



# EAGLE EYES

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## A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AND MY FUTURE

by Daniel Mosley, ERS Student (ER-13)

It all started on the 9th of January, and though it has been fun, boy was it hectic! Eagle Rock School took on the building of the Salud Clinic, a health center for low income families in Estes Park and Larimer County. Salud needed a new facility because the old location was too cluttered and small to serve more than one person at a time. The building of the Salud clinic became a two period project for 12 weeks, but for me it turned out to be more than just a class. Involvement in hands-on work is something I want to pursue in the future. Completing the project also allowed me to help out the Estes Park community and help create a new medical facility in the world.

Before we began the project, Salud Clinic was at a different location where there was little room at all. The place had about 600 square feet of space and a ceiling that I could touch with my hands. They had one exam room with a waiting area that sometimes was bursting with people. The objective was to move into a new location to have a bigger place for their business operations, but the clinic did not have the money to hire professional contractors. Because Eagle Rock is known for helping out in the community (for example, we have built a playground, a fishing pier for the disabled, a deck for the tourist info center), we decided to build the new location for the clinic. All the Salud Foundation had to supply was the materials and we were on it, supplying the labor for free.

The work we did at the Salud Clinic included removing the old carpet, framing new walls, installing insulation boards, sheet rocking, building cabinets and

## SEVEN GRADUATES MAKES IT 31

On April 17, seven students graduated from Eagle Rock, raising the total number of graduates to 31. Two were from Boulder: Tammy Thomas and Catie Hart. Two others were also Coloradans: Brian Pennington from Aurora and Bryan Freeman from Longmont. The remaining three were from out-of-state: Rose Peredia from Ukiah, California; Megan Rebeiro from Fairhaven, Massachusetts; and Alejandro Medina from Decatur, Georgia.

A recent issue of the school newspaper "From Under the Rock" described some of the graduates' plans. Tammy intends to teach Summerbridge in Houston from May to August and then enroll in college. Catie Hart plans to work with middle school children in San Francisco for a year after a summer of work and play. She hopes to attend college in New York. Rose is looking forward to working in a community service agency when she returns to California.

Summer road trips figure into several graduates' plans. Alejandro will follow-up a summer road trip with college enrollment. He has been accepted to Mercer University. A road trip is also on Bryan's agenda, followed by hard work to get money for college, specifically the University of Colorado in Boulder. Megan will follow up her road trip with hard labor—laying floors. She hopes to go on an Outward Bound trip in the summer and is thinking about working with Public Allies in California next school year, saving college until 1999. Brian Pennington is also thinking about being part of Public Allies after his road trip.

shelves, and painting the walls. We basically installed everything but the carpet and electricity. Our own head of school, Robert Burkhardt, took care of the plumbing.

I really liked this job because it involved hands-on building. In fact what I want for myself in the future is to be a carpenter and an electrician. So this job came in very handy for me. Think about how many people will walk in and out of the clinic each day, how many people's lives will get saved because of one clinic. That's why I was also committed to this project— not just for our name as Eagle Rockers but for the people who are living here in Estes (and others around the world).



Josh Blomquist, Shaun Meehan, Alejandro Medina, Reese Gregory, & Daniel Mosely pose with Garth Lewis (back) in front of newly constructed Salud Clinic.

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**Editors:**

Clayton Cooper  
Lois Easton

2750 Notaiiah Road  
Estes Park, CO  
80517-1770

**Phone Numbers:**  
(970) 586-0600

Denver Metro  
(303) 442-7655

**FAX**  
(970) 586-4805

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Mathematics

## A LANGUAGE FOR OUR CULTURE

by Robert Burkhardt, Head Of School

The language of any community inevitably reflects its culture. I first realized this as a Peace Corps Volunteer in northern Iran thirty-five years ago. As I listened to and thought about the ceremonial Farsi phrases I heard daily, I came to understand how they led me into a deeper understanding of the people near the Caspian Sea.

In the almost five years that Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center (ERS) has been in operation, we too have evolved a language for our culture. Following are several examples (in bold face) of early Eagle Rock idiom. Part mantra, part exhortation, they are shards and fragments that help decode "The Rock."

We began ERS with a question: "**What constitutes a safe community?**" Students and staff wrestled with the policy implications of our multiple answers, and over an extended period of time, painstakingly forged a consensus concerning non-negotiable behavior and the clear expectations which continue to underpin the school's philosophy.

I teach a class called ERS 101 to all incoming students. Our first activity is a discussion of the validity or inaccuracy of the words "**I choose all my behavior.**" Students come to understand that as an operating principle this statement is always true at ERS, with attendant individual accountability.

Another early message to students is the assertion, "**You have no right to no opinion.**" We want students to think, to grow dendrites, to come to understand that they are fully capable of expressing their original thoughts. Many of our students have experienced a culture of silence in prior settings. We insist on active brains, and we believe in the long-term efficacy of advancing and defending ideas.

Morning exercise begins at six a.m. Monday through Friday. I lead every Monday, and the first thing students hear is, "**Reach up, stretch yourself.**" My hope is that these words will echo through their lives to include more than fitness as they continue to reach for higher achievement.

Our weekly community meeting opens with students and staff saying "Good morning" or "Hello" in over thirty languages.

"**Buenos dias, Jambo, Nihao, Bonjour, Aloha, Shalom, Talofa, Namasteh**" and other greetings slowly stretch our world view and appreciation of other cultures.

We also use non-verbal communication. Several years ago student Tara Trimmer-Jewell taught ERS how hearing impaired people applaud. Visitors since have been surprised to see many pairs of hands wagging silently over head after a trenchant or touching remark.

Eagle Rock staff and students make a commitment to practice environmental stewardship. An example of this is our admonition at mealtime: "**Take all you want; eat all you take.**" We significantly reduced the size of our dining room garbage pail once we began saying and doing this. Further, meetings invariably end with the exhortation to "**Leave this place better than the way you found it.**" This statement applies to life as well.

Whether in classes, meetings or other group settings, Eagle Rock insists on respect for the individual. Sometimes interests or emotions run high, and multiple voices clamor for attention in response to a point made. A student or staff member, sensing this, may say to the speaker who has the floor but whose voice is getting overwhelmed, "**Wait until you get the respect you deserve.**" This almost always brings a smile of serenity to the speaker, and it gets us back on track.

We believe in engaged lives, and use hortatory language to impel ourselves in chaotic, drifting or entropic situations. "**Find a need and fill it**" is standard advice at Eagle Rock. We also have a definition for taking charge of situations. "**Leadership: the inability to stand there and watch things go to hell.**"

All of this intentional language is part of a culture choreographed to help our students understand their purpose: "**Make a difference for the better in the world.**" In our second five years we will refine, evolve and strengthen this fundamental message.

*Commitment - cont.*

At the ribbon cutting on April 10th we introduced to the community a new and IMPROVED clinic where the conditions are more comfortable. For the period of time that I worked on this project, I gave it all my effort to make sure we made progress towards that ribbon-cutting day. And that's what I got out of this class and the effect it will have on the rest of my life.

## A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

by Erin Saunders,  
ERS Graduate December 1997 (ER-6)

Dear Eagle Rock Community,

Hello there sunshines! Today in my Psychology class, I learned something that made me think of good old Eagle Rock, and I thought I would share it with you. We are studying the parts of the brain and learning how humans develop. Many of the most important elements of a person's sense of self - making choices and problem solving - lie in the front of the brain. This is also the part of the brain that happens to "wire-up" last. Some people don't have all the connections going on until they are twenty. I'll let you guess who those people are! The frontal part of the brain separates us from the rest of the animals. Here are a few of the capabilities that make us unique and how they play out at ERS:

1) A Sense of Self: Ability to distinguish yourself as a unique individual; 2) Self Motivation; 3) Self Monitoring; 4) Self Analysis: POLs; 5) Sequencing to a Goal: Baby steps; 6) Future Memory: Ability to visualize the consequences of a particular choice; 7) Impulse Control: Non-negotiables; 8) Emotional Expression and Balance; and 9) Working Memory.

While discussing these in class, my teacher was commenting that too many of the students she receives fresh out of high school have not fully developed these traits. I then realized that Eagle Rock is set up in such a way to help foster all of these things that make us "human." I don't know any other place that does.

When you are out in the world, people automatically expect you to have some degree of responsibility for yourself, your actions, and your future. It is what the "system" expects. However, the "system" in no way helps us develop these skills. So, today I was

sitting in class thanking Eagle Rock for helping me to be more prepared. And here is the exciting part. YOU, YES, you very folks who are sitting in the Hearth right this instant are also going to be more prepared!!! So, I know some of you were worried about how well Eagle Rock helps students plan for the future, and wondering how well you would compare to other graduates. Let me tell you, baby, we are MILES above the rest. So, hang in there, and don't stress about being prepared.

Good luck on POLs. For those who were fortunate enough to know her, think of Judy with her four-leaf clover headband telling us all to **celebrate our learning**. Don't get too stressed about the end of the trimester. Take a breath - break is almost there. We are going to make this world better. I will see you all at graduation.

Much Love,  
Erin

## SEARCH ANNOUNCED FOR DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM POSITION

Over 300 job announcements for the position of Director of Curriculum were mailed at the end of March. These announcements described Eagle Rock's curriculum as it is now as well as desired qualities of the person who "understands and has experienced at least some aspects" of that curriculum and "can project what Eagle Rock must do in the next five years to help students learn and help Eagle Rock maintain its leadership in curriculum development."

Job responsibilities include the following:

- \* coordinate the educational program
- \* refine and develop the curriculum and curriculum processes
- \* work with instructors to implement and assess curriculum
- \* hire as part of a team of students and staff, coach, and evaluate instructors
- \* link with the Director of Professional Development to provide internal and external professional development opportunities
- \* work with other directors to coordinate the overall Eagle Rock program
- \* teach and work with students to help them graduate

Applicants should send a vita and detailed letter of application to Lois E. Easton, Director of Professional Development, Eagle Rock School & Professional Development Center, P. O. Box 1770, Estes Park, CO 80517.

For a copy of the job announcement or for more information, applicants may call Lois at 970-586-7109 or use e-mail at [leaston@psd.k12.co.us](mailto:leaston@psd.k12.co.us).

## THE ART EVOLUTION AT EAGLE ROCK

by Mary McGuire, Art Instructional Specialist

Webster's defines "evolution" as an unfolding; a process of development or change. In the grand scheme of things, in the real-time timeline, three years is a mere fraction of the smallest possible measurement of time. And yet, it is the brief period of time in which a significant change in attitude towards the arts has occurred among many of the Eagle Rock students.

Although the State of Colorado does not require its high school graduates to have any credit in the arts, Eagle Rock School does. The wise souls who constructed the curriculum believed that a full and thoroughly rounded education must include education in visual arts, music and performance. Aesthetic expression is one of the eight themes, and finding and developing the artist within one of the ten commitments of  $8 + 5 = 10$ , the foundational underpinning of Eagle Rock education.

When I arrived over three years ago, students had somewhat limited access to educational opportunities in the arts. The school brought in guest artists three times a year during Explore Week to provide the students with some visual art; many teachers incorporated art-based projects into their content area work; Robert's literature classes performed works by Shakespeare before audiences; and rumor had it that there were at least a dozen kazoos and some soprano recorders lurking somewhere on campus. I was routinely accosted by students requesting art "boxes" (credit) for projects that had earned them credit in other classes, and all too often, bedraggled posters and sketchbooks were trotted out for viewing and requests (demands) about credit. Those were challenging times.

Since then, several talented interns and I have worked hard to effect real change. A core of classes that address the state visual art

standards and introduce students to some basics in the fine arts and crafts has been created. In these classes, students not only learn techniques and processes, but they also discover and are able to manifest the unique creativity they possess. We attempt to help them understand the historical and cultural significance of various visual art forms, to discover the value that art has in their lives, and to explore the ways in which art can enrich their lives in ways relevant to them. We often work with other instructors or interns to integrate art with other disciplines, finding wonderful combinations that seem to work well for all concerned.

We are evolving in the other arts areas as well.

Alison Trattner has been responsible for taking our summer

theater productions to new heights, and for continuing a tradition of "going for the gusto" in our performance department that had been started earlier. Robert continues to bring students to the stage via his literature classes, amid much laughter and creativity. The addition of Karolee McLaughlin, a music educator par excellence, has ensured that Eagle Rock students have the opportunity to "find the musician within" and earn their music credit with glee.

It seems as if the kaleidoscope has shifted, the picture has changed, and something has taken hold. The number of students enrolling in art classes continues to grow, and the beautiful and personal pieces of art that emerge from their efforts in these classes now adorn the walls all over the campus. The number of students joining the ranks of actors and musicians on campus continues to increase, and their skill levels are indicative of their dedication and the fine coaching they receive from teachers.

The strongest argument in support of the "art-evolution" theory is the fact that several notable "art-haters" and "I'm-not-an-artist" types have actually signed up for art classes, even after all of their art credit has been earned. The reason most often cited: "I think I really like this stuff." Evolution? Maybe. Revolution? Seems like it. Whatever it is, I think it's great!



Sita Heninger with fountain made during Explore Week art class.

### Eagle Rock School (Continued)

#### Lois Easton

Director of Professional Development

#### Richard Gordon

Learning Resources and Information

#### Colleen Graham

Human Performance

#### Dick Herb

Director of Operations

#### David Hoskins

Science and Environmental Science

#### Jeff Lemon

Head Cook

#### Garth Lewis

Career and Service Learning

#### Ted Long

Assistant Facilities

#### Mary McGuire

Arts, Music, Performance

#### L'Tanya Perkins

Admissions Associate

#### Tim Phelps

Chef, Instructor

#### James Sherman

Society and Social Studies

#### Brian Simoneau

Cook

#### Philbert Smith

Director of Students

#### Heather Solar

Health and Wellness Counselor

#### Lisa Spring

Administrative Assistant

#### Audrey Stevens

Registrar

#### Alison Trattner

Language and Literature

#### Bonnie Vavra

Business Administrative Specialist



## CHANGE AT EAGLE ROCK: NEW STAFF, NEW INSIGHTS

by Clayton Cooper, Associate, Professional Development

Change is not feared at Eagle Rock. It is embraced - for with change comes a freshness of attitude, opinion and spirit. Change forces educators to reexamine their goals and abilities to follow through on the original mission of the school. The introduction of new staff members into the community provides a similar opportunity. New staff continue the legacy of their predecessor yet add a unique flavor to the job. New staff may even question or challenge some long-held beliefs that veteran staff have accepted as truths. Offering insight and leadership in counseling is Heather Solar and in mathematics is Jason Cushner.

Heather Solar says: "Being challenged, and accepting the challenge," is the biggest goal she has for her time as the Health and Wellness Counselor at Eagle Rock. While at Eagle Rock, Heather plans on participating in a wilderness trip, improving the anger management curriculum and continuing to be involved in prospective student interviews. Her biggest goal is to "jump start" the personal growth presentation process so students are working on it from day one. She would like to work on this presentation so eventually it will become a much larger part of the graduation process. Since receiving her bachelors degree in social work from Colorado State University, Heather has worked with court ordered youth in a variety of settings including a wilderness program, a probation school as a teacher's aide/counselor, and a paraprofessional at Centennial High School. She has a passion for working with court ordered youth, and eventually sees herself as a parole officer for the same population of kids. Wherever she goes she feels she will take the philosophies of  $8+5=10$  with her.

Jason Cushner feels making the jump from intern to Instructional Specialist is an amazing opportunity for a young teacher. He was initially attracted to Eagle Rock because of the heterogeneous classrooms, and residential support of the school. Now that he has begun teaching, he is excited to make decisions as to what students need to learn to graduate and to teach others about the successes of the Interactive Math Program (IMP), specifically the portfolio system. Outside the classroom Jason wants to make a difference in people's lives and give folks the opportunity to create a life they love. Jason began his life on the west coast receiving his degree from the University of California, Irvine, in Applied Mathematics. After college he taught English in Turkey, and Math and Physics at the Skibby Learning Center in Newport Beach, California. He then completed the MAT program at Colorado College where he received the Lori Anne Lowe Memorial Award for creativity in the classroom and commitment to students. In addition to the challenges of teaching, Jason pushes himself in running, hiking and traveling to the far reaches of the United States to find the best climbing.

## GRADUATE HIGHER EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND: AN UPDATE

by Dick Herb, Director of Operations

The Graduate Higher Education Endowment Fund was formed less than a year ago with the objective of supporting Eagle Rock graduates as they pursue higher education. Six \$1,000 awards have been given to date, and the school anticipates awarding another 5 to 6 among April and August, 1998 graduates. The plan is to gradually build the endowment fund to a point where the size of the awards is double and will perpetuate for up to the four years a graduate is in college.

Thanks to the generosity and number of donors contributing to the endowment fund (plus some help from the stock market), it is ahead of its projected position. Leading the way are contributors in memory of Judy Gilbert (gifts continue to trickle in) and the efforts of Ross Burkhardt establishing a gift to honor Ross's and Robert's father. Parents, led by Carolyn and Darrel McGinnis (Jerry, ER 13), were particularly strong in their support. Hats off to Ross, the McGinnis family, and the rest of the donors for their efforts.

The next fund-raising event will be the first of two all-school work days, one this May and the second in October. Last year these events yielded over \$7,000!

Total Donors	270
Total Gifts	\$87,892
Investment Gain	\$7752
Awards written	-(2000)
Endowment Value	\$95,944

If you would like to help make a difference in the life of an Eagle Rock graduate, please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Eagle Rock School Graduate Higher Education Fund, P.O. Box 1770, Estes Park, CO 80517. Or, contact Dick Herb, (970) 586-7120.

As part of a recent research effort, we attempted to contact every former student of Eagle Rock; however, we could not reach certain people. If you know how to reach any of the following students contact Carolyn Herb at (970) 586 - 8114.

Emily Embery	Denise Rosenof
Mia Ferrell	Jaime Gutierrez
Jose Ramirez	Amber Carpenter
Rhianna Eusea	Adin Hunt
Romel Marsh	Joel Powell
Paul Ritzie	Malik Shah
Cornifia Harris	Brian Eukel
Jay Heintz	LuAnna Matthews
Shawnequa Scrogginns	Kristina Wessendorf
Ralick Wiggins	Miles Benn-Lowry
Joe Cooper	Tyrone Hubbard
Tiffany Jones	Anna Navarro
KaTrina Fayson	Carole Hodge
Doug Holt	Blanche Ricks
Tara Jordan	Brandi Jenkins

## COSMETIC SURGERY BANNED AT EAGLE ROCK: TEACHING THE WRITING PROCESS

by Travis Beck, Language Arts Intern

Alison Trattner and Travis Beck, the fearsome duo in charge of the Language and Literature program at Eagle Rock, have declared war on skin-deep revisions of student writing. Alison and Travis are on a crusade to eradicate the impersonal slashing, hashing and shuffling of drafts. No longer will instructors seek easy gratification by making over a student's draft with a red pen. To offer an alternative, Alison and Travis introduced the staff to strategies for sitting with students and coaching them through their own revisions. Staff and students who practiced the methods while working on Presentation of Learning (POL) packets attest that the students are now better able to edit their own writing. One example of this learning is the increased ability of students to listen to and punctuate their sentences correctly.

At a staff meeting before the first onslaught of POL Packets, Alison and Travis (assisted by the histrionics of intern Miranda Johnson) ran a workshop on coaching writing for the entire staff. The writing gurus emphasized that no instructor should ever just hand back a corrected draft. Instead instructors should work side by side with the student in a writing conference. In the fishbowl demonstration, Miranda played the role of the student, Alison played her inimitable self, and Travis extracted the lessons for the group. Jason Cushner, the math instructional specialist, retained the following points from the workshop: "Not to give specific corrections. Try to get them to catch their own mistakes. Have them read the paper to you." One of the strategies which emerged was this: Instead of correcting a grammar or spelling error, why not circle the word and challenge the student to identify and solve the problem themselves? Trouble shooting might mean sounding the word out, visiting a dictio-

nary, making intelligent use of a computer spell checker, or asking someone to help explain the grammatical reasoning. The object of conferencing is for students to internalize the corrections they make and become their own proofreaders.

In the crush of preparing POL packets, it wasn't possible to conference with each student on every draft. When we practiced the coaching techniques, however, impressive learning occurred. Intern Mary Beth Mulcahy stated, after using the conference technique, "The new papers I get from students have fewer mistakes in them. They're aware now that they can self-edit, which they didn't before believe they could do." Student CJ Bush explained, "Just by going over it, you realize it and it starts getting in you head." Sandra Ramirez, who has been a student at Eagle Rock since ER-5, said, "When I revise my own stuff, the number of times I hand it in goes from six or seven times to once or twice."

Here's one specific example of the teaching and learning that occurs during coaching. Punctuation is often enigmatic for Eagle Rock students. Instead of marking a student's paper with commas and periods, the coach hands the pen to the student and asks him or her to read a particular sentence again and notice where there is a pause. The coach explains that punctuation is like a set of road signs for the reader, indicating when to slow, when to yield and when to stop. Soon students begin to recognize when to add commas and how to divide long (frequently run-on) sentences with a period or semi-colon. For one student I worked with, the previously complicated matter of punctuation became a simple task of deciding whether his pause was a "little boom" or a "big boom."

Never again should Eagle Rock students put a comma in their writing just because someone told them to, or copy a spelling without struggling through the corrective process. The goal of revision is for students to learn how to enhance their writing independently, not for instructors to perform futile face lifts.

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