



Views from our Hilltop

The Deck House School Newsletter

Fall 2009
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www.deckhouseschool.org

Views from the Headmaster...

The Deck House School Accredited by New England Association of Schools and Colleges

On behalf of The Deck House School I am proud to announce that we have been approved for accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). This is a huge step for a school of our size and the culmination of three years of self study and evaluation.

The visiting committee said of their time at our school:

“ A visit there is a reminder that as much as we try to complicate it, education is an essentially simple enterprise involving talented teachers and willing students in an environment of trust and support. ”



I think this statement captures the essence of what Ned Hall had in mind when he began this school thirty years ago.

With the accolades of accreditation comes responsibility; NEASC accreditation is a significant accomplishment but not a goal in itself. The mission of NEASC is to foster an ethic which drives schools to continually evaluate and improve their programs. In this sense, our accreditation is a beginning and not an end. Along with their praise for our school, the visiting committee made several recommendations to get us started on this process.

One of these recommendations was to develop the ability to give financial assistance to families who would otherwise be unable to afford a Deck House education. This was a recommendation that really struck a chord with me. One of my biggest frustrations as headmaster has been to have young men who would have benefited from a Deck House education turn away due to financial constraints. In the current economic downturn, this problem has only worsened. The lack of financial aid has not only deprived these young men of the support and attention that we offer, it has led to a lack of economic diversity among our student body.

Finding the funds to offer economic assistance in this economy is a challenge but it is a worthwhile challenge; one that will help us better fulfill our school's mission. There are many young men who would benefit from being a part of The Deck House School community; all of them deserve a chance.

We look forward to meeting this challenge and we invite you to join us in the effort.

By Thomas Blackford, *Headmaster*

Mission Statement

The Deck House School is a small residential high school for boys who have struggled in the academic mainstream. Students and staff work together to create a community that builds positive relationships and encourages social, emotional, and academic growth.

Our Administration, Faculty & Staff

Administration

Tom Blackford, Headmaster and Social Studies, has been with the school for **fourteen years**. A Bates College alumnus, Tom's enthusiasm for social studies echoes his passion for sailing and his restoration of a vintage sailboat.

Melinda Browne, Assistant Headmaster and Mathematics, has **ten years** of experience at The Deck House School. In developing a research-based approach, she completed her program of study for a Doctorate in Mathematics Education from The University of Exeter.

The Deck House School administration and faculty have, on average, nine years experience with the organization. Shared memories, over the years, shape our broad perspective as well as flexibility, openness, and genuine interest in the boys.

Faculty

Jason Anthony, English, has been a faculty member for **five years**. Jason has a Masters of Arts Degree from The University of New Hampshire. He is writing a book about the history of food in Antarctica.

Christine Correa, Arts and Humanities, has been associated with The Deck House School for over **twenty years**. A Skidmore College alumna, Christine is an accomplished fine artist, and a student of native cultures.

Hilary Glover, Science, has provided **four years** of top-notch scientific enrichment. An experienced researcher, and lecturer, Hilary holds a Doctorate in Microbiology from University College, London.

Keir Larock, Technology Coordinator and Theatre, has a total of **six years** with the school. A graduate of Kenyon College, Keir began his career as our housemaster. He is a newlywed and a new homeowner.

Residential Staff

Christopher Carlson and Matthew Gerety, Housemasters, and graduates of Bates College, are new to the school. Both participated in this year's trip to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (see photos of students below).

The Deck House School also draws upon the expertise of **Lucrecia Gilman, Spanish Cooking**, **Stephanie Hale, College Counselor**, **Edmund Krawic, LCPC**, **Dolores Rollins, Spanish** and **Shirley Tawney, Special Education Consultant**.



A Student Point of View

The Deck House School is by far the best school I have ever been to. I was in and out of schools since the 3rd grade until my sophomore year before coming to The Deck House. It's now my third and final year at the school and let me tell you, the experience has been life changing. I have excelled academically, I have made new strong relationships with kids all over the country, and the staff have become some of my best friends. We've had our ups and downs but in the end we pull through and are laughing with each other at the end of the day.

My favorite thing about The Deck House is the co-curricular program. Since I have been with the school I have found a new loved passion for producing music. I am well on my way to Full Sail University for Recording Arts and working my way to owning my own record label. The school does everything in their power to help prepare me for my future, from bettering my math skills to better my social skills and the way I think about life.

I can guarantee if I were to continue going to public school I would have dropped out and been working some low class job just barely making it. Not anymore, now that the Deck House has come into my life and changed everything for me. The way I think is more open minded, the way that I live is more positive, and now I'm actually looking forward to a future.

Andrew Yager, Class of 2010

