

Who is Doing What

VWS Alumni Corner

Kiera Chase

Class of 2007



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

KC: I traveled for a year right after graduating from high school and spent six months in India and several months working in Corsica. When I returned to Vancouver, I wanted to begin my post-secondary studies. I found a unique program in Aberdeen, Scotland that incorporated University course work with rigorous practical experience in a teacher preparation program in Special Education. After two years I transferred to Concordia University and completed a B.A. in arts education. I decided to go on a long road trip that would take me from Montreal through the U.S. back to Vancouver. While on this trip, I stopped in San Francisco and decided to stay. I enrolled in a Masters program at San Francisco State University in Special Education. While in school I worked as several charter schools around the Bay. My professional focus was to develop special education programs in which students could be fully integrated into the general education classrooms. Most of my instructional focus was to support teachers. I decided to continue my education and was accepted into a PhD program at UC Berkeley. My research began to focus on the use of technology in instructional settings, with a specific emphasis on designing tools that encourage constructivist-learning experiences. I recently graduated and am beginning full-time employment at an educational non-profit company called ConnectEd California.

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

KC: I am part of the Learning Teaching and Pathway Development team at ConnectEd California. We work with teachers and administrators who are implementing Linked Learning. This approach challenges practitioners to design integrated instructional experiences that prepare students for college and careers.

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

KC: All of the stories! How learning the letters of the alphabet involved a story. That all of our history was told as a tale. I loved learning to carve, knit, and crochet. People that I have met are constantly impressed with my crafty skills. I have wonderful memories of all of my teachers; Mr. Adams trying to get me out of a tree, Mr. Timm and his love for nutmeg latté, Elaine and her fanny pack on our Stein Valley adventure. In fact, those hiking trips are also some of my fondest memories.

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

KC: I have no way of knowing what my life would have been like if I had gone to another school. I do know that in the 6th grade, when I was almost got myself expelled, I really did not want to go to another school. I think being a part of the Waldorf approach to education helped me be curious and always willing to try new things. I think that being part of such a unique educational experience, personally benefited and helped me recognize the importance of not pathologizing and stigmatizing learners. I try to bring this student-centered approach to the work I do with students and teachers.

*Interview by Ronaye Ireland for Development,
June 2016*