

Highlights on Harborlight Alumni - October 2009

An Interview with Diana Beckwith, Class of 2007



*Leanna DeMarco & Diana
dressed for a Medieval Fair*

These past two summers, Diana returned to Harborlight in a volunteer capacity, to help with cataloging and shelving books for the school library. She also assisted Tim and Jackson with the final week of summer Adventures at Harborlight SNAKE Camp. But, when asked what brought her back, Diana replied: "Harborlight has always been my second home. I spent most of my time there from kindergarten through eighth grade. I have had good memories and bad memories there, and I have met some wonderful people that will be life long friends. In eighth grade I realized how much of a family my class was. They were my brothers and sisters and I had grown up with them. I grew with the community and eventually it was time for me to go off on my own. I came back because I like seeing the same teachers and people that I once had, but also like seeing the new faces, at least new to me. I came to be with the people I love and know well, and to meet the new people that I hope have the same love of Harborlight as I do. "

Diana is now a junior at The Waring School, where she has achieved honors in all classes, a 95th percentile in Le Grand Concours (a National

French Contest that rewards achievement in the learning of French language), and also won third place in the Beverly Poets Contest. About Waring, Diana offers the following: "it seems like I have been (at Waring) for years now. There is such a community there, something like the one at Harborlight. Everyone knows everybody's names and we have the closeness to that of a family. What brought me to Waring initially was its similarity to Harborlight. I have twenty-one kids in my class and we are all friends. We occasionally have our fights and drama, but in the end we are so much like a family. Not only do I have friends in my grade, but in all grades. I have friends who are seniors, friends who are in eighth grade, and friends who are sixth graders. Waring relies on the fact that learning is voluntary, meaning that kids want to be there. They wake up early in the morning to finish their homework; they trudge to school, and go to their classes, because they want to, not because they have to.

To me, Waring is a home, (obviously now I have plenty). I love the people there and the friends I have made. I enjoy the hour long lunch on the quad surrounded by my class in a circle. I love the Humanities classes we have, talking, comparing



Working on a holiday craft project in ECE

Anne Bradstreet to John Winthrop. I love staying up late at night to finish that last piece of homework. What Waring has made me realize is that whatever effort you put in, you receive in knowledge.

Harborlight gave me the confidence to step into a new school and feel comfortable. The workload was heavy and the stress of going to classes all day long made me tired and worn-out. But Harborlight taught me that to succeed you need to work hard and put 100% into everything you do. Waring is the same way.

At the beginning of my Waring career, I had no idea what to expect. I expected something like the classes at Harborlight. I didn't like to read when I originally came to Waring, but that changed. In Humanities classes I've read Charles Dickens, Frank Kafka, William Shakespeare, Machiavelli, and many others that I typically wouldn't have taken off the book shelf, but Waring made me see a whole other world of reading. Waring lets students be in their comfort zone, but also challenge themselves to reach new heights. They open up a world of new talents, hobbies, and friends."

As a junior, Diana looks to the future: "Right now, I'm trying hard not to think of college, but it is always on the back door-step. I am focusing on the preparations for college. This includes SAT prep, ACT prep, PSAT prep, good evaluations from teachers (hopefully honors), writing for *Le Temps* (school newspaper), debate, current events, piano, physics, running, and getting time to spend with my family and friends.

I basically know what I want to do when I grow up, although you never know it might change in the future. Right now, I want to be a doctor, specifically a surgeon with a PhD in Genetics. It would be wonderful to



Diana's class photo from 2004-2005

get into Harvard Medical School, but I have to keep my options open. I don't really know what undergraduate college I want to go to, but I do know I want to double major: something in Biology or Chemistry, and something to do with Architecture or Design just as a back up. Right now, I'm trying to keep my options as open as possible so I can have many different paths I can take. "

All of Diana's former teachers at Harborlight, as well as the entire administrative team agree that Diana will be a "mover and shaker" in her adult life, no matter where her studies lead her. We look forward to following her in her future endeavors and celebrating in her triumphs!