

# Harborlight Middle School Class of 2010



The Class of 2010 is the embodiment of  
Harborlight's mission and is a  
reflection of the School's commitment to:

*~ Experience Excellence ~*



# Graduation Address to the Class of 2010

## by Susan Egan, Head of School



**“Shoot for the moon.  
Even if you miss you will  
end up amongst the  
stars.”**

**You already are  
Stars at Harborlight!**

### **To the Graduates and Guests:**

Welcome to Harborlight’s Class of 2010! Thank you to all of the families, friends, faculty, staff, students and board members who have joined us today to celebrate this auspicious occasion.

### **To the Class of 2010:**

I leave you with three thoughts today to not only help you to be successful in high school, but to have a fulfilling life as well.

### **Practice 21<sup>st</sup> Century Thinking Skills**

The world has changed drastically since you were born and you won’t be able to follow in the same path that your parents did. Instead, you will have to forge new paths through very different territory.

You have learned many skills and made many friends at Harborlight and have learned to: love learning, work well in teams, and to think independently. You have also learned to respect the environment and others’ rights and opinions and have proven to be very competent in so many different ways.

Learning how to do equations is training your mind while learning how to think is an education. Luckily, your parents had the foresight to send you to a school that specializes in teaching students how to think analytically, critically and creatively - which is not only very important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it’s essential. Educating your mind to think in this way will serve you well throughout your life and in everything you do, and especially in your work and in your relationships.

### **Listen to Your Inner Voice**

You have listened to your parents voices since you were born, and your teachers voices since your very first day of school. Now it’s time to start listening to your own inner voice. Life is difficult and the closer that you get to adulthood the more you realize that no one is going to do it for you. In order to be successful in life, it’s important to know what all of your

personal challenges are so that you can work to surmount them. You also need to know your gifts, skills and talents and be able to identify your passions. This deep knowing of yourself will drive your life forward in a positive direction so that you may realize all of your dreams.

### **Give Back**

Practice empathy in order to understand other people’s feelings and thoughts. Practice compassion and be kind to everyone. Practice humanitarianism and give back to the world.

You are all very important people and you matter immensely to your family, friends, classmates, teachers, school, community, state, country and world. I greatly respect and admire each and every one of you and your accomplishments. Show the world just how smart, creative, compassionate and responsible you have all become. Embrace all of your new challenges in high school with confidence. We are all very confident that you are ready for high school and to compete with the other students you will meet there. We know that you will not only survive in high school, but you will thrive there as well!

**“Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss you will end up amongst the stars.”**

**You already are stars at Harborlight!**

**Remember, it’s better to strive for perfection and fall short than to strive for mediocrity and attain it.**

## **Congratulations Class of 2010!**



# A Message to the Class of 2010

By: Elisa Pitkin,  
Director of Elementary and Middle School Education



As I thought back on the years that the ten students sitting here today have spent at Harborlight, I realized that I have known some of them since they were 2, watching them come into my classroom with big, blond curly hair (even then!), very curious about the materials on the shelves. I have been lucky enough to see some life changing experiences; a realization that they can make a difference in the lives of troops that are overseas, working to help those that are less fortunate that we are, both here and abroad, looking into the future of our planet and speaking for the trees, and putting the needs of others before their own. There have been countless times that many of us have been rescued from “technical difficulties”, have been impressed with a student’s ability to work with young children, have seen students learn from their experiences, good and bad, and change for the better because of them. It has been wonderful to be a part of their lives and I can hardly believe that their time at Harborlight is coming to an end.

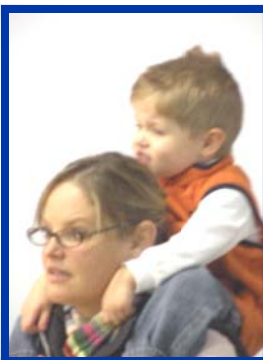
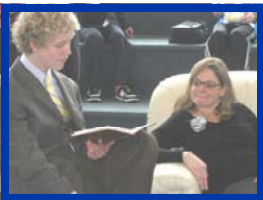
I often turn to children’s literature or poetry to “borrow” words of wisdom from authors who can say things much better than I. “Opportunity” was written by Berton Braley, an American poet that was first published when he was 11 when a small company published a fairy tale that he wrote. He said:

*“With doubt and dismay you are smitten  
You think there's no chance for you, son?  
Why, the best books haven't been written  
The best race hasn't been run,  
The best score hasn't been made yet,  
The best song hasn't been sung,  
The best tune hasn't been played yet,  
Cheer up, for the world is young!  
No chance? Why the world is just eager  
For things that you ought to create  
Its store of true wealth is still meager  
Its needs are incessant and great,*

*It yearns for more power and beauty  
More laughter and love and romance,  
More loyalty, labor and duty,  
No chance - why there's nothing but  
chance!  
For the best verse hasn't been rhymed  
yet,  
The best house hasn't been planned,  
The highest peak hasn't been climbed  
yet,  
The mightiest rivers aren't spanned,  
Don't worry and fret, faint hearted,  
The chances have just begun,  
For the Best jobs haven't been started,  
The Best work hasn't been done.*

This year’s graduating class has shown again and again their passion for things that they believe in, their love of learning new things and their ability to challenge each other. They have shown that they do know how to work hard, get things done and exceed our expectations. Despite any challenges and bumps in the road along the way, they have succeeded. They have embraced new opportunities and are exploring new ideas and I can’t wait to see how far they will go.

Congratulations, Class of 2010! Work hard and never miss the opportunity to better yourselves. I will miss you all and look forward to hearing from you in the future!



## Manuela Galindo-Carvajal



This day today is graduation. The best of times and worst of times, which gradually crept up on us because we didn't want to think about it. It pains me to leave because it's almost like a family here in Middle School. These past three years I have spent at Harborlight have been the best of my life, and I have shared them with great people. I will sincerely miss everybody I know.

Harborlight is a great school. Normally, people choose a school close to where they live, but we picked a house that would be close to the school, because we had picked the school first. On the first day of sixth grade, I got off a plane from Colombia, not even knowing the address where I was going to live. Harborlight was the home that was waiting for us. Soon, I made many friends.



Each year was better than the previous one, but I was enjoying school a lot since the beginning. Learning a lot. Experiencing a lot. It was really great to get to know my classmates more and grow closer on trips such as the kayaking, up to whale watches and the trips to DC and Montreal, but some of the most memorable things also happened in class, like the times we rode the preschool tri-cycles, Flyted on Leif Erickson day, went to project adventure, or ordered Chinese food during lunch. Shrimp tempura.



It's sad to leave here and go to high school, but it's time to leave. I am certain that I am prepared and there is no reason to stay, as much as I'd like to stay. I've come a long way since that first day here in sixth grade thanks to my teachers. At my last stage here in Middle School, Tim, Tracy, and Jackson have taught me so many useful important things that will help me on this journey.

Jackson was my advisor for the whole three years; he became a Middle School teacher when I became a Middle School student, like we moved up together. But he's not going off to high school unless he leaves for Nazareth. Probably not happening. He always encouraged me with my writing and with what I wrote, when I was too self conscious to like my writing. Sometimes I wanted to throw it away and give up but he'd say "No, this is good, don't throw it away." He taught me not to give up and to try not to be a perfectionist. We learned many study skills in his history class; history studying was always very fun, with skits and games like the "tape the name to your forehead" game, although Pictionary and charades could get a little competitive.



Tim, my math and science teacher, told me many times to leave my colored pencils away and that I didn't need them during math. To him, those were for science class dissection sketches ...and for throwing on the ground to see if I was really concentrating/paying attention at my math or not. But it was very funny. His patience is truly remarkable even when he had to take my books away from me so that I would not read them while I was supposed to be doing my work. He'd been warned about this by Liam and Niamh. But he was pretty ok about me reading if it didn't interrupt my work. He loaned me a lot of books and often joked around about me being some sort of book inhaling mutant. He cheered me on during Project Adventure classes when I was too scared to jump, saying, "You can do it, you can do it, JUMP ALREADY, you can do it" Tim likes to joke around and remained cheerful even when his arm was in a sling for like a month. He could also be very insightful. I remember at the beginning of the year I needed glue for some project and couldn't find it. When I asked Tim where the glue was, he said, all reflective-like: "The glue that holds everything together, That's Tracy." Yes, Sure, but...where is the glue? But he was right, Middle School wouldn't be the same without Tracy... or Tim or Jackson. Tracy is able to pull off being silly and serious at the same time, as we saw the morning before going to Canobie when she asked who was riding with her or as we saw many times during her language arts class. Besides the basic five senses, she has common sense, a sense of humor, and that really weird way of reading my mind and understanding what I was thinking.



Middle School wouldn't be Middle School without these three, an awesome trio. They say to look forward, but I will always look back and remember my time here. They say that high school is going to be a wonderful opportunity with many doors opening, but I am also looking forward to coming back finding the doors still open here and visiting to help out.

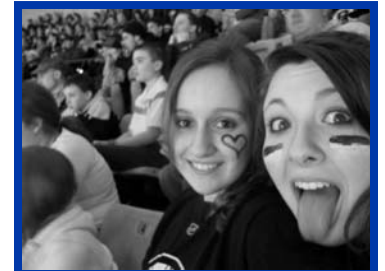
My experience here was hundreds of amazing things that would take too long to mention and describe all of them. Too many days to remember. Every day was special even when it was not a particular occasion. Not that I didn't enjoy weekends, but weekends sometimes felt too long for Monday to



## Manuela (cont'd.)

arrive and for me to be back with my friends and everybody having fun. I hope for lots of student council activities to be planned next year on weekends so I can come. I'll be at the car wash rain or shine. I hope for Movie nights to remain on Fridays so we can all join, and that poor Jackson is still fully booked every week of summer with summer camp. And hopefully there'd be some after school pottery here and there, or an invitation to give a pottery demonstration during math class again. Thank you Dan for that one, it was awesome!! (Sorry Tim) Thank you Marcela for the wonderful Spanish classes. Thank you Heidi for teaching me how to act and write scripts. Thank you everyone for everything, Thank you for listening and guiding me and for helping me become a better person in so many ways.

Thank you and farewell, Harborlight. Oh, and Happy Birthday, Tracy!



## Hannah Garvin

I came to Harborlight in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Even though I've only been here for three years, it seems like I've been here forever. I guess it just feels like home because this school feels like a second family to me. Since we are all so close here, it's pretty easy to make friends and talk to the teachers. Throughout my years at Harborlight, I've created many inside jokes with friends and even with some friends that graduated last year!

When I walked through the front doors of this school in September 2007, all I remember is being the "new girl" who needed to ask where the bathroom was and who was looking to make new friends. My first day here was better in just two hours. During snack time, a fellow 6<sup>th</sup> grader invited me to eat snack with her and a few other people. That girl, now sitting here at graduation with me, is Emily Lockard. We started talking and soon we were really good friends. One of the cool things about this school is that the teachers let you meet and become friends with kids in different grades. That's how I meet a 4<sup>th</sup> grade girl named Vivien Gere. Emily, Vivien, and I became good friends. When I look at myself now, I see a more confident, wiser, girl graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade with a bunch of friends.

Although I may have moved on to Middle School and made new friends including, Bridge Gough, Abby Mace, Rachel Mold, Hannah Dragonas, Jenna Nee, and Rachel Rizzari, I still keep in contact with all my friends, including the ones I made on my very first day here at Harborlight.

I'd like to thank a few people. Thank you to Tracy for helping me with my 8<sup>th</sup> grade project and during those tough times in math when you spent extra time with me, making sure that I understood the chapter. Thank you to Jackson for his tough weekly quizzes and difficult exams. They helped me realize that high school exams will be a lot harder. Thank you to Tim for teaching and helping me in science, and his upbeat science classes that kept everyone involved. Thank you to Dan for not only teaching me art, but for pushing me just a little bit to paint something I like. Thank you to Marcela for those great Spanish classes!! And, thank you to my dad for also assisting me with my 8<sup>th</sup> grade project and both my Mom and Dad for giving me a great opportunity to get a wonderful education. We are gathered here today to celebrate a special day for the graduating students. As we venture off into the next four years of our lives, we will always remember the experiences of this graduating class of 2010. Thank you.



## Michael Jedraszek



Through the years I have been here at Harborlight, I have witnessed many great things. I have been here for the construction of the Middle School, the new preschool, and the Upper Elementary classrooms. I was there when the new front entrance was constructed and the renewal of the preschool playground was done. I was also there for the start of minor things like the After School Program or Clubs, such as flag football, Tim's waffle ball, Lego Club, and the start of the Destination ImagNation teams.



Also at Harborlight, I have done many extremely fun things I could not have done at most schools. In LE-3, we had a yearly festival where the class would research an ancient culture, like China. Then we would put on a show/presentation that people would see, and they would go around and view the different posters and examples of China's culture and other interesting historical subjects. In UE, we went to Mystic sea port for 4 days. That was different because we had to sleep on hard bunks in a ship. Then, the next two years we went to W. Alton Jones in Rhode Island. That was really fun, especially the game Predator Pray. It's almost like tag, but there are bins full of needs like water, food and shelter. You have to collect a certain amount to survive the winter and enough to reproduce. While doing that you have to avoid being tagged or "eaten" by an animal higher up on the food chain.

In Middle School, we did the most fun things of all. The first year, we walked around New York City and visited places like the United Nations and the 9/11 crash site. We also saw an awesome Broadway show of the Lion King and went to man fun places like the M& M's store and Toys R Us. The next year we went to Montreal, Canada! We went to a really fun space camp, a couple of museums, and a huge underground mall/shopping center.



Through the year, I have learned many great things. In science, I have learned about chemistry, physics, geology, and weather. Physics and chemistry were my favorite subjects of all because it is great to learn through all the cool labs we did. In history, we learned about Japan, India, China, the American Revolution, the Golden Age of Piracy, the Witch Trials, the French and Indian war, the war of Spanish succession, and all about the American Colonial Period. My favorite subject was the American Revolution because I enjoy learning about old time wars. In Language Arts, we learned about the play Twelve Angry Men, Siddhartha, the Allusions Project, and a bunch of vocabulary. My favorite was the Twelve Angry Men play because I enjoyed watching the movie and reading the play. In writing workshop we learned how to write a poem, a short story, a persuasive essay, and analytical essay, and how to make a portfolio. My favorite was making a short story because I enjoy making stories that are science fiction.

Thank you and good bye Harborlight!



## John Kasarda

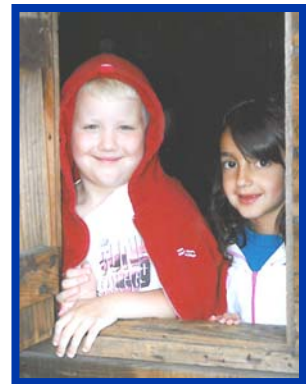
When I came here for preschool 10 years ago, I was small, had very blond hair, and, at that time, I didn't think much of it. I didn't think that I would be a graduate of the Middle School Program. I didn't think that I would become so close with all the people that I have met here. And, I never thought I would enjoy it.

I have an abundance of memories from this school, but my earliest was when I was in preschool. I was in ECE-4, which is now where the library is. Heidi was my teacher and it was Father's Day. My father came in, we had juice, ate pound cake, and I presented my dad with a paper necktie cutout that was decorated with all the reasons why I loved him written on it.

Then I moved into Elisa's class where things started to get "serious". Math problems like 1,000 plus 1,000 were daunting at first, but I soon learned division. Then, sadly, I had to leave and go to Upper Elementary. There I was welcomed to the "real world" as Niamh always liked to tell us. It wasn't long until I was in 7th grade and we were on our "beginning of the year" canoe trip. And, of course, I fell in after taking a huge hit from Luke and Max's canoe. Since it was the beginning of the year, my first impression for everyone was that of a klutz with goofy hair. After multiple class breakfasts, class trips, and class in general, I have bonded and become friends with my teachers and classmates.

I can happily say that this school has prepared me to move on. Because of the preparation that I received here, I am excited and feel ready to go to St. John's Prep next year. I would like to say thank you to my friends, teachers, the administration, and everyone I've had the chance to encounter here at Harborlight. You all have made a huge difference in my life.

In the words of Dr. Seuss, "Don't cry because it is over. Smile because it happened."



## Emily Lockard

A Native American Proverb that represents my educational experience at Harborlight: Tell me and I'll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I'll understand.

I have been blessed and fortunate to have had the privilege of attending this school I love so much. I have been taught to be a critical thinker. I have been shown that learning is a process to embrace. Mistakes are part of development. Conflict is resolved with civility and a peace rose. During my 11 years at Harborlight, I have always felt safe here at school. Feeling safe and secure helped build my confidence and I feel that I have accomplished many goals because of it. I have many fond memories and I have all my teachers to thank.

Holly Alto: My preschool and kindergarten teacher. Thank you for my practical life lessons and all your warm hugs.

Beth Sieminski: My Lower Elementary teacher: I love you. You are warm, supportive and amazing.

Amy Synenki: *Lord of the Flies*. I will never forget Piggy, his broken glasses, and his tragic end.

Liam: My Upper Elementary teacher: You have touched my life beyond words. Thank you for your in depth economy, history, and geometry lessons. I still use my little math dictionary that we created.

Niamh: You are my role model: Thank you for supporting my creative writing and teaching me about the environment.





Marcella: Muchas gracias. After having you as my Spanish teacher since 1<sup>st</sup> grade, I know now how important the Spanish language and culture really is to us.

Dan Lord: You are an awesome Art teacher and I will miss you.

Heidi: I will never forget being The Lorax: I will always speak for the Truffala Trees.

Tracy: I actually have developed an excellent vocabulary through all of our hard work over the last two years. You taught me how to take proper essay tests. I will miss you.

Tim: I finished Algebra I with you and I will be continuing Geometry next year. I will miss your Sponge Bob-themed Punnett squares and hilarious extra credit questions about Phineas and Ferb.

Jackson: You made learning poetry more fun than I ever thought was possible. I will remember how fun and involving your study sessions were.

Finally, I say thank you to the Harborlight Community. It has been an honor to attend this school and I will treasure my memories fondly and will make you proud.



## Jennifer Nee



I was a 6<sup>th</sup> grader trying to transition from a public middle school to a Montessori classroom. No part of me wanted to do well, no part of me thought I could. I had only been here for a month and I'd done the minimum amount of work to get by. My laziness and neglect was noticed by Tim, who took me aside, and instead of yelling at me for unfinished work, told me how I could bring my grade up before the end of the term. That's when the gears began to grind, and I understood that I was surrounded by people who wanted me to succeed. "Good enough" would not be good enough anymore, not for this School and not for myself.

This September, I will be going off to the Governors Academy to start my life as a high school student. This would not have been possible without Harborlight. In April 2007, when I started out in the Middle School, my confidence was low; the lowest grade on my report card was a D- and I barely ever talked to my parents. Today, two and a half years later, I am the class president, I am an A-B student, and I *voluntarily* hang out with my family.

I want to thank Tim, Tracy and Jackson for helping me through every assignment, and dealing with me during my teenager moments. You are the best teachers anyone could ever ask for, and I am eternally grateful for everything you've done for me. This School has changed my life forever. The lessons I've learned and the people I've met will not only follow me through high school, but they will stay with me for the rest of my life. Harborlight has made me the student, friend, and woman that I want to be.



## T.J. Ostrowski

I started at Harborlight Montessori School in preschool for two years and loved it. I had a great time here and have some great memories, mostly when I was outside in the playground. I left Harborlight Montessori School to find a school closer to my house. When I returned to Harborlight after eight years and numerous schools, I really found out that this was the place for me. I was accepted by people very quickly, and I loved the idea of working at my own pace. I have made so many new friendships with people here. One of my favorite parts of Harborlight was the fact that when I came in, I was accepted by my teachers along with the kids. The teachers made me feel so comfortable.



The class trip was to Washington DC. I got closer to my friends. Every night at the hotel was a new adventure. One night it was about one in the morning and we heard Tracy bang on our door. Apparently we were too loud. We heard another knock on the door. We were all too afraid to open it, so we hid under the covers. After about two minutes of arguing about who would get the door, we opened it, and found Tracy.

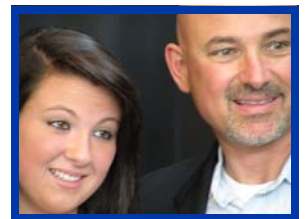


Without these teachers, I could not have made it through the school year. I would like to thank Tracy for helping me edit, and teaching me about literature. Without her I would not have gone very far. I would also like to thank Jackson and Tim. They brought humor to the class and morning meetings. They are also amazing teachers and have helped me through my year at Harborlight. Marcela has helped me with my Spanish. I have learned new Spanish words and have loved the people that Marcela brought in. They were very interesting to talk to, and I learned more about different countries and cultures. I didn't like Spanish before, but now *me gusta espanol*. Dan has helped me with my art. He is my favorite art teacher that I have ever had, and I feel that my skills and class participation have improved throughout the year. Tim was a great gym teacher this year. From tennis to skiing to golf, I have improved, and I admire his multitasking skills. I would also like to thank Heidi. She has helped me with my music skills, my acting, and learning proper stage directions and etiquette. I personally think my education has improved, and I have improved as a person. And to conclude, your mom's face!!! Thank you!



## Rachel Rizzari

I never thought I would be graduating from a private Montessori school or be going to Bishop Fenwick. I'm forever thankful that it happened though.



From September to January of my 7<sup>th</sup> grade year, I had a bad attitude and acted as if I did not want to be here. I secretly did, but was far too stubborn to admit it. Now, I openly express how much I love it here.. I have changed in so many ways. I feel like I'm a much better person because of it, and I owe it all to my parents, for "making" me come here, my teachers for helping me every step along the way, and Susan for building the School in the first place.



I will always remember the first day of 7<sup>th</sup> grade, looking around and judging everyone right away. One of the most important lessons I've learned here is that you can NOT judge a book by its cover, because the people I judged poorly are now not only my best friends, they are my family. I feel as if the best part of my life is over, but I know that with the preparations Harborlight has given me, the rest of my life can play out however I want it too. Thank you everyone, for making these past two years of my life the best ever.



## Ford Seidel

Fellow Harborlight community members,

As I stand here today, ready to leave, I think about what have been the most meaningful moments for me at HMS. I came to Harborlight when I was three years old. Heidi was so lucky to get me as a student. I was in her class for two years. Then, when I think Heidi had all of me that she could handle, she passed me on to Beth.

In Lower Elementary, I remember building a model of the Mars Exploration Rover Landing Vehicle when we studied space, and studying weapons and technology when we explored ancient cultures. I studied weapons and technology in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, causing Beth to make a rule that you can't do the same topic thrice. Shortly after I left. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, I participated in the School's first science fair. I built a robotic mouse with obstacles detecting whiskers and a light-sensing nose. Since then, the science fair has been the best part of the year. By the way, I still go down to Beth's room to turn off her computer monitor, which she always neglects to do.

When I moved to Upper Elementary with Liam and Niamh, I remember how excited I was to go on our class trip. Playing poker with my friends and Liam after a long day of hiking was so much fun. Surprise- I liked the poker more than the nature part of the trip. When it was my turn to manage the Morning Glory Café, I was enthralled. I finally found a school activity where I could put my love of money to use. I'm so glad that Liam and Niamh prepared me for Middle School.

In Middle School, I went on two great class trips. Washington and Montreal were two of the best experiences I've ever had. I loved seeing the Capitol in Washington and going to space camp in Montreal.

I'd like to thank Tim, Tracy, and Jackson, as well as all of my previous teachers, and I wish them the best of luck with future classes. I'd like to thank the faculty and administrators for creating the wonderful educational and social environment that I've been a part of for the past ten years.

Finally, I'd like to thank my parents for making it possible for me to attend Harborlight.



## Caleb Whitten

Except for my 7th grade year, I have been at Harborlight since I was four years old. Reflecting back upon this wonderful journey I have had here at Harborlight, and all the memories I have made, and all the struggles my friends and teachers have helped me persevere through.

Even though I graduate here today, I will probably be here tomorrow, and will stop by from time to time in the years to come. This ceremony is just a brief moment in my life, but my time spent here at Harborlight has been engraved into my mind, and I shall never forget this experience. And, now, I want to thank all of the people.





## Farewell And Good Luck!



### Tim Creamer, Math, Science and Physical Education Teacher

In his inauguration speech in 1994, Nelson Mandela (now president of South Africa) said these words:

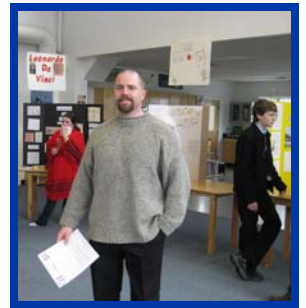
*“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves: Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”*

Choose to shine. If you have the mind for it, be brilliant! Consume yourself with learning – you grow exponentially with knowledge. Don't be afraid to be intelligent – it is a gift, a blessing that not all others will appreciate. Many will however, and you have the right to your own brainpower.

Your words and actions are a way to shine. It is imperative that you, as students and people, advocate for yourself and speak your mind. People may not always like what you have to say. People might disagree – fervently even. But that doesn't always mean you are wrong. It does not mean that you should not speak because others find what you say unpleasant. You have a voice – use it! If it makes others uncomfortable, that will empower them to speak on the other side of the issue. Understand and research your opinions. Find facts about what you believe in. Then speak up – stand up for what you believe.

In life most people do not find that they regret what they have said, but rather what they have not.

Choose to shine, graduates. Do not be pressured to weaken your natural light. Choose to shine.



## Tracy Wood, Language Arts and Math Teacher



Our graduates have spent years, literally, listening to me lecture. As you may expect, I have pretty much run out of words of wisdom for them. Besides, they know everything at this point. Right parents? As I look out into the audience, I see family members who I've known for years. Together we've been through the ringer, and come out with smiles and some tears. So, today, I'd like to address my remarks to the parents.

As I was thinking about what to write last night, my mind kept breaking into Tevia's song from Fiddler on the Roof. *Is this boy whose hair I used to cut while he sat up on the kitchen stool with a towel around his neck???* *Is this the girl I drove around the block so she would sleep??* Last summer, Susan offered me a book to read to help me better understand the tremendous stress that adolescence places on our students and their parents. It's called The Roller Coaster Years , raising your child through the maddening yet magical years of middle school. Being a mother of two middle schoolers myself, I would say that adolescence is more of the former (maddening), and just enough of the latter (magical) to keep us from throwing them out on the street. Now I have a confession to make: I didn't read the book. But rarely does a day go by that I don't think of it and its catchy title. I have browsed through the chapter titles (a good reading skill right?) and have drawn inspiration from them also. So I just wanted to share a couple of them with you, and let your imagination, or perhaps memory, fill in the missing pages.



Chapter One - Playing Mind Reader: Understanding Your Middler's Developing Intellect

Chapter Three - Haunted House: The Emotions and Tensions Your Middler Feels

Chapter Four - Escape Artist: Your Middler's Battle for Independence, and my favorite,

Chapter Five - Three Ring Circus: Why Your Middler is Distracted, Disorganized, and Disinterested



A funny observation - if you search for the book on Amazon, you will find that customers who bought this book also bought, How to Hug a Porcupine, Getting to Calm, and Boy Crazy – Keeping your Daughter's Feet on the Ground When her Head is in the Clouds . All these titles remind me that adolescence serves as a lesson in extremes.



One of the precious things about our Harborlight culture is that it is a place where we can be accepted as our best selves even when our best doesn't feel so great. These students have grown to approach their work and each other with integrity every day knowing that they will be accepted even on their bad hair days.

Now I'd like you all to stand up and show me where your energy is today, and Ford will teach us how to grasp it on our new Smart Board. . . . JK

## Jackson Tingle, Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher

Often times the great public education system of our country has been compared to a melting pot stewing together the varied groups that compose our American tapestry. I like to think of Harborlight more like a pressure cooker. Frequently emotions run very high and very strong in our halls. From the disgruntled parent to the colleague with whom you just don't agree, our small community offers little space to escape. In those challenging moments it can be difficult to remember the reasons for which we teach.

I would like to introduce you to those reasons: Jenna, Hannah, John, Emily, Michael, Rachel, TJ, Caleb, Ford and Manuela. It has been my consummate pleasure to instruct these young men and women for two, if not three years. Over that time they have grown to become a community of learners rather than an amalgamation of peers. Here in lies your greatest challenge - to navigating the road ahead as individuals. For several of you, your time together verges on a decade. Though you may be going on to the same school as some of your peers, largely you must now forge a path unto yourself. While this no doubt seems daunting, it is also the most rewarding. In the fall, you will step with the same feet into very different shoes. The reputations you cast for yourself are entirely of your own making. See this not as a time of loss, but as a time of growth: a time of new-beginnings rather than closed doors.

8th graders, I charge you with the following: remember where you came from, take control of your present, and set the course for your own future. What loosely translates to "best wishes in future affairs" in Anglo-Saxon and as was wished to me on my graduation from UNH by my dearest professor *waes thu hal* Class of 2010.



## Where are they going next?

Manuela Galindo-Carvajal,  
Nazareth Academy

Hannah Garvin,  
Clark School

Michael Jedraszek,  
St. John's Prep

John Kasarda,  
St. John's Prep

Emily Lockard,  
Bishop Fenwick

Jenna Nee,  
Governor's Academy

T.J. Ostrowski,  
Gloucester High School

Rachel Rizzari,  
Bishop Fenwick

Ford Seidel,  
St. John's Prep

Caleb Whitten,  
St. John's Prep



*“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail.”*  
*-Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## MISSION

Harborlight Montessori guides the growth and development of the whole child from infancy through young adolescence in an environment that:

- Fosters a love of learning
- 
- Maximizes individual potential
- 
- Promotes academic excellence
- 
- Inspires creativity
- 
- Celebrates diversity
- 
- Encourages mutual respect
- 
- Nurtures compassion and humanitarianism
- 
- Advocates stewardship of the environment
- 
- Graduates responsible, productive citizens of the world



## HARBORLIGHT



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