



EAGLE EYES

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News From Winter Trimester 2002

THREE WISE WOMEN FLY THE NEST—

by Tim Riley, Intern,
Professional Development Center

The sunny afternoon of Friday, April 12, three amazing women achieved their goals by grasping their Eagle Rock diplomas and earning the honorable distinction, "Eagle Rock Graduate." Whitney Bell, Mahkaea Jackson-Sams, and Monique Navarro have left the nest, and are soaring away towards bright futures. They bring the number of Eagle Rock graduates to 70.

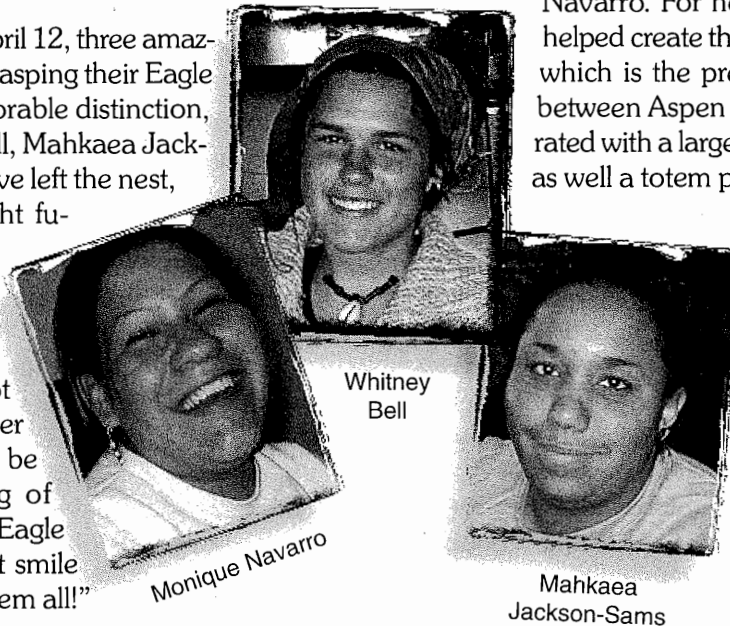
Monique Navarro, a Lodgepolian from Denver, originally came to Eagle Rock because she was not happy with her family situation. Her time here has taught her "how to be more compassionate and trusting of people." When asked for a favorite Eagle Rock memory, she flashes her bright smile and says, "I can't even think about them all!"

She went on to say that playing intramurals against Head of School, Robert Burkhardt, was always enjoyable for her - especially when he lost. "He gets very upset," says

Navarro. For her legacy project, Mo helped create the "Garden of Eagles," which is the pretty, rock-lined space between Aspen and Pinon. It is decorated with a large, stone checkerboard, as well a totem pole. As for her future,

Monique intends to utilize her extraordinary gift for working with children — she's going to become a teacher.

Mahkaea Jackson-Sams is a Juniperite who was born in Seattle, but moved to Boston



Whitney Bell

Monique Navarro

Mahkaea Jackson-Sams

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EAGLE ROCK WELCOMES GARY KESSLER AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gary R. Kessler, Vice President of Human Resources & Administration for American Honda Motor Co., Inc., has been named Executive Director of the American Honda Education Corporation, the board that governs Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center. He has been serving on the board for over a year.

Mr. Kessler joined American Honda Motor Co., Inc. in 1996, as Vice President of Human Resources and Administration. He is responsible for directing Human Resources, Facilities, Procurement and Administration functions for American Honda and its affiliate companies. Prior to joining Honda, Mr. Kessler held the position of Vice President of Human Resources for Global Eyewear at Bausch & Lomb, Inc. where he was employed for 12 years. He has over 20 years of executive experience.

A native of Detroit, Michigan, Mr. Kessler holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Stetson University in Florida, and a Master's Degree in Management/Human Resources from Central Michigan University.

He and his wife of 30 years, Mary, have two daughters. Jennifer is a teacher and Kirsten is a mom and a student. The Kesslers also have two granddaughters Emma, 3 years old, and Edna, one month old.



Gary Kessler, New AHED Executive Director

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EAGLE ROCK PARTNERS WITH PUBLIC ALLIES FOR INTERNSHIPS

*by Dan Condon, Former Eagle Rock Intern
and Program Manager, Director of Educa-
tion & Training, Milwaukee Public Allies*

An exciting new partnership unites Eagle Rock's internship program with Public Allies. Over a year in the making, the partnership will be managed by Dan Condon who was a Public Ally, served as an Eagle Rock intern from ER7 to ER 10, and is currently Program Manager and Director of Education and Training in the Milwaukee Public Allies program. "The program will benefit Eagle Rock in many ways," Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development at Eagle Rock, commented.

Almost ten years ago, Public Allies was founded by two remarkable women who set out to prove that prevalent stereotypes which labeled young adults as "slackers" and "Generation X" were wrong. Vanessa Kirsch and Katrina Browne saw that young people were committed to active citizenship and community change, though this significant energy and talent often remained untapped, especially by the nonprofit sector. With help from hundreds of volunteers, Kirsch and Browne created Public Allies to recruit, train and support diverse young leaders, preparing them to assume national and community leadership on pressing public issues.

In September, 1992, Public Allies launched its first apprenticeship program in Washington DC, placing 15 outstanding young people aged 18 to 30 in positions of influence in the city's nonprofit sector. The following year, Public Allies Chicago began with 30 more Allies. In 1994, young people started local chapters in Milwaukee, Raleigh-Durham and Wilmington, DE. Public Allies opened in San Jose/Silicon Valley in 1995, Cincinnati in 1998, Los Angeles and New York City in 1999 and Taos in 2000 (in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps).

The Public Allies partnership with Eagle Rock provides Public Allies with its eleventh site. The partnership will provide Eagle Rock Interns (now termed Public Allies or Fellows) with health care benefits and a post service

education award of \$4,725 that can be used to pay off past student loans or pay off future education. Ally fellows will benefit from enhanced professional development. Opportunities include more intentional individual development including coaching and goal setting, and enhanced Learning Seminars. Fellows will also work as a team on a "Legacy Project" that will contribute a lasting benefit to the Eagle Rock community.

This is an exciting new direction for Public Allies as it marks the first single site placement where all participants will live and work together in community and focus on one priority area: education (specifically, to address the high school dropout problem in American schools). Conventionally, Allies serve at a variety of organizations throughout a city on issues such as education, environment, public safety, human needs, youth development and community revitalization.

Public Allies and Eagle Rock have enjoyed a long-standing relationship, which began with Head of School, Robert Burkhardt's friendship with Public Allies founder Vanessa Kirsch. A national Public Allies evaluation team met at Eagle Rock's Professional Development Center to create an innovative Comprehensive Continuous Learning Plan. After graduating from Eagle Rock, Tara Trimmer-Jewell (ER-5) and Sandra Ramirez (ER-6) participated in Washington DC Public Allies Apprenticeships.

In 1992, President Bush's Commission on National and Community Service named Public Allies as a model for getting young people involved in service and provided support to expand the program to Chicago. During the 1992 campaign, President Clinton also identified Public Allies as a model for national service. Public Allies actively worked with the White House and other organizations to create the Corporation for National Service and its signature program, AmeriCorps. In 1994, Public Allies received its first support from AmeriCorps, and has remained a committed partner ever since.

To date, over 1,000 young adults have participated in Public Allies (more than 70% are people of color). Through apprenticeships and team service projects at more than 400

EAGLE ROCK CREATES ERS AMERICAN PRIDE

by Naeha Breeland, Student

We all remember the horrific day of planes crashing into two historic sites, innocent people dying, and the stench of human flesh from the bellowing, lurid smoke that silently polluted two cities. Though only a small fraction of the American population witnessed this unthinkable event, most other Americans were shocked with disbelief at the information newscasters were passing on. Since the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, DC, Head of School, Robert Burkhardt, has visited the New York site. Out of the goodness of his heart, Robert wanted to find a way to support those who lost family members — firefighters, especially — in this tragic occurrence.

Late in ER 25 (Fall 2001), Robert conversed with Jacques Fournet, one of the wilderness instructors, who is also a gifted musician: "What would it take to make a CD?" This would include a group of ER students singing on the CD with profits being given to the Engine 24, Ladder 5 Family Relief Fund. Jacques then chose five students who had an interest in singing and asked if they would like to participate in this project. Philip O'Mara, Angelique Williams, Roshounda Williams, Leif Rauscher, and I all agreed that this was a wonderful opportunity for us and, with no doubt in our minds, a good cause. Philbert Smith, Director of Students, was also a part of this production.

It's Sunday morning, January 20, 2002, about 8:45 AM. As soon as we gather the five of us, six including Jacques, into the yellow Activity Bus, we are on our way to take that hour and a half drive to Fort Collins. On our bus ride, we have a most enjoyable time warming up our voices to "MuSiC sOuLcHiLd," "Ludacris" and many more artists from Leif's wide selection of R & B and rap. In no time, we are at the studio. We walk off the bus to a beautiful countryside, the smell of fresh air, the glare of the sun reflect-

ing on the freshly fallen snow, birds twittering and dogs barking. Jacques leads us down the hill into a room with no windows, but not soundproof (as we found out later in our attempts to record between the dogs barking and semis driving by). We are in the Bayou Folk Recording Studio, a small room with carpeted walls, dimmed lights, a nice comfy sofa on the left-hand side, the computer set up in the far left corner of the room. On the right there are various instruments set up: the conga drums, a traditional drum set, and guitars. There are knickknacks covering the walls, contrasted with brochures on the ceiling that advertise performances of the BayouFolk. We begin recording right away.

It is Sunday night, about 7:30 PM. We are returning to the yellow bus, and beginning our journey back to The Rock. We have successfully recorded seven tracks that show our pride in the country. The CD includes "We Fall Down. . . But We Get Up," "Amazing Grace," "Star Spangled Banner," "America the Beautiful," "Lift Every Voice," "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and an impressive song written by Roshounda. We all feel that we have accomplished something great, something that we will remember forever. We created our own CD.

The CD, "ERS American Pride," came out three days later for the community, the rest of America, and anyone else to enjoy. We have priced each CD at \$10 (or \$12 if they need to be shipped). Other donations are also accepted. All the proceeds have gone (and will continue to go) to the Engine 24, Ladder 5 Family Relief Fund.



Photos by
Jacques
Fournet

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Life After Eagle Rock

Alison Trattner
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CAMP PTOLEMY TAKES STUDENTS IN NEW DIRECTIONS

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

Ptolemy was an Egyptian mathematician, geographer, and astronomer who lived near Alexandria. Mapper of over 1000 stars, he theorized that the sun, stars and planets revolved around the earth. His theory lasted nearly 1500 years when it was finally proven that the earth was another planet that rotated around the sun.

Eagle Rock has had its own Ptolemy — Camp Ptolemy, that is. Designed as a last-ditch intervention for students who would otherwise need to leave Eagle Rock, Camp Ptolemy was established in January 2002. According to Philbert Smith, Director of Students, “The students who chose Camp Ptolemy made choices to stay at Eagle Rock and work on themselves in a smaller community. They needed to learn that the world did not revolve around them.”

The Camp, just a few hundred yards from one of the student residences, featured a fire ring, a kitchen area, and two sleeping areas crafted from plywood, 2 X 4s, and tarps. Even though it was cold, Camp Ptolemy students were in no danger, having excellent sleeping bags and seeing the school nurse weekly. They attended classes and lunch with other students and had a nightly study hall but otherwise had limited contact with the rest of the community. Various staff spent the nights with them.

Periodically, Robert Burkhardt, Head of School, wrote emails to update friends and family of Eagle Rock about the progress Camp Ptolemy students were making. Here are some of his observations:

Tuesday, January 22: “As Luke Sledge, currently of Camp Ptolemy, walked up to the HPC [Human Per-

formance Center or gym] to take his morning shower, Mahkaea popped her head out of Juniper House door and worriedly asked, ‘Are you all right?’ Luke didn’t understand. He and his cohorts had been hunkered down all night in their plywood shacks, and although the wind had lifted walls and strained the rudimentary construction, it had been just another night in the woods. THEIR power hadn’t gone off.

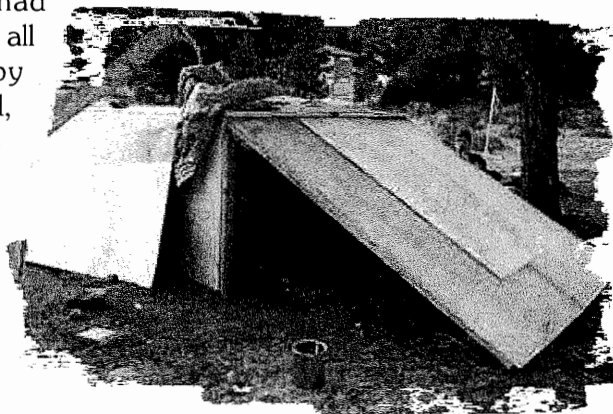
“Are you all right?’ Mahkaea asked again. Slowly Luke grasped the meaning of Mahkaea’s question. She and others were worried for the safety of the Ptolemites. Morning exercise, which always goes on at Eagle Rock, had been canceled for safety reasons.

The Houses had been attacked all night long by screaming wind, and those inside were imagining how desperate things must be at Camp Ptolemy.

“Should I milk this?’ Luke thought to himself. Studying the anxious expression on Mahkaea’s face, he opted for the ethical response, and moved on to take his shower. Luke told that story around the Ptolemy campfire last night as we reviewed the events of the day. . . . a tasty meal served up by Kanoa; the support this community has given to the Campers; their service work and how they like it; their increasing sense of solidarity with and love for each other (made more endearing by their ability to express it openly); the touches they have added to the Camp — a shrine, a mounted ‘pig’s head’ (this in homage to their first reading assignment, *Lord of the Flies*); wonder at their current reading project, *Endurance* (the story of Ernest

Shackleton’s ill-fated Antarctic expedition), with much commentary about how those explorers responded to adversity. . . .

“As each Camper checked in, I could not help feeling that the moral center of Eagle Rock School is the fire ring at Camp Ptolemy. These eight students. . . are forging a rich and deep community under adverse conditions. They have created systems to manage food, sanitation, warmth, and laundry. They are enjoying life with less. They treat each other well, and have forthrightly faced internal struggles and mastered them. They are doing what needs to be done. It is an object lesson for the school, and the



One of the shelters students at Camp Ptolemy built to combat winter weather
Photo by Mieko Ozeki

Ptolemites understand the impact they are having. I’m very proud of the way they have chosen to respond to this challenge — it augurs well for leadership

in this community when they return to their Houses.”

Wednesday, January 30: “Written in lipstick on the mirrors of the men’s room in the HPC are several messages from persons unknown, including ‘We Love Camp Ptolemy,’ ‘Keep it up!’ ‘Remember — we support you.’ Given that five inches of snow fell last night, the temperature was 6 degrees above zero, and more snow is falling now to usher in another very cold evening, the Campers appreciate the support. They are doing VERY well and their spirits are high. They remain the moral center of Eagle Rock School.”

