



EAGLE EYES

Volume 14, Number 2

News From Summer 2006 Trimester

REACCREDITATION AT EAGLE ROCK

by Robert Burkhardt, Head of School

In January 2005, then Director of Professional Development, Lois Easton, initiated a process that resulted eighteen months later in the reaccreditation of Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center by the Association of Colorado Independent Schools (ACIS) and the North Central Association (NCA). Lois held a series of meetings with ERS staff to develop our Self-Study, a seventy-page document that appraised all aspects of Eagle Rock and provided the Visiting Team a sense of the school when they arrived for a four-day visit in March 2006.

By May 2007 the new Director of Professional Development (and founding ERS staff member) Michael Soguero will have led the staff through another process to formulate our First-Year Response to the Visiting Team report. Michael will coordinate the staff's response to specific recommendations from the Visiting Team concerning various aspects of the school program. We will revisit the recommendations when we submit our third-year response in 2009. Accreditation occurs on a seven-

year cycle, and the process will begin again in 2012 when we again prepare a self-study.

The Visiting Team commended Eagle Rock for "outstanding adherence to its mission that is evident in every decision, in every nook and cranny of the school. Eagle Rock may well be in the top 10 schools in the country where the mission is practiced on every level." Additionally, the Visiting Team remarked on the "strong sense of joy in awakening students to the natural world, to the arts, to a strong work ethic, to community, to learning that will last a lifetime." Finally, the Visiting Team commended Eagle Rock for our "creative, energetic, dedicated staff who exemplify best practices in their delivery of curriculum, compassion for and care of the students, work ethic, and modeling of a strong community culture."

The Visiting Team also made six key recommendations for us to consider, and these will be the focus of Michael's work during the next several months. The recommendations are: a) Directly connect the extensive wilderness

...See Reaccreditation - Cont. on Page 8

FORMER FELLOW RECEIVES CHANGE-MAKER AWARD

by Dan Condon, Associate Director of Professional Development

Public Allies alumni are part of a dynamic and growing national network of diverse young leaders committed to a lifetime of working for community and social change. This year Public Allies recognized outstanding program graduates for their life's work in social change, and for exemplifying the five Public Allies values of collaboration, diversity and inclusion, a focus on assets, continuous learning, and integrity.

Sarah Ballard, from the 2005 Public Allies Fellowship at Eagle Rock School, received her award specifically relating to her work with mentoring young people. Sarah explains, "Public Allies got me back on track with social change and activism. Eagle Rock exposed me to the power teaching has on young people."

Sarah is using her Public Allies experiences to develop and highlight the assets of young people in Louisville. Sarah currently develops and oversees a mentoring program in a Louisville housing project through Big Brothers Big Sisters. Her work has enabled hundreds of young people to connect with and have meaningful relationships with thoughtful and caring adult mentors. Sarah attributes much of her success to her learning and practice of the values of community participation, inclusion and collaboration. She also has a special interest in using her teaching, youth development, and fine arts background to help more women claim their power through art therapy. For more information about Public Allies, visit www.publicallies.org/eaglerock.

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STUDENT LEADERSHIP: HOW TO FOSTER POWERFUL STUDENT VOICE

*Excerpts being reprinted with permission from the Coalition of
Essential Schools. Visit ceschangelab.org for the full text.*

We all know that areas of student engagement, achievement and school culture improve when students are given a voice. Oppressing, controlling and silencing students should be a thing of the past. Giving students voice in the classroom, a say regarding school policies and a role in reform initiatives make schools more democratic, less autocratic and certainly more learner centered. But what does meaningful student voice look like? This panel was moderated by Eagle Rock School Head Robert Burkhardt, Director of Students Philbert Smith, Associate Director of Professional Development Dan Condon, and student Coral Ann S.

Q: I have been trying to engage the students in the process of developing "voice," however, there seems to be a lack of buy in by the students. How can I convince them that the school wants them to be part of the policy making process, that their voice will not simply be "window dressing?"

A: As a student at Eagle Rock I remember the first time I spoke was in a situation where I was comfortable. I knew the topic, I knew what to address and I felt comfortable in my answer. I think the fear of speaking from your mind holds many students back. Give them a head start. Putting out other ideas by other students and opening a discussion up. Then they won't feel as though the words they speak will be taken drastically; it will just become a typical conversation. A lot of times when they are voicing opinions, the opinions don't go anywhere. Make a valid statement that what is said is really going to affect the school. Make sure they know this is their chance to have a say in the system. – Answered by Coral S.

Q: What do you see as the relationship between voice in the classroom and in policy, and developing 'voice' in writing?

A: I think that through writing the students get the time to put in enough thought process to write a true opinion. Though voicing opinions at Eagle Rock does a lot of good as well. Having students speak their own words in large

crowds gives them a self-confidence needed in many real world environments. – Answered by Coral S.

Q: Expressing thoughts in writing generally (but not always) encourages some reflection about what has been said. Also a student may find it difficult to, for example, be critical about an aspect of policy in a traditional group meeting. John

A: John---initially, it may be true that the reflection is on what has been said. Developing critical thought is like building muscle, it has to be exercise. Through regular ongoing conversations, pushing students to go below the surface, students begin to go beyond what has been said before. It is wonderful to watch this transformation. As they do it orally, it will begin to reflect in their writing. As students become comfortable with "their voice" they have no problem reflecting on policy issues. With policy issues guidance is needed to help students understand the merits of reaching a consensus and to understand that having a voice does not mean that you will always get your way. Student voice works best when adults value student voice. – Answered by Philbert Smith

Q: Is authentic "student voice" really possible in large comprehensive schools? We find working with small teams of students to be very powerful but almost impossible to spread the bounty school-wide or district-wide. When it becomes to the whole school and beyond it is sort of like an undemocratic "corporation" where "roles" are assigned, expectations rose, but there is very little authentic student voice that is not ruled by inflexible rules established for the sake of safety and routine. Is authentic student voice really possible in large and poor public schools?

A: I think this is a leadership and culture question. From my viewpoint it is possible to so arrange a school that voices are used and heard. It takes time and patience, but if the school leaders want to "hear," they will. And they will set

ANOTHER GRADUATE TAKES FLIGHT

by Janice Lee, Registrar

At the beginning of each trimester, excitement and anticipation builds as the Eagle Rock community looks forward to learning who our next prospective graduates will be. Throughout the trimester, students who have applied for graduation become even more immersed in their learning, personal growth, and final academic achievements at Eagle Rock. It is an intense, but rewarding time in all of our lives.

On August 4, 2006, **Sevi Donnelly Foreman** was the 114th student to graduate from Eagle Rock School.

Sevi enrolled as an Eagle Rock student on September 15, 2002 (ER-28). Born in Medellín, Colombia, and raised in upstate New York and California, Sevi came to Eagle Rock feeling success was not within his reach in Los Angeles and a lifestyle change was needed. Music was Sevi's sanctuary. Reflecting, he once said, "I feel Eagle Rock is the right place for me. I know if I work hard I can succeed here. I am extremely excited about all the experiences I am going to have here and all the things I will have the chance to learn." More recently, Sevi stated, "As I became more aware of who I was, I gained more freedom in forming who I was evolving to be. My learning, my growth, and my passions will continue to evolve as time goes on. Eagle Rock is merely one of the many stepping-stones that I will cross as I continue to become a more intelligent and enlightened human being."

Sevi will be remembered for sharing his musical talent, developing and participating in an Estes area fund raising benefit concert for Katrina victims and the ERS Graduate Fund, teaching others, formally and informally, to play the guitar for over six trimesters, jamming in the School House, discussing social justice issues, receiving the Eagle Rock Excellence Award twice,



and representing Eagle Rock School as a keynote presenter at the Alternatives to Expulsion, Suspension, & Dropping Out of School conference Florida during ER-35.

Sevi believes "Life is the most precious gift one will ever receive and to not embrace every moment is to fail one's self and starve one's spirit. I have a passion for life and I want to experience all its pains and joys so that I may become a wise being before death knocks at my door. Being in the present moment and embracing its struggles and pains is a constant struggle in itself, but the present moment is what is important to me for we are only guaranteed one life, so why not live it?"

Sevi will attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA and will major in jazz composition and music production. This accomplishment would never have happened, according to Sevi, "had I not realized that in order to be an eclectic musician, I needed to understand the fundamental principle of western theory as well as delve into studies of music from around the world. The love of learning has, and continues to, make my life richer as it persists in opening my eyes to the many wondrous things that there are to experience and observe."

Mark Dougherty
Sous Chef

Cynthia Elkins
Arts

Beth Ellis
Learning Resources
and Information

Eric Farmer
Language and Literature

Jacques Fournet
Wilderness & Outdoor
Education

Jimmy Frickey
Mathematics

Mike Glowacki
Head Cook

John Guffey
Service Learning

Dick Herb
Director of Operations

Sheri Jackson
Business Administration
Specialist

Janet Johnson
Science

Janice Lee
Registrar

Jeff Liddle
Director of Curriculum

Karolee McLaughlin
Music and Performance

Jen Morine
Human Performance

L'Tanya Perkins
Admissions Associate

Tim Phelps
Chef Instructor

Scott Rashid
Second Chef

Russ Rendón
World Languages

Anna Ridder
Wilderness &
Outdoor Education

Philbert Smith
Director of Students

Michael Soguero
Director of
Professional Development

Terry Tierney
Assistant Facilities

To Be Announced
Life After Eagle Rock

Jesse Tovar
Health and Wellness
Counselor



EAGLE ROCK IMPACTS DUTCH JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

by Dan Condon, Associate Director of Professional Development

This past June a group from *The Sprengen*, a non-profit youth care organization located in the Netherlands, traveled to Eagle Rock to spend time leaning through Eagle Rock's Professional Development Center. *The Sprengen* consists of a correctional facility for 100 boys and a residential facility for 60 boys. At each location they house a high school. The schools are in the process of reforming, inspired by Eagle Rock.

They are redesigning the residential facility into a living, learning and working community. Hans Jagers explains, "We were inspired by our visit! We experienced the strength of 8+5=10 in daily living. We learned about the Wilderness Program, visited several classes, and talked to the members of the learning community."

The group of 10 people from *the Sprengen* who visited Eagle Rock will be leading the redesign team in their reform process. After their summer vacation they will call the residential facility *Campus of the Sprengen* and will begin to

implement the redesign at that time. Within two years they hope to develop into an attractive program for young people with severe behavioral problems who are living in the Netherlands. It is not clear how Eagle Rock and the Sprengen will benefit from each other's experiences, but we look forward to further contact with our Dutch friends.

FELLOWS MOVE ON

by Margrette Castro, Director of the Public Allies Fellowship Program

Every year, Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center in collaboration with Public Allies, Inc., brings in 12 individuals passionate about education and youth development. They interact with students in and out of the classroom and learn ways of empowering students to make healthy life choices, take charge of their learning, and to be leaders. Fellows learn and grow as well and share their gifts with the community. The following Fellows will be very much missed and the Eagle Rock Community and Public Allies thank them for their contributions.

Daniel Alvarez, Societies and Cultures Fellow, will be going back to Chicago to work on his Master of Arts in Teaching at DePaul University. Danny will begin his courses in the fall of 2007 and is excited about continuing the process of learning to be a better teacher.

Adriana Barboza, World Languages Fellow, will be moving to Minneapolis to work with Wellstone Action, a non-profit organization that trains, educates, mobilizes, and organizes individuals and organizations to create social and political change. Adriana will continue the work she started at Eagle Rock by continuing to teach

and empower people to create social and political change while empowering herself.

Alan Barstow, Language Arts and Literature Fellow, will be pursuing an MFA in creative writing at the University of Wyoming. He will teach composition for the University and will specialize in creative nonfiction. His studies will culminate in a book-length work of publishable quality. He hopes to use his experiences, including Eagle Rock, as a lens with which to write.

Sarah Dribin, Learning Resource Center Fellow, will stay on at Eagle Rock for the next year as the Learning Resource Coordinator, a new position created and defined using her past experience as the LRC Fellow. Sarah also plans to pursue her Master's degree in Library and Information Sciences (MLIS). Sarah hopes to stay in education and coordinate a Learning Resource Center at the secondary level. She also plans to sharpen her passion for media awareness into a specialty and develop her philosophy regarding access to information.

...See Fellows - Cont. on Page 8

REDEFINING SERVICE LEARNING

*The following is being reprinted with permission by Horizons,
the newsletter put out by the Association for Experiential Education.*



SERVICE ISN'T JUST ABOUT DOING GOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED; IT'S ABOUT DOING GOOD WORK WHEREVER YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF.

by Katie Wiseman, Student

During my second trimester at Eagle Rock I enrolled in the service program (ER-38). I engaged myself in two service areas, both in Estes Park. On Tuesdays I worked with Jane Lopez at MacGregor Ranch on marketing initiatives and restocking the meat freezer, and on Mondays and Fridays I dedicated my time to repairing furniture through Furniture Connections. Part of the ER 38 curriculum is to set academic and personal goals. My academic goal was to begin my service credit early. Each Eagle Rock student puts in more than 500 hours of service by the time s/he graduates. Many students don't start working toward that goal until at most a year into their Eagle Rock careers. I started my chunk in my first academic trimester. One of my personal goals was to connect with the Estes Park community. I feel more attached to the community I live in now because I worked with local businesses and was an active member of the Restorative Justice program. I was also striving for a new perspective on what service is. When I worked in the wood shop, I felt that it was more of a hobby than a service. And that was one of the things I loved about the service I did during ER-38. It didn't just feel like a service, but a learning experience and a hobby. While restoring furniture, it truly felt as if I was taking the saying "one man's trash is another man's treasure" into my own hands.

One of the skills I came to appreciate and associate with service was dedication. I developed a greater understanding of what dedication means while working

at MacGregor Ranch. At first it felt as if I was there to just restock the freezer, but as time went on I realized that I had to be fully into what I was doing or else it wouldn't benefit me. It was during this time I learned that service wasn't just for the person I was serving, it was also for me. But the biggest challenge I faced was in the woodshop. When I first started I wanted to get as much done as possible with as little work as possible. I came into the woodshop thinking I could get so much done because I had refinished furniture before. It took me a few weeks to accept that I would only complete one project in the 10 weeks allotted. The first few weeks I didn't know whom I was helping by fixing up a table. At MacGregor I knew directly whom I was helping. The indirect nature of the service project at Furniture Connections was challenging because it felt as if I was just doing work to fill up the class time. Only when I did my first furniture pick-up did I realize the positive repercussions of what I was doing in the woodshop. I was turning this once thought of trash into someone's new table. I was now more affected by the community I was doing service for and I could now identify it.

My understanding of service and community has changed over the past two months while working with businesses in the Estes Park community. I came into service with the only notion of service as community service. Now when I hear service I get a mental image of tutoring, woodwork, moving someone's furniture, gardening and many other things. Now I feel that service is a two-party enjoyment instead of just a recipient-oriented process. I truly believe I have learned so much as a person and as a person of service. I also have refined what is important to the people for whom I do service, and when people come in to help it really is appreciated. When I went to the ranch at first I felt like I was just there to do the little jobs, but as time went on I felt more important as marketing came into play. I was now having a direct impact on the success of the place for which I was doing service. I learned that service is more than just odds-and-ends jobs and that it is about making a difference in whatever place one works.

My suggestion to future service students is to challenge all the thoughts you come into service with. Take on roles that you thought you could have never taken on. Try to do things that positively reflect on Eagle Rock and benefit Estes Park. I would encourage students to develop new ideas of what service is and to get past the credit part of doing service. Service is a great thing,

...See Service - Cont. on Page 6

...Service - Cont. from Page 5

and I am so thankful that I got to experience it in my first academic trimester because I think I would have gone on with the idea of service as a punishment and a wilderness requirement.

About the Author: Katie Wiseman, 16, grew up in Windsor Colorado. She enjoys spending time with her mom and three dogs. Her service paper was written after six months of serving the Estes Park community, where Katie is currently attending the Eagle Rock School. Since arriving at Eagle Rock, says Katie, "I have come a long way from where I was to where I am now! Service is now an active part of my life."

YOU GET AS MUCH AS YOU GIVE WHEN YOU WORK WITH KIDS.

by Jonathan Petty, Student

This trimester I have done the most service I have ever done in my life. Before coming to the Eagle Rock School (ERS) the only time that I did service was when it was court-ordered. The projects were always picking up trash, and I rarely learned anything from it. This trimester I did a lot of service and I learned how it was beneficial to the community. The service projects I did included barbwire clearance, chopping wood, fire-pit removal, tutoring, trash pickup and campus demolition, which consisted of tearing down a part of our amphitheater. Even though I didn't volunteer, I enjoyed and learned a lot about contributing to the community.

The main service project I am going to reflect on in this report is tutoring. I have been tutoring 5th graders at the Intermediate School in Estes Park. A few other ERS students and I go there on Tuesdays and Fridays. The community needs us to do this service because kids always need extra help with their academics. The goal I set for myself was to be the best tutor I could possibly be to these kids. I didn't want to let them down like my tutors had done to me in the past. I really didn't have to practice any skills. Most of the stuff I helped the kids with I already knew, although I had to figure out a way to explain multiplication an easier way. I also had to practice socializing with the kids so we were comfortable with each other. Making sure the kids were comfortable with me was an important task. What made that difficult was that I am a young black male. Estes Park isn't that diverse and I know I seemed intimidating to the kids, yet I didn't let that hold me back from getting to know and helping the kids. As a result I learned that I could make a difference in someone's life and help out other kids. I also learned that Estes Park has a very good school system. These 5th graders were working on stuff I didn't learn until 7th or 8th grade, and they have the potential and drive to be very successful.

The greatest challenge I met with during this project was just getting on good terms with the kids so they felt comfortable working with me. I did that by asking them about their background and family and pointing out the similarities between them and me.

When I first started with service, I wasn't planning on learning anything—I just wanted to get the credit out of the way, but as you can see I have learned a lot. I see many changes in myself as a result of tutoring the kids. I feel that I can help make positive changes for children, and that makes me glad because most of my life I have been a bad influence on kids. It feels good to repent from that and do some good. I've also learned that the meaning of service isn't just helping the community, though that is a big part of it. I feel that service is about finding peace within myself and doing positive things that aren't necessary for me to survive but are good for me. The advice that I would give to a student before they start a service project is don't just do the service to get it done, try to get something for you out of doing the service. If they are working with kids like I was, I would also advise them to give 100% to helping the kids because the kids need as much help as they can get.

In the other projects, I feel that I didn't learn nearly as much as I learned while tutoring the kids. I say that because when I was doing the other projects I didn't see the importance and priority. When I was tutoring the kids I knew I was making a difference, which made me put a lot more energy and care into it. During the wilderness course I did the barbwire clearance and the fire pit removal. The purpose for the barbwire clearance was to keep the wildlife from getting caught in it. The purpose for the fire pit removal was to make the desert more wild and for people to not use up all the natural resources. I picked up trash and demolished part of the amphitheater for "Sunday Sweat." I feel proud that I embarked on so much service this trimester, and I plan to continue to help out the community.

About the Author: Jonathan Petty, 17, grew up in Denver, Colorado. He plays football, lacrosse and basketball and boxed for a little while. Says Jonathan: "I drive a baby blue '85 Cutlass Supreme and plan to fix it up to a clean old school. My life before ERS was pretty rough and going down the wrong road. I got into some trouble with the law, was involved in gangs, drug and alcohol abuse, violence, theft, robbery and a whole lot of other things. I was living the stereotypical life of a gangster. I was kicked out of two Colorado school systems, so I wasn't enrolled in high school when I came to ERS. I had broken my probation for the second time the Saturday before I left for ERS, so pretty much ERS is my only chance to succeed. I feel I bring leadership, humor and compassion to this community."

STUDENTS RECEIVE COLORADO CARES AWARD FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

by Dan Condon, Associate Director of Professional Development

Governor Bill Owens and Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton honored outstanding volunteers who make a difference in their communities on August 10th at a reception at the Governor's executive residence. Eagle Rock School students were awarded the Governor's 2006



Colorado Cares Volunteer Service Award for their tireless efforts to assist others in their community.

"Volunteers have a powerful impact on the strength and well-being of Colorado's communities," said Governor Bill Owens.

"We're thankful for the dedication of this year's recipients of the Volunteer Service Award because they are making a difference in the lives of many Coloradans throughout the state."

Lieutenant Governor Norton has direct supervision of Colorado's mentoring and community service activities, including Colorado Cares Day. Colorado Cares was created in 1999 by Governor Bill Owens as a day of service in recognition of Colorado's statehood, and as a way to encourage Coloradans to give back to their community.

"These volunteers set an important example for other Coloradans," said Norton. "I am proud to have been a part of this event to celebrate the human spirit at its best. Through their work in schools and senior centers, neighborhoods and churches, these volunteers have made a difference in the lives of many Coloradans."

Service learning is recognized by Eagle Rock as an effective, experiential means of preparing young people to make a difference in the world. From the school's inception, service has figured strongly in its values, expectations and commitments. "Service to others," "Environmental stewardship," and "Participating as an engaged global citizen," are expressed in $8 + 5 = 10$ and highly valued at Eagle Rock. Students are expected to "Serve Eagle Rock and other communities" as an ongoing part of their learning experience and knowledge acquisition at the school. The service-learning instructor and fellow coordinate service-learning experiences and partnerships, providing many direct and indirect community

service opportunities for students through a variety of short and long-term activities.

These include the following:

Service Specials, a hands on service-learning course that meets four times a week each trimester and engages students in on- and off-campus community service as well as regular opportunities to think, discuss and write reflectively about their service experiences and viewpoints;

Chores, a community-wide work program whereby students and staff participate in campus maintenance including recycling, landscaping, forestry, resupply and general housekeeping;

EagleServe, which consists of two to three days of community service each trimester provided at Eagle Rock and to the wider community;

Service-Learning Advisory Council, where students have a voice in planning, action and decision-making around service-learning at ERS;

Independent Service Projects, whereby students develop a proposal to integrate a service-learning opportunity into their coursework or personal time;

Classroom Service-Learning Projects, which are coordinated through different instructors and courses.

Service learning appears in courses like Soccer and Service; For the Birds; Service, Spanish and Culture in Guatemala; Four-Corners of Service and Culture; Wilderness; Math and Cooking; Reduce, Reuse, Recycle; Sacred Benches; and Sustainable Resources. These courses are found across the curriculum in art, math, world languages, science, societies and cultures, music and human performance. Service partnerships are maintained in collaboration with local organizations and agencies. These include Rocky Mountain National Park, MacGregor Ranch, the Prospect Park Living Center, Park School District, the Town of Estes Park, the University of Colorado, Rocky Ridge Music Camp, Sunrise Rotary and many more. Travel and off-campus experience in the wilderness program and in various courses provide service-learning opportunities in both local and distant communities. Students may experience anything from trail work to cross-cultural dialogue, from tutoring at an elementary school to renovating a home on the Navajo Reservation, from picking up trash to organizing a Peace-Jam project on global peacemaking, from working with Latino children in Estes Park's Roundhouse program to teaching English classes in a rural Guatemalan community school. For more information about Eagle Rock's curriculum visit: http://eaglerockschool.org/our_school/academics.asp

...Fellows - Cont. from Page 4

John Gillum, Human Performance Center Fellow, will be traveling solo throughout Europe for six weeks. Partly inspired by the solos ERS students get on Wilderness, he seeks to have solo time to reflect on ERS. After traveling, he will return to Charleston, SC, where he will work for Charleston County Parks and Recreation where he will lead kayaking trips, and facilitate ropes courses and challenge experiences. In the spring, John plans on attending Minnesota State University, Mankato to begin working on an M.S. in Experiential Education.

Sarah Gnizak, Service Learning Fellow, will be working for a camp in California as an Outdoor Education Instructor. Sarah hopes to continue along the experiential education path through outdoor education and eventually become a camp director. Sarah plans to return to school as well and continue being a life long learner. Sarah is thankful for her experience at Eagle Rock that has allowed her to learn and grow every day.

Jenna Kay, Science Fellow, is passionate and dedicated to science. Jenna will continue in the field of science either teaching in the public school setting, wilderness instructing, or doing non-profit environmental justice work. Jenna looks forward to living and working in challenging and supportive communities like Eagle Rock anywhere she goes.

Megan McLean, Health, Wellness, and Counseling Fellow, will start at the University of Denver in the Graduate School of Social Work in the fall. Megan will be focusing on working with youth and with people who have been through trauma. Megan's experience with Eagle Rock has been incredible, and has served as a confirmation on how much she loves working with youth, especially in a residential setting. After obtaining her Master's degree, Megan hopes to continue working

with a diverse youth population at a residential treatment center.

HaeJohn Medley, Visual Arts Fellow, plans to continue teaching. HaeJohn's current teaching options span from Las Vegas to New Zealand. In addition, HaeJohn plans to return to school to finish his other two degrees in Studio Art and Psychology. HaeJohn will continue to be active in the arts and education and looks forward to having his Basset Hound named Turbo.

Jill Patterson, Math Fellow, will be moving to Japan for a year to work as an Assistant Language Teacher for the JET program. She is departing in August and will be living in Ojika in southwest Japan. Her new town has a population of about 3,300 people and she will be placed in elementary, junior high, and high schools to teach English as well as participate in after-school activities with the students and teachers. Jill is excited to use the teaching skills she learned at Eagle Rock at her position this upcoming year.

Jamie Randenbaugh, Outdoor Education Fellow, will be living in Boulder, Colorado. Her employment is yet to be determined, although she has applied for a record of 14 different jobs in the last two weeks. Who knows, she may be waiting tables at your favorite restaurant or babysitting your neighbors' kids. In the future, Jamie would like to work with an environmental non-profit organization doing writing and education campaigns that influence young people to live sustainably. Jamie would also like to attend graduate school for journalism after some more professional experience with writing. Jamie is looking forward to continuing working with people in the outdoors on shorter-length courses, possibly with the Women's Wilderness Institute in Boulder.

For additional information about the Public Allies Teaching Fellowship at Eagle Rock School visit www.publicallies.org/eaglerock.

...Reaccreditation - Cont. from Page 1

training experience each new Eagle Rock student has to the classrooms and student life when the students return; b) Utilize the Professional Development Center in preparing teachers for classes where they encounter different learning styles, disabilities, and serious gaps in student learning; c) Develop clear language and understanding of the Eagle Rock experience of chores vs. service, so that each reflects the mission of the school; d) Consider integrating technology so that all systems talk to one another and can be accessed by all staff; e) Find ways to pay greater attention to the mental health and well-being of all the students; and f) Look closely at finding ways to improve the social studies curriculum so that it plays a stronger role in each student's learning experience.

ACIS Heads of School Mary Lou Faddick (Foothills Academy) and Rex Brown (University of Denver High School) co-chaired the Visiting Team. Their deep wisdom helped to ensure that the 2005-06 reaccreditation episode impelled Eagle Rock to grow through the experience, and we are grateful to them for their fine work.

...Leadership - Cont. from Page 2

up systems to ensure regular discussion or feedback. By paying attention to the culture the school is building it becomes possible to evoke the voices one wants to hear. No, it is not easy. But it is important. — Answered by Robert Burkhardt

Q: First, thank you all for your participation in this panel. As a teacher at the classroom level, I have been a believer in nurturing and encouraging student self-determination and input into the pedagogy and curriculum directions we take as a class (within the framework of best practices, school policy and state standards). Examples are a “de-briefing” after an assessment, planning a strategy to improve achievement on an upcoming unit of instruction, deciding whether to move more deeply into a topic or move on to another and developing plans for projects that interest the student while remaining within the scope of the course. Generally this works well and I’m looking forward next year to working in an even more student centered environment. I have little experience with “real” student voice at the school level; however, some of my classroom experience with this issue raises this question. How does Eagle Rock strike a balance between genuine student input and the random, non-relevant type of input? One doesn’t want to stifle a student’s opinion; on the other hand one presumably wants the dialogue to move forward in a meaningful direction. Do you simply take a more patient approach, allowing time for the odd tangential discussion? Or do you use methods or guidelines to keep the dialogue on track? I’m interested in any specific practices at the school, house or classroom level you would like to share. Wyatt Bingham

A: Wyatt --- Thank you for your fine question. Yes, we are patient with errant student voices, but we are not fools. There are periodic arabesques in student discussion that may seem to go nowhere. There are other times when observations are

germane and trenchant. You have a role to play in setting guidelines and expectations. One of the advantages we have at Eagle Rock is that there are a variety of forums for discussion (community meeting, Gathering, advisory, class, gender meetings, ad hoc committees, etc.). This gives students and staff AMPLE opportunity to hear and be heard. It also offers many opportunities to steer a conversation or discussion back to relevancy. It has taken a number of years, but our students, especially veteran students, are adept at concise framing of argument or plea. And they are careful with each other (small communities help this occur) to not dismiss out-of-hand a stray remark, knowing that poor treatment of another will return to haunt them soon. Constant practice and modeling will yield favorable results. — Answered by Robert Burkhardt

Q: I believe the root problem at my elementary school is that the teachers don’t know how to communicate effectively in a democratic environment at school. How can I help my colleagues to find productive ways of communicating with the administration? The teachers at my elementary school (LAUSD LD 3) appear to be habituated to the “we versus them” mentality to the extent that the teachers automatically fight any ideas they hear from someone who they believe is in “authority.” How can I help change this? I’ve already tried for 5 years to show the teachers that there is no “us and them,” but I’ve seen absolutely no change in behavior.

A: Perhaps there really is an “us and them,” and therein may lie the seemingly intractable problem. Do the administrators want to communicate with your colleagues? Or do they want to speak at them? If your colleagues have been effectively dismissed or marginalized for some time it will take hard work and patience to rebuild relationships. My suggestion: start slow and small and manageable. Pick something for next autumn that has a high probability of success involving only a few people. Make it work. Trumpet the success slowly (nothing succeeds like success). Build relationships and

communication through real events over time. And remember that there will be some who do not want it to succeed. Be like water: seek your own level and work with like minds. Have fun. Others will acknowledge success and results over time, however grudgingly. Then you can potentially reel them in, slowly. — Answered by Robert Burkhardt

Q: Are you familiar with the work of Dr. William Glasser, M.D.? Glasser is a psychiatrist and lives in LA. He has written many books, but relative to this topic, Choice Theory and Every Student Can Succeed. His premise is that everything evolves around our relationships. If we want to foster powerful student voices we must create a better relationship between administrators, teachers and students. What do you think?

A: I really believe that this is a strength we have the luxury of having at Eagle Rock as we’re residential and year round. Not to say it’s not possible elsewhere. Through my Houseparenting experience those relationships were powerful. I play a variety of roles for students from big brother to surrogate parent. We are intentional in having as many different teams and groups (intramurals, advisory, house, etc.) as possible in order to building these relationships. — Answered by Dan Condon

A: I’ve been using Glasser’s ideas since the beginning of Eagle Rock. He’s a very smart guy, and his words seem written for this school. I have long been convinced that the various relationships among students, teachers and administrators are foundational to fostering and nurturing student voice. We use the word “community” as the primary lens for developing relationships during the first five years of Eagle Rock. It turns out to have been a wise choice. — Answered by Robert Burkhardt

A: It’s really true! Being able to address staff members by their first names and knowing a little about their personal life really connects the student and staff. We are so lucky at Eagle Rock because we get to share almost three meals a day with

...Leadership - Cont. from Page 9

staff. At the table we get to find a connection in lives. It helps our community and the smaller communities within our community. Examples like classes, advisory, and houses. We all become closer through spending leisure time together. – Answered by Coral S.

Q: Hi, there. Do you think that student voice has any effect on learning? If so, what effects do you think it has (positive and negative)?

A: Absolutely, it has an effect on learning. I do not see a downside with student voice in the classroom. Sometimes it may be awkward and uncomfortable, most of the time it stimulates learning. Students learn and retain more when they

feel like an active participant and take responsibility for their learning. I would like to caution that student voice not be looked upon as a program to be implemented. My view is that it is an attitude to be encouraged and nurtured. This is done through building authentic relationships based upon trust and intimacy. Then systemic changes can occur within the classroom and school as a whole. – Answered by Philbert Smith

A: What a wonderful question! And the answer is an emphatic YES. Think about your own learning for a moment. When you are in charge of where you go, what you do, what you think, what you say, what you read and write and see, there is more likely a higher return on learning than if I were to tell you to

read this or go there. As students use their voices and become more familiar with directing their own lives, they are both more accountable for choices and any resultant learning. They are more conscious of choreographing their own lives. It is not in passivity that we learn--it is in action that gives us opportunities to think, reflect and grow. Student voice is one important tool in this process, as the speaker cannot disengage from his/her responsibility for having spoken the words. It has been our experience at Eagle Rock that students grow their own voices as they move from newcomers to potential graduates, and their learning seems to follow a similar pattern. – Answered by Robert Burkhardt

SOCIAL NETWORKS AND DEMOCRATIC SPACES

by Stephen Paul Smith, Former Public Allies
Teaching Fellow in Society & Cultures who

spent the summer at Eagle Rock researching for his PhD at UC-Berkeley

Advocates on both sides of the education debate cling to their talking points. Progressive reformers highlight structural factors. They argue that substandard educational funding abandons disadvantaged students to rat-infested buildings, dog-eared textbooks and overflowing classrooms. Conservative reformers tend to fault individuals. They spotlight incompetent teachers, weak families, and a lack of student responsibility.

Despite their differences both sides recognize the potential of small schools. Conservatives celebrate the free-market logic of charter school competition and progressives rejoice in the potential for tailored curriculum and smaller classes. Both camps see promise in local control, community involvement and value-driven education.

In practice, of course, small schools never reflect either ideal. They are contradictory places, places of negotiations, failures and resurrections. Eagle Rock is no different. As a summer researcher at the school my goal has been to identify some of these contradictions in order to understand the struggles of students and staff from various perspectives, and, hopefully, to illuminate these processes in order to improve the prospects for students to succeed. In the following paragraphs, I briefly note a few of the common paradoxes for Eagle Rock and other small schools.

A significant dilemma for small schools attempting to construct democratic communities is “how to deal with hierarchies of power,” and particularly the divide between staff and students. How can institutional

practices encourage full participation from students, teachers and administrators? And, conversely, how do schools maintain systems of authority and discipline while cultivating an honest dialogue prefaced on full equality? Eagle Rock is an interesting case of ongoing democratic negotiation in a small school because it has developed so many effective networks to foster a dialogue across various actors in the institution.

Community meetings and morning gatherings are clearly the most inclusive venues for democratic participation at Eagle Rock. They provide a public space to discuss everything from second chances for students that have been asked to leave to announcements about chores, visitors, and extra-curricular activities. In these gatherings individuals may air both the sacred and the profane comments that form the background of a functioning community. However, other intentional social networks may be equally important to cultivating a democratic ethos by drawing more reticent members of the community into the conversation, eliciting their opinions, and translating those concerns back to the general collective even when the individuals originally expressing them hesitate.

Other small schools could learn from the intentional overlapping social relations at Eagle Rock. It is sometimes assumed that the size of schools will determine their democratic potential. The equation reads: Small school equals democratic community.

GUATEMALA: ROUND DOS

by Robyn Weaver, Former Public Allies Teaching Fellow in World Languages

Leaving behind air conditioning, a reliable supply of electricity, and many of the things that we have been accustomed to as inhabitants of the United States, four veteran Eagle Rock students, the World Languages Instructional Specialist (IS), and a co-instructor (yours truly), hopped aboard a United jet on May 22nd and began what was our physical journey to San Andrés, El Petén.

Over two years ago, Russell Rendón, the current IS, entertained the idea of taking a group of students to Guatemala to take part in a service-learning project. As the class design evolved, it took shape in the form of a history and culture experience including service components. After getting the approval, the first group of Eagle Rock students to take part in an abroad expedition happened ER-36. The course was a success, and we were not only given permission to have a second round, but were welcomed back this trimester by the San Andrés community as well as Volunteer Petén, the organization with whom we worked.

Heidi Bingham-Schofield, Mad-den Foreman, Stephen Maestas, and Brizeida Piña were the chosen ones to take part in an experience that most people can only imagine. The course officially began on May 15th at Eagle Rock; however, the students had been meeting once a week, preparing passports, and reading various books about Guatemala since the previous trimester. We began our course discussing culture, investigating the various books read, and digging in to the secrets about Guatemalan politics. We prepared as much as we possibly could in order for us to better understand Guatemalan people, culture, and the way of life. In between

all this, we found a bit of time to shop for books in Spanish to donate to the library in San Andrés, as well as seat bottoms for swings to help us construct a playground we planned to build as our service project.

Upon our arrival in Santa Elena's airport on May 24th, we met Mateo, the director of Volunteer Petén, who explained to us that, "the rainy season seems to have come a bit early this year." After a bumpy and mud-



dy ride, we were dropped off at our host families' houses. Later on that afternoon and slightly weary-eyed, we took a tour of the town and neighboring villages. That night, we spent time with our dear host families and also got acquainted with large insects, copious amounts of rain, and the unfamiliar sounds of nighttime Guatemalan animals.

The following day, we began with our own version of morning gathering, oftentimes journaling and discussing what this experience was like for us. We then were given Spanish lessons with Brizeida we gave English lessons to grade school students at La Escuela Norte. Around 9:00 am, we began a thirty-minute walk out to Ixhuacut, a village nearby, where the future site of the playground was. Our plan consisted of building a bungalow, fencing in the area, leveling the area, and constructing and putting up a swing set, see-saws, and monkey bars. We worked for two hours, and if

our "hired" driver hadn't found better work, we considered ourselves lucky and caught a ride back with him to San Andrés. We ate lunch with our families and then either went down to Lake Petén Izta for a respite from the midday heat or took a much-deserved nap. Then around 3:00 pm, we reconvened for our afternoon block of work, continuing to mix concrete, dig holes, cut pipes, level the earth, build rock walls, paint the equipment or other various tasks. It was physically demanding work, considering nearly all of it was done without the aid of electrically powered machines, in the heat and humidity of a low-lying jungle climate. Afterwards, around 6:00 pm, we ate dinner with our families and then oftentimes spent the evening at the library with the children of the community, playing Uno or checkers, reading books, watching a movie, or throwing *ronrones* (unbelievably large flying beetles that adhere particularly well to hair, skin, and clothes) at one another.

We took an amazing trip to Tikal National Park in El Petén. Tikal is a well-preserved ancient Mayan city, full of temples and other historic buildings. We spent the day exploring the park, learning about the fascinating history of the civilization and taking in the majestic ecosystem of the park.

When we returned to Eagle Rock on June 9th, the students had the weekend to recover, rest and readjust to life in the States. Then there was one more week of class where students reflected on their experience.

Overall, the trip encompassed what Eagle Rock is about—experiential learning at its best. Many people worked hard to make this trip possible and it is our hope that we can continue to provide such an opportunity to scores of Eagle Rock students who are willing to make a difference in the world.

EAGLE ROCK PRESENTS NINTH SUMMER PRODUCTION, *THE BOY FRIEND*

by Andy Artz, Former Adjunct Faculty in Music & Performance

Eagle Rock students and staff were proud to present *The Boy Friend*, a satire of 1920's musical comedies in which boarding school teenagers in the south of France fret about falling in love. The show returned to



the outdoor amphitheater after last year's dinner theater production held in the Lodge, and we were fortunate to have great weather. All six of our scheduled performances were played to robust audiences between June 18-22. As usual, we also presented selections from the show at the Senior Center and Good Samaritan in Estes Park.

Back in the fall, a group of students traveled to San Francisco with Karolee McLaughlin, our producer, to meet with beloved director Rick Roberts, whom we were lucky to have for a ninth summer. After listening to and leafing through scores of shows, the committee narrowed the choices to five, and *The Boy Friend* was selected a few weeks before auditions in February. In addition to those offered parts at the time, a number of auditions were conducted by phone or upon the students' return in May, and we finally settled with a cast of eleven students and five adult community members.

The lead character of Polly Browne, played by Amanda Hansen, is a sweet and innocent young lady having trouble finding a partner for the upcoming Carnival Ball because she is worried every suitor is only

interested in her considerable wealth. Things are looking up for Polly when she becomes besotted with Tony, a messenger boy played by Marc Feder, until he inexplicably runs away just hours before the party and is pursued by the police. Polly thinks all is lost and must be persuaded to even come to the Ball, but she is finally astounded when Tony appears and reveals that he is, in fact, a wealthy aristocrat himself! They profess their love and agree to be married, just hours after they first met.

Meanwhile, as this farcical romance is playing out, supporting characters are glimpsed. Polly's friends Dulcie (Tatiana Vinzant), Fay (Ashley Trunck), and Nancy (Christine Woeltge) are all aflutter about their costumes and dates for the evening's Ball. Maisie, played by Shelby Violante, remains busy keeping the hopeful boys on a string. Patrice, Bobby, Alphonse, and Marcel, played by Tahira Ali, Steve Sanders, Jonathon Petty, and Jesse Collier, flirt and frolic. Polly's father, Percival (Mat Kasper) comes to visit his daughter and reluctantly reacquaints himself with Madame Dubonnet (Cindy Elkins), the headmistress and an old flame! Robert Burkhardt lurked about the action (and the girls) as Lord Brockhurst, pursued doggedly by his overbearing and dramatic wife, played by Sarah Gnizak. Finally, Nathalie Tovar stole the show as the French maid Hortense, with help from Saul Flores and Big Mike Glowacki, who had cameo roles as waiters and cops.

Some moments that proved consistent audience favorites included Natalie's tendency to dust other characters, the hilarious histrionics between Robert and Sarah, including the impromptu swordfight with cane

and parasol and Sarah's "palpitations," the silent interactions between Saul and Big Mike, Steve and Shelby's dancing in *Won't You Charleston with Me*, Sia Yang's reprisal of *Speaking French*, and the vaudeville-inspired and very cute *Never Too Late to Fall In Love* with Robert and Tatiana. Jonathon always got a laugh when he delivered one of his lines in his deep, resonant voice, and Cindy delighted the crowd every time she tickled the over-stuffed Percy (Mat) and made him hop.

The only thing that seemed to happen faster than Polly & Tony's romance was our production schedule, which we trimmed to five weeks instead of the usual ten. Fortunately, we had an experienced and dedicated production team. In addition to Rick and Karolee, Suzanne Garramone returned as the accompanist, Andy Artz acted as stage manager, Leah Englebart choreographed, and ERS graduate Mat Kasper designed and built the sets. Devin Cruikshank returned for a second summer as light designer and technician extraordinaire. Sarah and Cindy made invaluable contributions as Dance Captain and set painter in addition to their roles. Caitlin McTague, a summer intern, joined the team to coordinate publicity and act as House Manager. Caitlin and Andy also stepped in to fill roles that were vacated just before the final two performances. Supporting the cast and the production team were a dedicated set crew. Paul Cook, Saul Flores, and Katelynn Wiseman worked tirelessly on lights, sound, and set construction.

The long hours of rehearsal and preparation proved worth it in the end, when our cast rose to the occasion and delivered fantastic performances. Here's looking forward to next summer!

To see photos from this summer's production visit: <http://eaglerockschool.org/gallery/index.asp>

THE WORLD CUP AND GOODBYES

*Former Language Arts and Literature Public Allies Teaching Fellow
Andrew Barron recently sent this letter to the Eagle Rock Community.*



On game day, the streets are empty- like Christmas day. Businesses close during the game. Buses run slow. At the Hogar, the process starts long before kickoff. The boys have to clean their rooms before the director of the Hogar, a widely despised man named Walter, will turn on the power. On this particular day, there was paint all over the floor. The boys had showered Germán with flour, water, and paint to celebrate his birthday. The beds must be made. The floors must be cleaned. And most importantly, the TV needs to be operable before 4 o'clock when the game will start and Argentina's World Cup hopes will either be squashed or vaulted. For a nation struggling to be hopeful, the importance of The World Cup cannot be overstated.

During the game, the boys sit in chairs, on their beds, or stand, nervously shifting their weight. In addition to the TV, there is a warped table, cement floors, and a few metal chairs. From time to time, Pepe has to kick the side of the TV stand to jar the cables back into place, fix the picture, and relieve the tension that grips the room whenever the screen goes to snow. The room is cold and unheated. The boys watch intently, in turn cursing the refs, the opposing players, and their own players as the ball moves around the field. If an Argentine player makes a bad pass, the boys yell expletives and insult his mother. When Argentina scores they scream. They shake their fists in the air. They throw their chairs across the room.

Although Argentina lost in penalty kicks to a clearly inferior German team, I was blessed to share the excitement with these boys. When the dream was squashed, we hugged, patted each other on the back. Pepe cried and began speculating about the Olympics in two years.

My time at El Hogar La Casita, a home for abused, neglected, and abandoned boys in Buenos Aires, draws to a close. In a week, I'll return to the United States to see my family and friends and to face a barrage of questions, beginning with "How was it?"

How was it? It was a year. It wasn't perfect and neither was I. I was sad and capricious, angry and lonely and short-tempered. And in all my failings the boys loved me. Even when I didn't want to be there, I wanted to be there.

In these final weeks, I have tried to say my goodbyes in my own way. Those who know me know that I believe in food. I believe in its ability to show deep gratitude and feed the soul as much as the body. Last week, I showed my gratitude to the boys through food. For the younger boys, I made an asado (Argentine barbecue), and for the older boys, I treated them to dinner out at the neighborhood all-you-can-eat buffet.

I chose this way to say thank you and goodbye because I wanted to give the boys one meal when they could ask for seconds and receive them. I wanted to give them plenty- if just for once.

Seconds (and thirds for that matter) are important. There are a thousand small doors that open with privilege. So many doors, we sometimes mistake them for a big door called rich, white, or first world. But the doors are small. We see them more easily in aggregate. Lucas asks for seconds at lunch and the cook

says no. It's a small no, a small defeat, but that door closes and the no's add up to a wall. Long before I could speak my mind, I spoke my stomach. What happens to kids like Lucas who learn early on that there's no reason to speak up, the answer's always no? The asado last Saturday was a chance for them to get nothing but yes's- and lots and lots of good food.

At dinner out with the older boys, everyone buzzed with nervous energy. None of them were entirely comfortable, but Alan, the youngest of the group at 13, was clearly the most unsure of himself. *What do I do? Can I eat whatever I want? And dessert? Is there a bathroom here? Can I use it?*

After I explained that all-you-can-eat means you can keep going back for more if you want and that includes dessert, and yes, the bathrooms are for everybody, including you, he calmed down and started to enjoy himself.

I'm reminded of my privilege (those many open doors), when the boys feel like they need to whisper, slouch, and try to disappear in public. They have been told repeatedly, "You don't belong here. Go away. And no you cannot have seconds."

Alan ate his fill of grilled chicken and french fries. Pepe ate steak and more steak. Germán ate seven bowls of ice cream, and on the walk home, he hobbled like an old man, claiming the ice cream was kicking his insides.

Alan, Jonathon, and I walked back from dinner arm over arm. We often walk this way, like members of a strolling chorus line, like friends. Alan looked up at me and said flatly, "I've never eaten like that." Alan hadn't ever eaten like that. He'd never been to a restaurant. He's never been to a movie or a fair. He's never even been to a friend's house to hang out.

EAGLE ROCK COLLABORATES WITH CES ON SUMMER INSTITUTE

by Dan Condon, Associate Director of Professional Development

Eagle Rock School & Professional Development Center worked with the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) in hosting their Summer Institute held in Denver, Colorado this past July.

Conference participants included individuals and teams of educators interested in small high school design. The Institute provided powerful professional development for large high school teams interested in converting to small schools, as well as teams creating or improving new small schools.

In the tradition of CES, an essential question served to frame the work throughout the week: *How do we design and continuously improve schools that support powerful instruction and success for all students?*

Eagle Rock Alumni Jeremy Martinez provided the opening address at the Institute. He spoke to the essential question and provided a framework to understand what schools might do in order to become more democratic and equitable for all students. Jeremy shared, "This process of democracy at Eagle Rock is not incidental. Democracy is built into the curriculum and morals of the school. Democracy is continuously being evaluated and searched for. Eagle Rock has its most effect because it is democratic."

La Dolce Vita, Eagle Rock's a cappella group also performed at the opening session. The group was founded three years ago by a group of students and staff who shared a love of singing.

Throughout the week Eagle Rock met with partner mentee schools, Skyview Academy of Thornton, Colorado and Odyssey – The Essential School of SeaTac, Washington.

Fourteen of Eagle Rock's staff were able to attend portions of the conference in Denver. Mathematics Instructional Specialist shared, "I left with a renewed appreciation for the potential of Essential Questions to make my classroom more engaging with deeper thinking done by students more regularly." Jen Morine, Human Performance Instructional Specialist stated, "It was great to sit and talk with other teachers from around the country about differentiated curriculum with a focus on continuing to improve what we do in our classes at ERS. With this being a focus for our instructional staff this year, the timing was great."

A highlight for the Eagle Rock learning community included hosting 60 conference participants on campus on Tuesday, July 21.

Reflecting on her visit, Melody Sears, Principal of Renaissance School at Olympic in Charlotte, North Carolina shared, "I need to concentrate more on rites and rituals, as they are important to establishing a culture and behavior pattern, as well as school traditions."

To learn more about CES visit: www.essentialschools.org

...World Cup - Cont. from Page 13

Alan, more than any of the boys at the Hogar, is a child of hogars (homes). His mother had AIDS, and since he was two years old he has been a ward of the state. His mom was in the hospital on Monday when we went out to dinner. She died that Thursday.

When I saw Alan on Friday, we hugged. He had already been to the cemetery to bury his mom. When I asked him about it, he had the look of someone who had already done his mourning. He shrugged and smiled, as if to say, what am I supposed to do, it was bound to happen.

I get to go home. No matter what I do in my life, where I go, what clothes I dress myself in, I have parents who love me, and a family that would take me in and even take me out to eat.

I'm coming home, and I can't bring these boys with me. So what do I do? I don't do anything. I come home and be me.

So, How was it? It was a year. It wasn't perfect and neither was I. But I got to say yes to a bunch of guys who are used to no's. I don't know how many yes's I've been this year. When we do homework together, when we walk to school, when we go to the park, when we eat together,

Can I play with the flashcards?

Can I carry the ball?

Can we whistle when the train passes?

Can I say the blessing?

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Thank you, boys, for saying yes to me, too.

STUDENTS ATTEND WORLD SCHOLAR ATHLETE GAMES

by Katie Wiseman, Eagle Rock School Student

The last five weeks of this trimester started off a day early on a plane to Rhode Island, where I joined two other students as participants in the World Scholar Athlete Games (WSAG). As Eagle Rock instructors HaeJohn and John excitedly awaited our arrival in Rhode Island, we realized we didn't completely know what we had gotten ourselves into. The WSAG are events planned to bring young people between the ages of 15-20 from over 150 countries together to make a difference in the world through sport and art. Tatiana and I participated in the writing program; Dustin was on the basketball court along with John who coached girls basketball; and HaeJohn spent his instructional time with artists from all around the world. We were in Rhode Island for nine days dedicating ourselves to a specific program and

got to see the ocean for the first time and took pictures of HaeJohn, Dustin and John swimming. It was a great trip that gave me the momentum to come back to Eagle Rock.

Being in Rhode Island set the ideal example for us to come back to Eagle Rock and create our own Olympic games. We spent the first two weeks back planning the ERS Olympics. We picked teams and the countries to be represented and decided how they were going to be represented. We planned events to have included and prepared an opening and closing ceremony. There was time and effort put into all of the details for our July 22nd *Game Day*, which seemed to approach so rapidly. We had four teams representing Argentina, Japan, Jamaica, and France. The theme for the day was Unity. We split the community up intentionally to have participants meet someone new. We had great weather and great team spirit. Events included the 400-meter dash, wheelbarrow races, water balloon toss, and the long jump. Members of each team participated in at least one event and we facilitated each event. It was awesome to see teams cheering each other on and teammates encouraging each other to finish their event. We took a non-traditional route by separating teams with bandanas instead of the typical t-shirt.

Our Olympics started with an opening ceremony that included a speech from our Head of School, the traditional lighting of the torch and the athletes reciting the Olympic oath. The beginning of the Games included a relay to the Field of Dreams (our athletic field). After a long morning of intense competition there was a water balloon fight and a barbeque. We finished the day with a traditional closing ceremony where medals were handed out and a slideshow of the day was put together. It was a great finish to see the torch put out to an incredible day of planning, work and fun!



were able to see multiple keynote speakers. Some of the more influential speakers included Bill Clinton and Bill O'Reilly. Each day held a theme that affected the whole world such as global warming, world peace, and the current hot topic of immigration. It was an amazing experience that allowed us the opportunity to take Eagle Rock outside of Colorado.

Dustin spent his days on the court getting to know people from as far away as Australia and New Zealand. Tatiana and I spent our days with 17 other writers from Bahrain, Argentina and Canada to name a few of the countries I had the opportunity to learn about. The time that wasn't spent in designated programs was spent in a variety of events such as dancing, listening to live music, hanging out in our dorms or checking our *MySpace* accounts at the university library. Staying in different dorms gave us the opportunity to meet even more people. My two roommates were from Canada and Poland. Our dorms served as the perfect opportunity to meet people from outside of our chosen activity. We were also able to adjust to the humidity and the time difference. We had one day to go sightseeing and we ventured out to Newport, Rhode Island for seafood and window-shopping. I

Have you seen it?

It's creating quite a buzz.

Eagle Rock's NEW website.

www.eaglerockschool.org

...Social Networks - Cont. from Page 10

While in practice small schools often provide a greater opportunity to develop intimate relationships with other members of the school, this does not necessarily translate into community. It may even devolve into a series of competing factions. I would suggest that intentional social networks that provide places to discuss ongoing issues at the school and create new friendships and trust cultivate the necessary democratic spaces that uphold the larger democratic community. At Eagle Rock these include advisories, house meetings and retreats, Eagle Rock service groups, kitchen patrol, gender meetings, specials and classes, mentoring groups, tutoring and study groups and other activities that bring together diverse segments of the students and staff.

The structure of curriculum at Eagle Rock may further foster cohesive social networks due to the open enrollment and mentoring that occurs in classrooms. The individualized learning plan (ILP) may serve democratic ends in avoiding some of the grade distinctions that may create barriers between individuals and groups in schools. Further progress on the ILP creates a quasi-mandate for student leadership that persuades more veteran students to take an active role in generating and facilitating public school discussions.

These networks tend to intertwine and in moments of democratic crisis may constrict to draw the relations tightly together rather than unraveling as in some small schools. Democracies in small communities, like the larger democracies beyond them, are always imperfect. Dialogue does not guarantee consensus, and full democracy in a school, which inherently requires a system of authority, remains impossible. Nevertheless, by fostering diverse and integrated social networks in school institutions, small schools construct profound spaces for students to practice citizenship, voice their opinions and listen to other points of view.

Eagle Rock is rich in social capital, networks and relations of reciprocal cooperation that facilitate trust, and this capital may be used to cultivate more democratic spaces and discussions at the school. Other small schools could equally develop such capital and reap the benefits in terms of the salience of their own democratic spaces. In debates on democratic schools perhaps attention should be redirected to the intimate spaces in schools where relationships develop.

In closing, I want to again thank the Eagle Rock School for hosting me during the summer months. And give a special thanks to Dan Condon, who organized my visit and provides valuable support throughout my research.