

Who is Doing What

VWS Alumni Corner

Interview with Aaron Mackee
Class of 1996



VWS: Tell me about your work and education after graduating from the VWS. (post-secondary schooling, travel, work experience, family, etc.)

AM: I spent a year at Capilano College after graduation before moving to Whistler to ski. From there I branched out to backpack and kayak guiding and then went back to Capilano College for the Outdoor Recreation Management program. The final semester of the program is a practicum that took me back to Whistler. I lived there for four more years, working on the mountain in the winter in exchange for a ski pass, and year round in the restaurant at Nicklaus North Golf course to pay the bills. Living in a resort town gave me time off in the spring and fall, and I took this time to travel, mainly for music. I spent several years going to Dave Matthews band shows, and this is where I met my future wife, Angela. In 2004 she moved to BC from Texas, and we re-located from Whistler to Vancouver where I worked in several more restaurants until I got a position with Squirrel Systems doing support for restaurant point of sale systems. In 2006 we moved to Dallas, Texas so my wife could finish school, and I ran the Texas office of an American Squirrel reseller for a year, then took a new position as the point of sale coordinator for a local restaurant chain in Dallas. After my wife graduated we planned to move back to Vancouver, but we got delayed by a year as we took in Angela's thirteen year old second cousin Jose to live with us. Eventually we adopted him so he could return to Vancouver with us.

VWS: What kind of work/study are you involved in now?

AM: I still work for Squirrel Systems as the trainer for internal support staff, and also do installations and training for restaurants across North America.

VWS: What do you enjoy most about your work?

AM: A constantly changing work environment. I am always faced with new challenges, and enjoy coming up with creative solutions. My work keeps me involved in the restaurant business, but I am not stuck working late night hours all the time.

VWS: What do you think are your greatest successes in life?

AM: Learning how to parent a teenager on the fly. I did not expect to be a parent in the Vancouver Waldorf High School any time soon, but watching our son Jose learn and grow has been an amazing experience.

VWS: How did Waldorf education affect your life, and your choice of career?

AM: I have never spent much time worrying about a career, and I think this is a direct result of my education. I have the confidence to step into any task knowing I can work out how to do it even when it is something completely new. I had absolutely no exposure to computers before working on my Grade 12 Project, yet I have pursued a career in IT without a second thought. Waldorf taught me to think critically and problem solve, and everything else has just worked itself out.

VWS: What are your fondest memories of your time at the VWS?

AM: After fourteen years of Waldorf education I have a hard time separating my school life from any other part of my childhood, and it is filled with nothing but good memories. I happen to have had my mom, Elaine Mackee, as my Class Guardian in High School, and while this was challenging at times it was an amazing experience. The Eurythmy troupe tour in 1995 stands out as we traveled for two weeks to the BC Interior, Vancouver Island, and down the coast to San Francisco. Hiking in the Stein Valley and our Grade 11 kayaking trip to Tofino also played a big role in shaping my life after High School. It may sound selfish, but to be honest it was the whole thing, and even fifteen years later, most of my closest friends are still people I met at the VWS.

*Interview by Michelle Gibson, for Development
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