

THE WISE PROJECT— MENTORS' VOICES

"Adam brought us visually, with a video performance, and literally, through his WISE journal, on an expedition through four western states. The journey highlighted nature and Adam's infectious enthusiasm for the many sides of environmental causes!"

Dr. Eileen Donahoe, Nathan Hale Ray H.S.,
Moodus, CT (2001)

"Diane saw Dr. M.J. Willard on television talking about training capuchin monkeys to assist quadriplegics. She traced her base of operations to Harvard, negotiated for living space with her sister, and went off to Boston to help train the monkeys and, along the way, meet B.F. Skinner."

Charles Deahl, Woodlands H.S.,
Greenburgh, NY (1987)

"I remember Robert because the subject (Orthotics) had never occurred to me as a project, but even more so for his family. His father, a Woodlands graduate, served on our Task Force, and his uncle, also in attendance at his presentation, was a Woodlands and W.I.S.E. graduate. Robert's grandfather had watched his son's presentation in 1974, and now he had attended his grandson's presentation."

Charles Deahl, Woodlands H.S.,
Greenburgh, NY (2000)

"As his mentor, I shall not forget working with Jonathan, in the late afternoon hours at school, long after most students had left for the day, as he dedicatedly searched to find the exact poem that would tie in with the content and emotion of his WISE experience (Horsemanship in the 90's). I shall also not forget his return from Wyoming, after an automobile accident that delayed his return--exuberant, newly focused and asking where he could get a copy of Robert Graves' Mythology so that he could read, again, the myth which explained how Poseidon had created horses for Demeter. I shall also not forget the stronger, more assured Jonathan who emerged during his WISE journey."

Mary Mastro, Woodlands H.S.,
Greenburgh, NY (1992)

"Perhaps my favorite WISE project was that of Eric. I was the 9th grade disciplinarian at Nyack High School and suffice it to say that Eric and I were very well-acquainted, and it wasn't a very positive acquaintance. Three years later, things still weren't going well for Eric so I was surprised to learn that he planned to do a WISE project in horticulture. It got more surprising. A month or so into his project, he was suspended for the remainder of his senior year. The mentor he originally selected refused to continue their collaboration. If he failed WISE, he couldn't graduate. With many misgivings, I decided to help him complete his project. He completed a thoroughly wonderful journal. However, we had to hold his presentation off-site since he wasn't allowed back in Nyack High School. It was extraordinary and the strides he made as a person were also extraordinary. In his journal he wrote, "I would like to thank Dr. Greene for her dedication." I would like to thank Eric for reminding me that all children are redeemable and if we persevere, we will find amazing traits in even our most difficult students. WISE is a terrific way to discover that."

Dr. Linda Greene, Nyack H.S., Nyack, NY (1997)

"Rosangela was a trailblazer. In the second year of our program, she attended a presentation and was inspired to do a WISE project in the field of auto mechanics. This honor student who planned to go to college and major in chemistry wanted to learn how to fix cars so she would not be taken advantage of when she took her car to the garage. At her presentation she was able to solve everyone's car questions--an extraordinary performance! This was our first placement in a garage. Imagine the difficulty of cold calling a garage and asking for a placement for a high school student and then mentioning the student in question was a girl!"

Dr. Linda Greene, Nyack H.S., Nyack, NY (1997)

"The best WISE project was a student who wrote a mountaineering guidebook. It was the ideal marriage between WISE and Colorado. The student learned that mother nature is the greatest ruler of the earth and worthwhile goals are always more challenging than they appear. You can't truly grasp that concept from any textbook, but only from a real world experience."

Sean Munkacsi, East High School, Denver, CO
(1999)

THE WISE PROJECT—MENTORS' VOICES

"Matthew made a book of poetry-wrote the poems and made the book. He met each week with me, but also with JoEllen Moldoff in her poetess mode. He attended readings and lectures and what was magical was that this kid had a venue in which he SUCCEEDED, something which had eluded him in the high school. His presentation was stunning. One of the mentors in the room said that it was a spiritual experience for her. I knew what she meant. The kids were enthralled, as were all of us there, when he had us read a number of his poems and interpret them. Powerful and fun."

Michael Gibbs, Scarsdale H.S., Scarsdale, NY
(2000)

"David interned at the Los Angeles Democratic National Convention during his WISE Project. He wanted to show how hard he could work and was looking for a challenge in his senior year of high school. He was asked to put together a questionnaire, and was surprised when 6,000 copies were distributed, and before he knew it, he had an office that overlooked Los Angeles. He, even, had breakfast with the mayor and a conference call from Bill Clinton!"

Nancy Schneider, Milken
Community H.S., Los Angeles, CA (2000)

"Lisa focused her WISE project on Judaic Studies and on the possibility of becoming a rabbi. With the enthusiastic support of her own rabbi, she studied the Torah, worked with young children in an after school program and assisted with the management of her temple. The highlight of Lisa's project was her conducting a complete service on the Sabbath before a large congregation of several hundred people."

Constantine Andreadis, Woodlands H.S.,
Greenburgh, NY (2000)

"Stephanie added two days to the front of her spring break and two days to the end in order to travel by train to Punta Gorda, Florida. With the permission and encouragement of her parents, teachers, and mentor, Stephanie worked with big cats (as in lions and tigers) at the Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary. She returned with some amazing stories and fabulous pictures of her in the cage with a tiger! Stephanie completed her WISE project at the E.&M. Bobst Hospital of Animal Medicine on East 62nd Street in New York City."

Ellen Sackelman, New Rochelle H. S.,
New Rochelle, NY (2000)

"Jeffrey and Michael were twin brothers at Nyack High School who both did projects in education. Jeffrey chose to intern at Head Start, where he fell in love with the students and the teachers. (He introduces the wonderful video of WISE at Nyack.) Michael worked with a severely disabled little boy at the Jesse Kaplan School. The video he showed at his presentation was extraordinary. There wasn't a dry eye in the house at either presentation."

Cynthia Robinson & Steve Gardner, Nyack H.S.,
Nyack, NY (1998)



Nyack High School Lynn Giles-Harris in mentor meeting with senior Michael Hanley (WISE Project -- Elementary School Teaching, (1999).