

Who is Doing What

## VWS Alumni Corner

### Melissa Deering, Class of 2006



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

**MD:** After graduating from the Vancouver Waldorf School, I attended Mount Royal University, and subsequently, the University of Calgary working towards my undergraduate degree in Psychology. I was eventually accepted into the department of Psychology's honours program, where I spent the final year of my undergraduate degree conducting research in Social Psychology, with a focus on revenge behaviours in romantic relationships. During this time, I also volunteered at the Calgary Distress Centre in an effort to gain more hands on experience and a more practical approach to my field of study. I graduated with my degree in Psychology in 2012.

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

**MD:** Although I enjoyed my time at university and was passionate about what I was studying, life has an interesting way of redirecting your path when you least expect it. After graduation, I intended to take some time off; I was torn between entering the workforce, applying to Grad school, and travelling. However, unexpectedly losing my job at the time aided that decision making process, and I began looking for work. I ended up working in a sales related position with a company that distributes processing equipment for Western Canada. Today, I am still with the same company working as an Inside Sales Specialist.

**VWS:** What do you enjoy most about your work?

**MD:** The company that I work for is very dynamic, something is always changing and I am learning something new every day. Our Inside Sales Department is, in a sense, the hub of the company. Therefore, I have plenty of opportunity to interact with a wide variety of people. I have also always liked to teach, and now in my current job I often assist in the hiring and training of new employees. I am also fortunate enough to work for a company that supports employees in reaching their long and short term goals. Recently, my team was given an amazing opportunity to participate in an excellent customer service course offered by the Disney Institute. In regards to long term goals, I am currently considering a move into Human Resources.

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

**MD:** I would have to say that my support network of friends and family, because the tangible success I have experienced has been the result of having such amazing people around me. I came to the Vancouver Waldorf School at a time in my life where I did not feel like I had much support, and the connections I made were instrumental in helping me thrive and achieve my goals. I also just recently purchased a home for the first time, which has been amazing, stressful, and incredibly rewarding.

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

**MD:** One of my fondest memories of my time at the Vancouver Waldorf School was our annual camping trips. I also will never forget the Grade 12 Project, and how exciting (and somewhat terrifying!) it was to present all of our work in front of our peers and the community. Although I will admit I found the process a bit overwhelming at times, the amount of growth and learning that I experienced was incredible.

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

**MD:** Based on my experience, a Waldorf Education goes beyond basic learning and academics because it teaches one how to think, and this truly is a gift. I believe that cultivating a passion for learning, critical thinking, independence and perseverance in students is far more beneficial than having them memorize textbooks or fill out multiple choice exams. In addition, having the support of friends and teachers helped me develop courage and conviction in my goals and ideas, which I have tried to carry forward in my personal and professional endeavours.

*Interview by Ronaye Ireland,  
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