



EAGLE EYES

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GRADUATES PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER EAGLE ROCK

by Cristina Paglinauan, Intern, Life After Eagle Rock

The Eagle Rock community has been energized this trimester by the activity of its December graduate candidates. Here's what several grads-to-be worked on this trimester and what their plans are for life after Eagle Rock:

Meghan McGuire (Ashland, OR) focused her senior research project on death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal. Her plans after graduation include working for a construction company until September of next year. She is applying for admission to the Pacific Northwest School of Art and sees herself eventually teaching art at a public high school. For her senior research project, **Janell Strasser** (Thornton, CO) learned about the shortcomings of our society's penal system, a project that included a visit to the Canon City jail. She is keen on traveling after graduating from ERS and has been looking into various service-abroad programs. **Joe Ledbetter** (Boulder, CO) focused his senior research on domestic violence. Joe is looking into working at a ski resort after graduation to earn money for traveling in Europe over the summer. He is also busy applying to colleges for admission next fall. **Jerry McGinnes** (Fort Collins, CO) wrote his senior research paper on global positioning systems; he has also put his energies into painting a mural of his own design in the Lodge. Jerry hopes to join the Navy in February or March. **Lourdes Flores** (Boston, MA) focused her senior research on the problem of global warming. After graduation, she will be searching for employment in Boston, volunteering at a local youth center, and looking into schools to study art or business.

These Eagle Rock grads are not the only ones who have been keeping busy; last August's grads have been active in the "real world." **Brian Hansen** (Denver, CO) is a first-year student at Front Range Community College. He is doing well in his classes and particularly enjoys his sociology class. He still plans to attend Northeastern University, where he has already been accepted, next fall. **Brianna Lopez** (Broomfield, CO) has been working as an elderly home-care professional. She plans on starting at Front Range in January to take prerequisites for nursing school. **Erin Saunders** (Atlanta, GA) is living in [Boulder] and working at Chicago's Pizza. She is applying for admission to colleges in the fall of next year.

EAGLE ROCK TRANSPLANTED; CHANGE IN A CHICAGO SCHOOL

by Holly Beem, Co-Director of New Directions, an alternative school in St. Charles, IL

Dawn Long and I direct an alternative high school, New Directions, for students with behavior disorders and emotional problems in St. Charles, Illinois. We came to Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center to get ideas on curriculum and service learning. We were so excited about what we saw and the application to our program that, if we weren't directly observing the school, we were in our casita brainstorming.

There are some major differences between Eagle Rock and New Directions that seemed at first to be significant hurdles. One, our students go home every night to their dysfunctional world as opposed to residential living where a student has less chance of derailing from healthy practices. Second, students are placed with us instead of making the choice to be there. Third, we are a public school with limited funds and some restrictions on how we provide academic credit. Even after touring the wonderful facilities at Eagle Rock, we threw these "yea-buts" out the window and came up with many specific concepts we could incorporate into our program.

The idea of creating community in a school we thought was great. As a result, we have already started running a community meeting on Thursday mornings. This week will be our fourth and some students are responding positively. We were particularly interested in the service learning curriculum. We have presented our ideas to the staff and hope to get service learning underway in the afternoons in our school instead of a PE curriculum in which the students have little interest or commitment. Dawn and I were impressed with the competency based curriculum and plan to implement it on a small scale by next September. We have written for a sample of the Interactive Math Program and will attempt Baker's Choice, a transitional program, in a math class this quarter. Although New Directions has incorporated ropes courses into past curriculum, we would also like to have some type of outdoor programming. We will be contacting a Girl Scout camp nearby for possible overnights and team building opportunities.

Needless to say, we were very impressed with Eagle Rock and returned to New Directions with much more than we had anticipated. However, it will take time to implement all the ideas we have. We are excited about what we have already been able to do and believe that our visit will help to make New Directions program strong and better able to meet the needs of students in the future.

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NEWCOMERS LEARN TO 'FIND A NEED AND FILL IT'

*by Clayton Cooper, Adjunct,
Professional Development Center*

In the true spirit of professional development several staff members left this summer to venture forth into the world and share the knowledge they had gained in their years at Eagle Rock. In their place, three gentlemen of different experience, passions and goals have risen to the challenge of being "new" at the Eagle Rock School.

James Sherman, the new Society and Social Studies Instructional Specialist, is thankful to be working in an environment where he actually has a say in what he teaches. He is looking forward to getting more involved in the school's curriculum and policy conversations as his previous teaching experiences at CSU and Front Range Community College provided insufficient professional development. James has a passion for world travel, spending significant time in Greece helping in the reconstruction and sailing of a 5th century B.C. Greek War Ship. James maintains, "There is no richer experience than travel. You are constantly learning, and the world is your classroom." He brings this enthusiasm into instruction, turning students on to the wonders of distant places.

In the Learning Resource Center, Richard Gordon is already making changes. He is

transforming the LRC into a more effective learning environment for students. He plans to introduce more study carrels, a comfortable reading area and wall hangings to lower the noise level. The strong sense of community initially attracted Richard to Eagle Rock. With a Ph. D in Social, Multicultural and Bilingual Foundations in Education, Richard has been interested in culture and community for years. He acknowledges that community is a powerful component of the Eagle Rock curriculum, but something missing in many schools. His primary goal while at Eagle Rock will be to create effective ways of implementing technology in the experiential classroom. He also brings a love for travel, bicycling and back country skiing to the community.

Filling a need in the kitchen is Brian Simoneau. This 24 year-old California native started working in restaurants in his early teens. He comes to Eagle Rock School from the California Conservation Corps, where he served as back country crew leader for two years. In that time, he fought floods and even participated in a search and rescue mission for a drowned woman. Transitioning into work at Eagle Rock is a logical "next step" for him. He says, "Every day I am learning. Tim and Jeff are extremely helpful, offering knowledge and guidance." Brian eventually hopes to attend the Culinary Institute of America, following in the footsteps of his mentors. While at Eagle Rock, Brian anticipates becoming more active in the community, teaching students his skills and even participating in intramurals.

ERS CURRICULUM IMPROVES; "BOXES" REPLACED BY DOCUMENTATIONS OF LEARNING

*by Lois Easton,
Director of Professional Development*

"What's a box?" "How do I get a box?" These were common questions students had about getting credit and graduating from Eagle Rock. . .before the Instructional Specialists introduced them to the "new and improved" Eagle Rock curriculum in September.

Out With the Old

Improvement on the old curriculum began almost two years ago when Instructional Specialists, led by Judy Gilbert, Director of Cur-

riculum, began to build a solid foundation under the graduation requirements. One to three boxes preceded each graduation requirement on the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). For example, American History was preceded by three boxes. As students completed work related to American History, to a level deemed "proficient" or "mastered," a portion of a box was shaded in. When all three boxes were shaded in, a student had completed all the required work in American History. When all of the boxes on the ILP were shaded in, a student was ready to graduate.

Old:

□ □ □ American History

The Instructional Specialists, of course, knew what a box represented in terms of skills, knowledge, and abilities in their own curricu-

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lum areas. They used the Colorado State Model Content Standards as the basis for their determination of what was required. The problem was that students didn't know what was required in the content areas; some felt that "getting a box" was a somewhat arbitrary and mysterious process. Instructional Specialists, trying to link learning in an interdisciplinary way, had difficulty understanding what was required in any subject other than their own. And, when Instructional Specialists left, they took with them the specific knowledge, skills and abilities that described their content area. It was time to build a foundation under the competencies required for graduation.

In With the New

Over a two-year period, Instructional Specialists began to build that foundation, starting first with the broad concepts, goals and standards that were important in their subject areas. Next they described the specific learning that students would have to do in order to be declared proficient in that subject. They specifically tied both the broad concepts and the learning into the Colorado State Model Content Standards.

A real break-through occurred when the ISs realized that it was not enough just to describe the learning. They needed to give students ways to demonstrate their learning. They began to describe the ways students could document their learning. The ISs also realized that they could help students even more if they were clear about what "counted" in these documentations. The ISs began to develop rubrics--sets of criteria for proficiency--for each documentation.

By September 1997, draft #8 of the Eagle Rock Curriculum Guide was ready for students to examine. For each graduation requirement, this Guide included the following:

- ❖ broad concepts, goals, and standards related to that requirement
- ❖ specific learning related to that requirement

- ❖ ways students could document their learning
- ❖ a description of how good their documentations would need to be to be judged "proficient" (rubrics)

In September, students were introduced to this curriculum revision and the revised ILP that traded boxes for documentations of proficiency. Instead of boxes, each graduation requirement was followed by the documentations that would indicate mastery. They learned that, once they had completed to mastery all of the documentations beneath a graduation requirement (with the rubric indicating what mastery looked like), the box next to that graduation requirement would be darkened. When the boxes next to each graduation requirement were darkened, a student would be ready to petition to graduate.

New:

American History

- **Project on a hypothesis**
- **Project - historical event**
- **Project - current event**
- **Project - projecting the future**

Student Comments

At first students were upset that things were being changed on them, no matter how beneficial the changes might be. According to an article written by student Meghan McGuire in the September 12, 1997, edition of the school newspaper "From Under the Rock," students feared that a new ILP would mean "stolen credit," and that ERS wanted to "incarcerate us here forever!" Meghan reported that students were sure they'd be "on life support and still at this school. Eagle Rock will soon be nothing but a retirement home!"

The article reports, however, that "the majority of students are enthusiastic about the new system. The new ILP spells out what a student is required to do to earn a box, unlike the old ILP on which defining a 'box' was a mystery."

According to student Rachel Curran, "I think that the new ILP is

fabulous because it spells out for me what I have to do to graduate without having to make specific plans with every teacher." Meghan, a December 1997 graduate who thought she had a lot to lose in the new system, actually discovered her fears would not be realized. She ended her article with, "Although change is scary for most people, especially those of us who have been attached to our trusty boxes for a long time, we should trust the system and accept change as it comes."

A copy of the Curriculum Guide was placed in each room on campus so that it is accessible to students who want to plan their graduation.

Staff Comments

In the same article, Registrar Audrey Stevens commented that the new ILP (based on the revised Curriculum Guide) "will give students a more accurate idea of what they have completed and what they have left to complete." Instructional Specialists hope that the new ILP and Curriculum Guide will help students become more self-directed in their pursuit of learning. They will know exactly what they need to learn, how to demonstrate mastery, and how good their documentation needs to be.

Instructional Specialists will find it easier to create interdisciplinary classes because the important concepts and learning in another subject area will be visible to them in the Curriculum Guide, along with rubrics to help them judge student work. When staff move on to other positions, they will leave behind their best thinking about what matters in their subject area specialties.

Finally, the planning and reporting tools related to curriculum have been revised to fit the new ILP and the Curriculum Guide. Learning, from Course Proposal to Learning Experience Record Sheets (which indicate what students have mastered at the end of a course), is one seamless process. If you would like a copy of the Curriculum Guide, please contact Lois Easton at Eagle Rock. Her direct phone is 970-586-7109. E-mail is leaston@psd.k12.co.us.

ER 13 LEARNS TO FLY

by Michael Christner, Instructional Specialist,
Wilderness Program
Heather Solar, Instructional Specialist,
Health and Wellness
Miranda Johnson, Intern, Social Studies

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead's words frame the ambitious task of ERS 201, a recent innovative course.

This class, mandatory for all new students, is an experimental course designed to create a transition from the affective experiential education students experience on their 23-day wilderness trip to the affective academic education of the school curriculum. The broad aims of the course are the following: 1) To continue the full integration of new students into the Eagle Rock community, and 2) To continue to provide new students with tools that will aid them in their academic and personal development.

The design of the class stems from a conversation among school administrators and faculty members, especially John Oubre, Dick Herb, Robert Burkhardt, and Michael Christner. In order to address a concern about the attrition rate among students in their first two trimesters, these staff members envisioned a class that would serve as a vehicle to ease the transition of new students from their wilderness trip to life at Eagle Rock. They concentrated on four main areas as critical to the success of students at Eagle Rock and later life: emotional growth, anger management, study skills, and time management. With the help of John Shea, a visiting faculty member, they designed the class as a problem-solving course that would help teach students these areas indirectly through intensive group work.

Consequently, this trimester's students in ERS 201 have tackled the issue of the educational system in America. Their goal was to write a proposal as a group to address this fundamental question: What is a good education and how can it be provided to every student? In order to better understand the complexities of this problem, the class visited two local middle schools, one public and one charter. Students interviewed school board candidates, a financial officer, principals, counselors, teach-

ers, and students. Through this process, they recognized that interviewing adults and speaking in public are not intimidating actions. By focusing on an interesting and exciting topic, we attempted to peak students' intellectual curiosity and demonstrate the importance of unearthing new information. Enhancing and refining their research and public speaking skills will help students succeed at Eagle Rock and also become effective life-long learners. As a final goal, the instructors hoped the students would be able to present their proposal to the Boulder Valley School Board and have an impact on educational policy. Student Donnie Adams, commented, "This process has been very difficult, because our group perceives many things very differently. Despite this, I would love to see our proposal serve a good purpose and change the school system in Boulder Valley and possibly the country." Another student leader, Danielle Williams, added: "I have many goals for our class, and teamwork is vital to our success. Hopefully, we will be able to work together as a team so our proposal is complete and at the highest standards it can be."

Although the objectives of the class are clear, the means and structure of the class are still experimental and continually changing. ERS 201 strives to help students achieve in all aspects of their lives at Eagle Rock by encouraging them thoughtfully to examine their performance in other classes, kitchen patrol, and their living environments. The instructors plan to offer this course during the second six weeks of every trimester and intend to change the social problem the students examine.

EAGLE ROCK SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

<u>FEMALES</u>	<u>MALES</u>	<u>CAUCASIAN</u>
35	35	34
<u>LATINO</u>	<u>AFRICAN-AMERICAN</u>	
6	13	
<u>NATIVE AMERICAN</u>	<u>ASIAN</u>	
4	3	

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		2	Wisconsin

Eagle Rock School
(Continued)

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Chef, Instructor

James Sherman
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Service Instructor

Philbert Smith
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Students

Lisa Spring
Administrative
Assistant

Audrey Stevens
Registrar

Alison Trattner
Language and
Literature

Bonnie Vavra
Business Assistant

FUND TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO ER GRADS

by Dick Herb, Director of Operations

On a cool spring morning last March, Robert Burkhardt and I met at a picnic table on the Esplanade. I shivered (even though the meeting location was my choice). Robert had a dream that would benefit Eagle Rock graduates and wanted to brainstorm the idea.

"Most of our graduates are college bound," Robert began, "and many without means. They will qualify for financial aid, but it won't cover everything. They have come to Eagle Rock committed to change. They have changed and successfully negotiated both the academic and personal growth sides of their learning, and now they are ready to take the next step."

"They came to us eluded by success, from troubled backgrounds, perhaps in trouble with the law. They did not expect to graduate, saw little future, had few options and less hope. Now look at them. They represent any school's top graduates. Dick, I want to find a way that ensures any lack of financial means won't stand in the way of their going to college."

The commitment of the American Honda Education Corporation (AHEd), which opened Eagle Rock in the autumn of 1993, includes all the expenses of a residential high school including some travel to and from home. In a few cases, the school provides clothing, medical care, prescriptions--whatever it takes to see that each student has a fair chance of success.

Robert's idea was to create a fund that would support scholarships for ERS graduates. He asked me if I had any ideas. It was a great discussion, a result of which was the establishment of the **Eagle Rock School Graduate Higher Education Fund**.

Nearly 60 friends of Judy Gilbert, Eagle Rock's Director of Curriculum,

contributed over \$5,000 following her unexpected death in June. American Honda Education Corporation donated \$50,000 to the Fund to commemorate her through scholarships.

Two all-school work days for the Fund were established in Estes Park. The first Graduate Work Day was held in June. Estes Park residents' requests for services were met by students, staff, interns and parents who worked to raise money for the Higher Education Fund. The response of Estes Park residents were overwhelming, and over \$7,000 was raised and contributed to the Fund.

Other funds have brought the Fund to over \$70,000. This includes \$7,000 donated in honor of Robert's father, Robert J. Burkhardt, Sr. The money has been invested for long-term growth and will be governed by a Board of Directors and managed by an Investment Committee appointed by the Board. For the first few years, income generated by Graduate Work Day, donations, and investment earnings in excess of the amount needed for biennial awards will be added to the Graduate Fund principal.

Six students have received \$1,000 scholarships from the Eagle Rock School Graduate Higher Education Fund, one in April and two in August. In December Jerry McGinnes, Meghan McGuire, and Joe Ledbetter received scholarships when they graduated. All six students are applying the scholarships towards college or university tuition.

If you would like to help make a difference in the life of an Eagle Rock graduate, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Eagle Rock School Graduate Higher Education Fund. You may send your check, made out to the Eagle Rock Fund, to Dick Herb, Eagle Rock, P.O. Box 1770, Estes Park, CO 80517.

SERVE TO LEARN AND LEARN TO SERVE, IN NEPAL

by Clayton Cooper, Adjunct, Professional Development Center

We leave: Part of ourselves

We take: Sand in our cuffs, rocks, shells, moss, acorns, driftwood, cones, pebbles, flowers, photographs

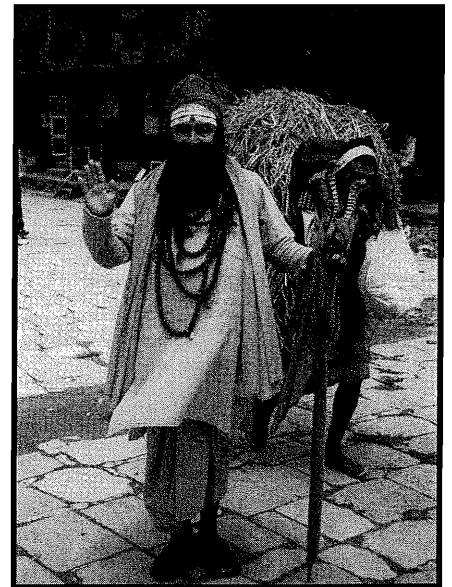
But is a picture a tenth of the thing? A hundredth?

Is it anything without the smell and salt breeze and the yellow warmth when the fog lifts?

Oh! but I got all these too

It is exposed forever on the sensitive emulsion sheet

Of my mind



This past summer the Service Learning Instructor, Garth Lewis, had the unique opportunity to guide a 16 person, youth service corps through the highlands of Nepal. Garth was chosen from an applicant pool of 1000 to co-lead this trip for Global Routes. A non-profit organization based in Berkeley, CA, Global Routes, provides young people with a cross-cultural experience, combining community service and travel components in Asia, Africa, South and Central America. Nepal is the most sought after

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trip for its adventure and limited access to the comforts of the Western world, such as telephones, TVs, and running water.

As part of his own professional development Garth took the six weeks away from Eagle Rock to have an authentic international service experience. A part of him was seeking the adventure, but another part was interested in gaining an understanding of what opportunities there are in service for young people. He may want to pursue similar work as his next career.

Garth's group began the trip by attending a week-long orientation outside Katmandu to learn the customs, culture and language of Nepal. Once somewhat acculturated, the group began trekking the Annapurna Circuit, a popular route named after the 8th highest peak in the world. After twelve days of backpacking and gaining over 10,000 ft in elevation, the group reached the service site, the tundra village of Manang.

The principle projects for the group were to construct stone steps at the entrance of the village and make a path to a nearby tea house begun by past Global Routes groups. This work was part of a larger revenue generating effort to improve the area around a nearby glacial lake, hopefully to attract more visitors. In addition to the service component where they were working side-by-side with villagers, students participated in home stays. These were their main link with the community as it provided them with a rich cross-cultural opportunity. Simply eating a meal, which usually consisted of potatoes, ramen noodles and leafy greens with their family, was a growth experience. The kids were encouraged to let down their guard, enabling the com-

munity to accept them. The village celebrated the accomplishments of the week with a town dance in honor of Global Routes. To thank them for their hospitality Garth and his group presented the town of Manang with \$2,500 the kids had raised as a prerequisite to going on the trip. This money would be used to pay for workers to complete the projects Global Routes had started.

The group then trekked over the 18,000 ft. Thorung La pass. Keeping with custom, Garth hung three prayer flags at the top of the pass, one in memory of Judy Gilbert. The group completed the hike down from Thorung La, flew to Pokhara and then went on a safari in the Chitwan National Park, near India. Due to the temperate climate of the region, the culture was a lot different than the one thriving in desolate tundra at Menang. Water buffalo burgers and fresh fruit were a pleasant contrast to the potatoes and ramen from the previous weeks. The group then returned to Katmandu, thus completing the trek through Nepal.

On his six week sabbatical Garth was successful in gaining a broader perspective of service learning. He was impressed by how townspeople were part of the service. "They had a sense of responsibility to their community," Garth said. "Life in Nepal centers around barter and trade. This economic system naturally forms community because the villagers do not pay for outside work through taxes. Everyone must pitch in, thus offering a sense of ownership and community pride." Garth hopes to use these examples from Nepal in the classroom as a springboard for Eagle Rock School's commitment to a healthy and nurturing community.

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