: EXCERPTS FROM A POETRY ANTHOLOGY

*Editor's Note: These poems were produced by students who participated in the Explore Week poetry class taught by poet-in-residence Jack Collum.*

### *In A Jar*

Save every living thing  
Mommies, daddies  
and those whatchamacallit birds that sing.

The dirt, flowers and sand on the beach.  
The stars in the sky that are too high to reach.

Save night, day  
darkness and light  
The colors that are so bright.  
Red, orange, yellow and white.

Save all the junk food in the whole wide world  
Dogs, cats and those whatchamacallits that howl.

*Katy Yniguez*

### *The Eagle*

I want to go inside an eagle  
I want to fly and soar through the crisp air.  
Dive and kill my prey,  
pick it up and take it to my babies.  
I want to go inside an eagle  
and feel the wind hit my face.  
I want to feel the wind flow through my body.  
I want to feel my heart beat rise,  
and feel my blood pump harder and harder.  
I want to go inside an eagle and just fly.

*Chantell Tenorio*

### *Creation of River*

From the tears of destruction  
the river was made  
From the tears of the  
lost souls  
the river was made.  
From the tears of  
a child who's been  
struck repeatedly  
the river was made.  
From the tear of an  
orphan crying to have someone who cares  
the river was made.  
From the tears of  
mother nature the river was made.  
The river was made.

*Haimanot Tesfai*

### *These Eyes*

Go inside these eyes  
Jump into the crystal blue waters  
Make a splash  
Explore my library of memories  
Stop and poke your head into my dreams  
Tiptoe into the darkness and whisper to my secrets  
Go inside these eyes if you dare.

*Catie Hart*

### *Jumping Chollas*

I remember the trip I took to become a student at some crazy school. We left even before the rooster crowed, to our desert destination. The ice was stuck to the window which pulled us there. Blinding snow frosted my cold red ears. The snow began to melt as the sun rose from beneath the waking earth. I arrived with a slap in the leg from a jumping cholla. I almost heard the cacti say "Leave my territory be, you don't belong here, and if you stay I will poke you with my sharpened thorns." The not-belonging part I seemed to agree on.

Oh, but those nights, those beautiful nights with beautiful white dots flying in the deep black sky called space. I felt so close to everything and nothing.

I remember Weaver's Needle, the mountain so large it was a shadow to the earth. Intimidating. I would have climbed it if it weren't for those loose rocks scabbing the rough and jagged hill.

I remember the desert whispering sweet lectures, the loose sand stabbing into my eyes.

I would like to save these things, even the jumping chollas.

*Ericka Esrick*

### *Birds*

Birds fly fly back  
to the Red Sea  
go fly back home and tell me the  
scenery.

Let me see through your intense eagle eyes  
and bring me back the smell of African pine trees  
Bring me back a photograph memory of their  
polished complexion  
that has me yearning just for one glimpse.

Birds fly fly and find me those people who are  
not with me  
find me those children whose souls live  
so I can save them from these war agonies

Birds fly fly and swim inside those bodies  
and tell me how their hearts beat.

*Haimanot Tesfai*

*"Academic" - Continued*

Though I support healthy life choices, I find it difficult to weigh cigarettes smoked in the woods over an expanding intellect. I don't think messing up by smoking is any worse than stagnating for a trimester and not following through on any project. That seems such a waste of the amazing resources at Eagle Rock—in terms of staff, students and materials. I am NOT discussing a lack of proficiency or being 'kicked out' for a few lousy homeworks—I am concerned about a lack of commitment. If there is one thing to do at Eagle Rock—and we already have so many shining examples—it's to SEIZE THE DAY."

However, there are some staff who do not think students should get kicked out for "not getting their work done." One such staff member is Michael Soguero (Mathematics and Science Instructional Specialist). He offered this response to making academic standards one of the non-negotiables: "My theory is that you may get obedience and compliance, not necessarily learning or understanding. And even when you get obedience it is based on fear, and I'm completely opposed to it." Michael continued: "I think that it is 100% up to the students to get the work in. When a staff member sees it as a problem and they want to change it, and make a difference in the problem, the only person that they can

control is themselves. They are going down the wrong path when they try to make students comply with something out of obedience and fear, like the non-negotiables."

Mary McGuire (Art, Music and Performance Instructional Specialist) also had some insight on academic standards as non-negotiables: "I don't think we should kick students out for not getting their work done. However, I do think we need to help students understand academic excellence. I want students to develop their hunger and thirst for learning!" Mary thinks the staff needs to solve this problem. She feels our dilemma is only temporary, and the community will rise out of this so-called "rut." "Eagle Rock has a kind of pattern to it. Right now we seem to be at the bottom of the hill, but it looks like we are pulling out."

Nothing has been set in stone yet. Nevertheless, those of you who think you might fall into this category, now is the time to get your work done and pull yourself up to the standards by which we, as a community, live. There must always be time for fun too, so don't overstress yourself.

*Editor's Note: The five non-negotiables are 1) no alcohol, 2) no tobacco products in any form, 3) no drugs, 4) no verbal or physical violence, and 5) no sexual relations.*

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