

DVS students find college courses a good fit

DVS student Brenan Peterman interviewed fellow students Yo'el Erez, Rose Hardesty, Andrew Moore, and Teresa Moore about their experience of taking college classes at Diablo Valley College (DVC) while concurrently enrolled at DVS.

Brenan Peterman (BP): What was it like going to DVC?

Andrew Moore (AM): Actually there was a lot of paperwork and stuff to get signatures and such. I had to go talk to the professors, which was a little weird but none of the professors had any trouble giving me their signatures. It was easy to get adjusted. I just kind of sat and listened and didn't have much trouble with most classes and homework except one. It was programming and data structures. It was really hard and I got behind on my work and couldn't catch up. I failed [that class] but I still learned a lot. I have been taking classes for six or seven semesters.

Rose Hardesty (RH): I expected it to be a lot harder. "College" was this abstract concept. Who knew what they did there? It was a world away from regular school, and only adults could handle it. Instead I found it was a matter of doing what seemed obvious to me and not as much to my classmates: Show up, do the work.

Yo'el Erez (YE): It's fun and interesting; only one boring teacher so far.

Teresa Moore (TM): When I first started going to DVC it was in [my parents'] car at night. When I started going in the day, then I got a bike, it was awesome.

BP: Why did you decide to go to DVC? How it is so far?

YE: I decided to go because I wanted to learn stuff.

RH: I started going because I wanted to test the waters. I realized it was in my ability to take college classes. I saw that there was an Italian course so I took the course.

TM: Well, I kind of got a phobia of telling people [at DVC] how old I am, but after that it was awesome!

BP: How do you think the knowledge you've gained in DVC will help you in the real world?

YE: In my job.

AM: I don't know if I will have a career in programming, but I am going to apply for an internship at [a company that] makes industrial strength financial analysis software.

RH: As far as I was aware, this is the real world and anything and everything I learn will help me however I so choose.

TM: Learning helps me pass my classes, which helps me in the real world. I mean this is the real world. And now I have a 4.0.

Open House

Saturday, March 15

11:00 am – 2:00 pm

- ▶ Tour our site ▶ Enjoy some refreshments ▶ Meet students, families, and staff
- ▶ Learn about what people are doing at Contra Costa's Sudbury school.



A JC moment:

A double feature on education at DVS

During the Montessori stage of my career in education, I became quite adept at creating projects that not only captured the academic curriculum, but life skills essential to adult existence, such as anger management or debate etiquette. I would often read books for ideas and weave them into projects that I would look upon with the pride of an artist. Since I have reached the higher levels of my education here at the shores of DVS, I understand the futility of creating those projects or mock situations. Only a real situation can provide the real feedback needed for quality personal growth.

I have observed this kind of situation here on a daily basis. Ten minutes ago I walked out of a Judicial Committee (JC) session that would put adult argument skills to shame. Heavy topics were discussed with the utmost respect and in a peaceful tone of voice. The goal of the discussion was not my approval as an adult, or a grade, but community communication and the resolution of an issue that concerns us all; there was no lesson, only purpose.

Sometimes the tone of the JC is loud and goofy and the point does not get across at all; it's functional at best. So it goes. This leads me to the yang of this double feature: Kids will be kids. Sure, DVS is a great education. Sure, in my professional opinion, there is nothing that comes close to internal motivation. When it brings out the adult in them, it does so in spades.

But let's not forget that the reason this educational model is so effective is that it flows with, rather than fights, our intrinsic programming. That programming in the early stages of life calls for play, and not thinking about the future too much. Without a clear understanding and construction of the present, ramifications and long term goals have no meaning.

We, the "intelligently superior" species on this planet have, by far, the most extended period of play. Right now, students at DVS don't have a job or a driver's license; they are at the early stage of learning. Some day, they too will work behind a computer, a wrench or a scalpel, but for now, the socks left on the floor, the goofy explanation for why the peanut butter is on the door or their loss of control in an argument is an acceptable (even if not correct) part of growing up, just like it's part of our growing up to understand that.

Vicente Lopez, Staff

Parents' Corner

I have a younger son, still too little to enroll at Diablo Valley School, who sometimes accompanies me to work and is known to all our students. He also has his own playschool he attends so I can devote my attention to DVS. The other day when I picked him up he was wondering aloud if his playschool teacher knew where Diablo Valley School was. Then he said, "Oh yeah, she knows. It's where the kids teach themselves." Out of the mouths of babes...

Anne-Martine Moore, Staff

A few weeks ago my daughter, another DVS student, and I attended a reading by Irish author Eoin Colfer, creator of the "Artemis Fowl" series.

The two teenage students are both fans of Colfer's and had heard that he was giving a few readings in the Bay Area.

The only appearance that worked with our schedules was at Copperfield Books in Petaluma.

At the beginning of the reading one of the event organizers announced that the bookstore had printed up cards that students could pick up on the way out as proof of attendance. As we left the reading a woman wanted to hand each student one of these cards. Both DVS students declined and were then asked what school they were from. When the woman found out they had come from Contra Costa County, she tried again to give them a card, stating that she was sure their teachers would give them extra credit for having gone so far to hear an author speak.

It seemed such an odd notion, needing proof so that a teacher would believe my daughter had attended an event. I also wondered how many of the other students attending the reading were there to get "extra credit" and whether my daughter would have enjoyed the reading as much if it had been assigned.

Evelyn Hardesty

Let Life Bloom

At Diablo Valley School, it's not uncommon for students to take college-level classes as young teenagers. Italian, computer programming, dance, theater – these are just some of the classes kids as young as 13 have taken at the local community college and elsewhere.

And college is just one way, perhaps not the most important way, that DVS students engage the adult world. Kids have gotten 'real' jobs as soon as the law allows, and start and run a seemingly endless stream of projects that link them to or mimic what adults do, from in-house snack bars and sushi clubs to field trips and dance parties.

This 'early' blossoming of adult-level responsibility and initiative we see in our 14 and 15 year olds is surprising only because our culture has made delaying adulthood a goal. It has not always been like this. To put things in perspective, Julius Caesar was running important

diplomatic errands for his father when he was 12; at 16, he was the head of a powerful Roman family. David Farragut was given command of a ship in the War of 1812 – at 12 years old. And it's not just a few famous people. Many of the pioneers who settled the American frontier were teenagers who today would still be in school.

But we no longer allow the ambitions of teenagers to flower. Today, we want our kids to stay kids until at least 18, and, among the college-going crowd, 22 or later – after law or med school, for example. That a 14 year old might want to get a job or travel is disconcerting – enjoy your childhood, kid, while you can!

But the results of this artificial suppression of adult ambitions in teenagers have not been good. First is the boredom almost universally reported by high-school aged students. But more importantly, there's no guarantee that responsibility will

somehow develop later if it is systematically stunted when it naturally arises. Instead, we end up with an alarming number of young adults (and older adults!) who have learned to wait around for someone else to make things happen, to sedate themselves with toys, food, drugs, TV and so on, and then to complain about their lives.

At DVS, the kids find out early on that it is their responsibility to make things happen. Nobody is going to watch over you every minute to make sure you don't 'waste' time; nobody will lay out pre-determined path to what you 'ought' to do. It is not surprising to see that many of our students find a passion at an early age. DVS gives our students the freedom and support needed to pursue their passion, making for happier, healthier and more focused young adults.

*Joseph Moore
Assembly President*

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Make it a GoodSearch and help our school

What if you could generate a donation to Diablo Valley School every time you search the web?

GoodSearch is a charitable search engine that lets you do image search, video search and shopping search as well as regular web search. The money GoodSearch donates comes from its advertisers, so it doesn't cost the users or the organizations a penny. Fifty percent of all ad revenue generated from the site is donated to the charity of the user's choice. No purchases or personal information are

required. Simply use GoodSearch as you would Google or similar search engines.

The next time you're searching the web, go to www.goodsearch.com and select Diablo Valley School as your charity. Help for our school is only a click away.



Wish List

Diablo Valley School

A Sudbury School

2924 Clayton Road
Concord, CA 94519

PHONE:
(925) 676-2982

E-MAIL:
office@diablovalleyschool.org

WEBSITE:
diablovalleyschool.org

If you can donate these or other useful items, please call 510.676.2982 to arrange for pickup or delivery. Thank you! Diablo Valley School is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. We provide a tax receipt for all donations.

- new computers
- software (MS Access)
- pencils
- drum kit
- tools
- art supplies
- new child's wagon
- lawn mower cover
- piano bench
- new fax machine/telephone combined
- answering machine
- telephone
- portable emergency radio
- space blankets for emergency supplies

Diablo Valley School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

Read this newsletter online at our website.

Kindly notify us when you no longer need to receive a hard copy mailing.

DVS Thanks You

Thank you so much to our wonderful supporters who have made gifts of funds or materials to help our school:

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