

Who is Doing What

VWS Alumni Corner

Interview with Emily Sheppard

Class of 2005



VWS: Tell me about your work and education after graduating from the VWS.

ES: All I wanted to do after high school was travel, but my career as a track and field athlete took precedence. (That and the fact that I didn't have money to travel the way I wanted to at the time!) So I went to the University of Hawaii at Manoa on a full athletic scholarship, competing for the Rainbow Wahine and becoming a NCAA Division I All-American in 2008, a huge accomplishment for me. During the track season, we travelled to the mainland (California, Idaho, Oregon, Washington etc) almost every other weekend to compete, and this temporarily satisfied my travel bug. However, training over twenty hours a week made track into a job and by the end of university, I was completely burned out and done with competing. I graduated in December 2009 with a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in Finance. After graduation I came home for literally four days before hopping on a plane and heading down to Paraguay to visit my boyfriend and his family. I stayed for three months and loved every minute of it. It was then time to come home and I've been living in Lynn Valley since then.

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

ES: I worked in the retail and restaurant industries before realizing that both were not for me. I'm currently working at a bank, coaching track a few days a week and finishing my personal trainer qualifications.

VWS: What do you enjoy most about your work?

ES: I would have to say....the benefits?! While I don't mind my job right now, it's definitely not what I see myself doing long-term. When I moved back home, the lack of sunshine and near constant darkness really started getting to me. I was completely unmotivated to do anything and didn't work out for months. I randomly decided to try yoga and have been practicing regularly ever since. Ultimately, I want to open my own gym/yoga studio. But who knows. I'm still young and don't feel any real need to decide right away. In the end, I'll do whatever makes me happy.

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

ES: My accomplishments in track and in university, and my amazing friends and family.

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

ES: I came to the VWS in Grade Six, after having attended an extremely strict private school in Bermuda. Needless to say it was a bit of an adjustment for me. Ultimately, Waldorf education affected me in many ways. It helped me to loosen up and not be afraid of being myself and being true to myself. It gave me an amazing group of life long friends. It allowed me to fully pursue my track and field goals by being flexible and supportive. It also helped me to realize the freedom that I have to choose, to do what makes me happy and not to be too influenced by societal pressures.

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

ES: Too many to list! But here's a few...the hiking and camping trips, choir and guitar class, Christmastime, Eurythmy in general, the 2004-2005 girls basketball team! My Grade 12 Project and all the great high school teachers (Elaine, Eitel, Karin, Tibor, David, Farrah and Bob).

*Interview by Michelle Gibson, for Development
February 2011*