

The Class of 2011

The yard was full with graduates' families, Assembly members, DVS alumni, and friends on June 11th to celebrate the graduations of Micaela and Rose. The week prior, the two diploma candidates had arranged to hold their thesis defenses at the Ygnacio Valley library in Walnut Creek. After listening to the oral defenses of their written theses, the Assembly agreed that both candidates had taken responsibility to prepare themselves to be effective adults in the larger community, and thus were qualified to receive diplomas. Both graduates planned to attend college in the fall.



Staff member Vicente López congratulated the graduates on joining the elite group of Sudbury alumni.



DVS alumnae Shalyn and Teresa offered advice to the graduates during the ceremony.



Rose (left) and Micaela (right) were presented with Diablo Valley School diplomas by Assembly president Joseph Moore



Thesis quotes

"At DVS I learned what I wanted from life... I'll make it work, I've always made it work; I plan to keep that up."
Micaela

"Having the time to pursue the activities I wanted day to day, moment to moment, has been an amazing gift."
Rose

Structure

a viewpoint by staff member Vicente López

Structure is a pillar to individual and species survival. Language, numbers, health, history, love, happiness, the list goes on. Structure allows us to prioritize, balance, achieve our goals, achieve success. Part of our adult structure as caregivers is to help our offspring achieve this success, to find happiness, to possess structure. We want our children to walk, run, smile, communicate efficiently, become wealthy, to live fulfilling lives.

I watch people walk by at the airport all with their own structure, mental and genetic, all part of the structure of the airport, part of the town structure... as I try to find structure to a paper that will help bring structure to the readers' minds as they bounce around one of the typical questions of new Sudbury parents: What about structure? My child needs structure.

Your child needs to walk and needs to talk, yet you don't go grabbing them and putting one leg in front of the other for them, give them walking homework, and blast their progress out of the water by saying something like "no, it's not ma....ma, it's M-o-t-h-e-r", just because we know the way the end-result should look like and because we absolutely know that it's in their best interest to do so. Your instincts as parents have served you well up to that point. One should not fear-block that instinct to allow them to find their own structure

at their own pace. Later they will want to learn more complicated motor and mental skills such as swimming, law, football, algebra, martial arts, medicine or quantum mechanics. The world we live in is a garden wealthy in doors to all the places they can dream and crave. Organically, they will tap into that knowledge so as to progress, to optimize their structure. They will tap into their age-peers for bike riding and games, the staff and parents for more refined advancement and later university and higher level professionals when we, the caregivers, are not enough. Everyone in that mix having created their own structure which the individual will incorporate into their own at will, trimming a little here and pasting a little there. In the meantime, for that electrical engineer or elite ballet dancer structure to exist, it must lay on a self-aware foundation structured by the individual that first learns to say ma..ma, and stub a toe while learning to walk. Only they can balance the structure of their weight, foot size, understanding of individual genetic motor skill, and inner drive to achieve the goal.

I return from swimming deep within the roots of my structure with childhood friends and parenting units to my present-chosen structure of growing and understanding the universe around me by arguing the politics and merits of the judicial committee with a 5 year old, getting into a heated debate with

a 17 year old about why he doesn't have the right to yell at the top of his lungs because he finally beat the mega-boss, bouncing back and forth ideas with a fellow staff member about how to balance the exertion of our adult wisdom and power and the understanding of the growing and learning nature of our employers while students of diverse ages casually listen in, processing democrat/republican views, crying internally over the Amazon tribes displaced to make place for a dam... and deciding not to change the structure of my run-on sentence so that it preserves the intensity of the idea I'm driving through.

I roam the halls of DVS, becoming part of the structure with every step. The bulletin boards are alive with schedules interpolating with active minds, smiles, and of course: chaos in the process of being tamed. The structure kids design here is powerful and sound. It's based on observation and hands on dancing with the complexity that being human entails. So when you ask, "What about structure? My child need structure or (s)he'll just play all day!" The answer is the same as when you ask about academics, social interaction, P.E., math, reading, writing, carrots... They are immersed in it it more deeply than this enthusiastically structured piece of writing could possibly explain.

Excellence

A parent's perspective

By Evelyn Hardesty

Yesterday, it happened again. I was on a work-related project with two other people. The project had stalled, and I came up with a solution to get it moving again.

Back when I was in school I was always a C student. I wanted A's very badly but could not see what I had to do to get them. It was like the A's were always out of my reach.

The worst thing about having been a C student is that I believed I would never excel, I would always be "just OK." I had many jobs where I was a C employee. Rather than figure out what my aptitudes were and find something I could excel in, I just assumed I didn't have what it took to excel at anything. I could have spent my whole life going from one dead-end job to the next.

Then, in my mid thirties, I stumbled by accident into the work I now do. Right from the start, I liked it and was good at it. Now, fifteen years later, I have the experience "A" students have: being able to do something with ease that others struggle at.

Thanks to Diablo Valley School, my daughters have never experienced wanting to excel at something but settling for just squeaking by. They won't grow up to assume that they are inadequate and that they have to grin and bear any job that comes their way.

Diablo Valley days

The 2011-2012 school year is off and running, with students engaged in their interests.



Face painting



Pizza making

Open House
 Saturday, October 15
 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.
 Enjoy some refreshments. Tour the school.
 Meet staff, students, and parents.
 Ask questions.
 Children welcome (of course!)

Diablo Valley School

A Sudbury School

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We are too.

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Thank You

We are grateful to these wonderful supporters who have made gifts of funds or materials to help our school:

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Want to help our school? Donate an item from our Wish List.

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|---|-------------------------------|------------|
| Scooters | Guitars | Microphone |
| Puzzle rack | Bowl mixer | Hand mixer |
| Flat screen monitors | Colored paper for art | |
| Small, portable amp | Helmets: child and teen sized | |
| Sturdy outdoor furniture | Computers: current models | |
| High hat & bass drum pedal for our drum set | | |
| iPod charger that plugs into the wall | | |

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