Tanner Alford
Tanner came to WRM as a third grade student. A sportsman and nature-lover, he enjoys fishing, mountain biking, skeet shooting, hunting, and baseball. It is no surprise that this athletic young man’s favorite activity at WRM was P.E. Tanner expresses confidence in the fact that his teachers at White Rock have prepared him with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that he needs to have for high school and beyond. He states that a valuable lesson he learned at White Rock is to “do things right the first time.” Tanner is attending Sunnyvale High School.

Taylor Cave
Taylor came to WRM just in time for her 8th grade year, following her family’s move from California. Her father, Todd Cave, was a member of the first graduating class at WRM, and her grandmother, Cindy Cave-Scherbarth, was president of our Board of Directors and served as Director of the school for a period of time. Taylor says that while at WRM she learned important skills in time management that she will put to good use next year in high school. She especially enjoyed and will remember the camping trips to the school’s Fairfield Wilderness Land that “changed her perspective on work and group activities.” A creative teen and talented artist, Taylor loves to draw, watch Anime, and read in her spare time. She also volunteers at Petco. She says that she has “loved all her teachers and made very good friends” during her short time at WRM. She is attending Williams High School in Plano.
Aliyah Clifton

Aliyah began school at White Rock at three years of age. Reminiscing about those eleven years, Aliyah credits one of her lower elementary teachers with inspiring her “to be happy with her own crazy self.” Well-rounded and athletic, (she plays basketball, soccer, softball, and runs track), and an accomplished violinist, Aliyah also is a long-time member of Girl Scouts of America. She vows that she will never forget the amazing experiences she had on the adventure trips. She feels that WRM has taught her to manage her time and also how to make friends with anyone, even when they seem to have little in common. Aliyah is attending John Paul II High School.

Nash Farmer

Nash is off to Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, after completing three years at WRM. He credits WRM with sparking his interest in science and helping him establish a sense of community, especially on the Fairfield trips. In his spare time, Nash has delved into theater and rowing. He also enjoys playing board games. One valuable thing he learned at White Rock is “how to plan ahead.”

Anastasia Jacques

Annie attended WRM for seven years. With enthusiasm and energy to spare, this teen has been involved in jazz dance, vocal training, and theatrical performance. She enjoys interior design, decorating, scrapbooking, and singing the scores to her favorite musicals. Annie professes to have many great memories of her years at White Rock, but one that she will always remember is dancing the Macarena in 2nd grade on field day. She has always enjoyed class projects as well; particularly, the 7th grade dramatis persona project where she sang a song from a musical. Annie says that the small class setting at WRM has taught her to work with and become good friends with people of very different backgrounds and interests. She feels that being comfortable in a diverse group will help her with communication skills later in life. She is attending Bishop Lynch High School.

Judge Rock

Judge came to WRM as a preschooler. Over the years, he especially enjoyed the adventure trips, the time spent at Fairfield, and P.E. classes. In his spare time he enjoys bicycling, learning about cars, and listening to music, and volunteers at the White Rock Center for Hope. Judge was inspired by, and will always remember, a presentation given by a visiting SMU professor who told his personal story of becoming a scientist and the geological discoveries of which he has been a part. Judge is attending Skyline High School, in the transportation cluster, where he will put to use the time management skills he has honed at White Rock. Characteristically philosophical, this young man reminds us that “a busy schedule does not mean that you can’t have fun!”
Ian Greenberg

Ian arrived at WRM as a 6th grade student. He says one very important thing he learned here was “how to value hard work and the fun of exploring different subjects.” Furthermore, he improved his writing ability and appreciates the fact that he was allowed to incorporate his programming skills into his middle school group work. This savvy computer guy has created web sites and social media pages for various businesses and can program in three different computer languages. He also enjoys hockey and video games. Ian is attending Bishop Lynch High School.

John Henry Hollas

After studying at WRM for eleven years, John says that he “learned to never give up.” He is happy that he learned to use his calendar to organize his assignments and priorities while at WRM. Highlights of the years he spent on campus were the days when his class got to go down to the creek during gardening class. John likes to build with Legos, plays tennis on the school’s champion tennis team, and is a talented artist. He brings his talents to Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

Lydia Todd

Lydia holds the distinction of attending WRM longer than any other student in the history of the school. Since her mother, Ileana Bolano, is a teacher at the school, a little nursery was established in the teachers’ lounge following her birth, and there Lydia’s caregiver, along with her mother, watched over her for the first year of her life. As Lydia grew, so did her interests and talents. She is an accomplished musician, having studied violin for eleven years. She has been a member of the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra for five years, and she is an exceptionally talented visual artist. In her spare time she enjoys drawing and tennis and has developed a passion for scuba diving. Her fondest memories of WRM are the adventure trips. She feels that WRM allowed her to “be herself and never give up.” She is attending Bishop Lynch High School.

Esteban Usuga

After completing eleven years at WRM, Steven is attending Greenhill School. He enjoys playing baseball, soccer, and football, and relishes camping and the out-of-doors. It comes as no surprise that he lists among his most memorable events the adventure trips. Like so many others, Steven believes that one of the most valuable skills he acquired at White Rock was time management. He feels this will help him immeasurably in years to come. Steven says that he is “grateful for what WRM has given to him and the many opportunities that he has had while here.”
Middle School Adventure Trip

The annual Middle School Adventure Trip, April 22-27, 2013 was to the remote wilderness of Big Bend National Park’s Santa Elena Canyon. Travelling by canoe, students gained valuable insight into the desert ecosystem, varied geology, and rich cultural history of the area while discovering newfound skills as paddlers and desert explorers. A service project was designed to rid the area of harmful and unsightly tires lodged along the course of the Rio Grande’s river bed.

Written by Judge Rock

The White Rock Montessori Middle School Adventure Trip was an experience fueled by our group of exuberant youths devoted to keeping the scenic Santa Elena Canyon rich in its natural beauty. Our expedition began as the last canoe left the shore, each of our boats loaded down with every piece of gear and supplies needed for our itinerary. Our backs and muscles ached as we powered through the numerous low sections of the Rio Grande and yet we felt inspired by the challenge of fording up to our camp near Fern Canyon.

Our mouths were watering. We knew as soon as we set camp there awaited pork tamales and beans for dinner. We had a night to rest before we continued our trek up river to perform the river cleanup. In no time, we were heading out to retrieve discarded tires; waterlogged hunks of water, steel, and mud. We worked as an unbroken team as we loaded the tires into our empty canoes with no hesitation or arguments. This was not some small, insignificant project. We were all putting our best effort into cleaning the river for future generations of adventurers and campers to enjoy the canyon even more than we did. There is no doubt that we had some outstanding moments during the service work while enjoying the grandeur of the river. We also had a whooping good time playing in the river, having water gun wars, and canoe races. These added to many unforgettable moments, in this grand wilderness.

At the day’s end we relaxed after a wonderful dinner and gazed as the moonlight crept along the canyon walls, the narrow night sky giving only a glimpse of the immense universe beyond. Exploring this indomitable section of the river that divides Mexico and the U.S.A., we were proud to have served both countries in keeping the Rio Grande…Fantastico!
On September 11, 2013, Middle School students participated in a ROPES (Reality Oriented Physical Education Science) course designed to develop skills in trust building, group initiatives, and individual challenges.

The 6th grade group with teachers Mr. Connery (UE2) and Ms. Brass (UE1).

The Middle Schoolers receive a safety lesson and put on their harnesses.

Jonny Abdo and Max Watkins take a moment to relax in the shade at Dinosaur Valley.

Michael Thomas, Elizabeth McPherson, and Sawyer Thompson

Anna Wehrmann and Victoria Coolidge
Alex attended the University of Texas at Austin, and Texas A & M, where she graduated a year early with a B.A. in Communications, and a business minor. She married Alex Kalvaitis on November 24, 2012 and currently works as a Client Service Associate for J.P. Morgan Private Bank.

Alexandra Grinaldi Kalvaitis  
Class of 2001

Caleb Veazey  
Class of 2005

Caleb graduated in May from Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, Arizona State University, with a B.A. in Jazz Performance. His next adventure will be graduate school to continue his musical studies.

Mary Rachel Stimson  
Class of 2005

Mary Rachel graduated with honors from Harvey Mudd College in May, 2013. Majoring in Computer Science, she was recruited by several major companies before accepting her dream job at Microsoft Corporation. She has moved to Bellevue, WA and joined Microsoft as part of the XBox Live development team where she is program manager.

Anna Sobering  
Class of 2002


Mary Rachel Stimson  
Class of 2005

Mary Rachel graduated with honors from Harvey Mudd College in May, 2013. Majoring in Computer Science, she was recruited by several major companies before accepting her dream job at Microsoft Corporation. She has moved to Bellevue, WA and joined Microsoft as part of the XBox Live development team where she is program manager.

Landon McGarry  
Class of 2005

(Pictured on Right) Landon graduated from Hendrix College with a major in Studio Art and a minor in Psychology. She plans on attending The International Montessori Training Institute in Atlanta, GA to receive her Masters in Montessori Education.

Evan Ott  
Class of 2007

Evan is a third-year computer science and physics major in the Dean’s Scholars and Turing Scholars programs at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the recipient of the Unrestricted Endowed Presidential Scholarship, and president of the Society of Physics Students. This past summer, Evan served an internship at Sandia National Labs in Albuquerque. Sandia National Lab employees apply science to help detect, repel, defeat, or mitigate threats to U.S. security.

Anna Sobering  
Class of 2002

Chloe Sturges  
Class of 2007

Chloe is attending the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) where she is pursuing an Opera major.

Phoebe Sturges  
Class of 2009

Phoebe followed her older sister, Chloe, to Ole Miss, where she is a Political Science major with sights on Law School.

Amy Brisendine Vigilante

Amy received her degree from University of California Santa Barbara and is currently living in Santa Barbara where she and her husband own and operate a small cafe.

Zee Rock  
Class of 2008

Zee is a sophomore at Harding University, double majoring in Public Administration and Leadership and Ministry, and on track to graduate a year early. Zee is a member of Gamma Sigma Phi fraternity, serving as an officer, and plays club sports. He has participated in the annual Spring Sing production as well as in Model Arab League and the American Studies Institute. Zee was elected Student Association Treasurer and is currently co-leading a mentorship group. Over the summer he embarked on The Experience, an internship trip. He and three other students, along with two professors, visited New York City, Miami, and Jinotega, Nicaragua, as well as serving as counselors at Harding’s annual summer camp, Uplift.

Hunter Stephan  
Class of 2009

Hunter graduated with distinguished honors from Lake Highlands High School this past June. He was captain of the tennis team, winning five consecutive district championships. Hunter was a member of the National Honor Society for three years, founder and president of the Young Republican’s Club, member of the DECA Club and Sports Reporter. He received the Wildcat Award for exceptional leadership and personality at LHHS, along with a Senior Service Award medal. Hunter will attend University of Texas at Arlington for a year before moving to University of Texas at Austin for a degree in communication or marketing.

Ryan Moss

Ryan attended middle school and high school in Sunnyvale. He was a member of The National Honor Society and was voted Mr. Sunnyvale High School. He was very involved in athletics, participating in football (Academic All-State), basketball, soccer, track, and power lifting. He is attending Texas A&M University.
Fridays are special in After-School Care. This is the day the children and their teachers, Ali Rhodes and Allyson Toler, explore American symbols, such as the American flag, the Liberty Bell, the Statue of Liberty, and many other symbolic images of our great country.

Another favorite area of exploration in ASC is Science. This year, everyone has been excited to learn more about invertebrates. They also are studying the layers of the earth, landform changes, and types of rocks. They will even make “edible” rocks as they learn how rocks are formed.

Returning from the summer, Mr. Maeding and his students set about weeding beds. They also pruned and cleared brush in the area of the new goat enclosure in anticipation of the arrival of our new goats this fall. Students have engaged in a soil study, delved into the food web, and begun to get their fall beds planted. Of course, there has been the normal duck and chicken care that many so enjoy.

New to the Discovery Garden curriculum this year is the study of Biodynamic Agriculture; a holistic understanding of the agricultural processes. The approach considers that there are lunar and astrological influences on soil and plant development, for example, choosing to plant, cultivate or harvest various crops based on both the phase of the moon and the zodiacal constellation the moon is passing through, and also depending on whether the crop is the root, leaf, flower, or fruit of the plant. Students are following the Biodynamic Sowing and Planting Calendar.

Ms. Res and her students began the year with the study of the native tribes of North America. Dividing the population into geographical regions, students discovered that within each region were many different tribes, each with its own heritage, customs, and values. Students in each class will focus on how one tribe met its basic needs of shelter, food, clothing, and daily living. The Lower Elementary’s tribe is the Sioux of the Plains, while the Upper Elementary is exploring the Tlingit of the Pacific Northwest, and the Middle school, the Navajo in the Southwest. Projects so far include totems, clan masks, and a medicine wheel composed of painted rocks. Each student painted a rock inspired by a spirit animal that he or she felt reflected their personal strength and characteristics. A gold line is painted on each rock that connects them all in the circle. The whole wheel represents a sense of community and connectedness while each painted rock symbolizes individuality and diversity.

PS1 children enjoy singing traditional American songs such as “This Little Light of Mine”, “Crawdad Song”, and “Shady Grove” with their teachers, Ms. Akin and Ms. Bolano. They enjoyed looking at beautiful images of the Grand Canyon as they listened to “On the Trail” and “Cloudburst” from the Grand Canyon Suite by American composer, Ferde Grofé. Teachers are reading Papa and the Pioneer Quilt by Jean Van Leeuwen. The class will start making their own quilt soon. They are also looking forward to making and eating an American favorite, apple pie!

PS2 children have been building new friendships and getting to know and appreciate themselves. Directed by Ms. Giroux and Mr. Lewicki, they are studying our beautiful continent of North America and making connections about where their place is in this big world. They will discuss how our country was discovered and learn about the everyday lives of young children during that time.
Lower Elementary 1

LE1 students and their teachers, Ms. Rose and Ms. Thacker, along with intern, Ginette Correa, are reading *The Buffalo Jump* by Peter Roop and studying American culture through dance, poetry, cooking, and visual art. They will discover the history of the Statue of Liberty. The story of Black Elk will offer an opportunity to explore lessons to be found in his vision.

Upper Elementary 2

Ms. Neilsen, Mr. Connery, and their UE2 students are having a busy start to the year with a lot of interest in the natural world. Students saw the culmination of a botany experiment started in April of last year to discover how plants can overcome obstacles in finding water. After six months of waiting, and to the amazement of all, their plucky avocado pit sprouted, despite the four-inch rock in its path.

The class has also started a worm farm and composting system. Beginning with a thousand Red Wigglers, UE2 worm ranchers hope to cultivate a thriving herd of 20,000 in a year’s time!

Middle School

October is a busy month for the MS. Under the direction of Mr. Piersanti, Ms. Hutcheson, and Mr. Maeding, the Middle School completed their first Fairfield trip. The weather was beautiful and everything went smoothly. The prior week was spent meal planning, shopping, testing tents, making inventory lists, creating work groups, and checking personal gear before departure. This year, students are setting up a remote lab with an outdoor laboratory tent, tables, stools, equipment and workspace for collecting, sampling, and studying specimens in the field. Global Positioning Systems have been purchased to allow students to map, survey and inventory topographical features of the Fairfield property.

The MS business is off and running. Prototypes of Christmas ornaments and wooden reindeer are complete and the manufacturing is in process. Fall crops are being planted for sale, and Rosemary skewers have already been made available for purchase.

Stream Team

Stream Team has been monitoring the water quality of Ash Creek and the Science Club has begun planning its agenda for the year, to include designing and building a campus weather station, and collecting and preserving specimens for an entomological collection. The club hopes to perform some chemical reactions and learn to balance equations related to the study of the Periodic Table as well.
Preschool 1 gets a lesson on bike trail safety.

Elementary children ride the trail on large tricycles.

Preschoolers give each other rides on tricycles with passenger seats.

While not in use, the bikes are kept safe from the elements in our custom-built bike garage.

Preschool and Lower Elementary classes enjoy a play about the Sun and Stars put together by the LE1 3rd graders.

Under the shade of the woods, the amphitheater is a peaceful and cozy place to gather for performances.

On September 14, 2013, parents enjoyed the opportunity to experience first-hand what it is like to be a student at White Rock Montessori School.

Preschool 1 dad, Robert Martin.

Parents explore materials in a Lower Elementary classroom.

Preschool 2 teacher, Rob Lewicki, and Preschool 1 and 2 mom, Natasha Taylor, work in the outdoor classroom.

10-and-Under Team: City Champions

12-and-Under Team: City Champions

8-and-Under Team: 2nd Place

14-and-Under Team: 2nd Place

All Tennis Teams

8-and-Under Team: 2nd Place

14-and-Under Team: 2nd Place
ALUMNI GARDEN PARTY

On May 11, 2013, the PTO invited alumni to a reception in the Discovery Garden. Almost a hundred folks, including several members of our first graduating class, gathered to enjoy the garden, catch up with former classmates and teachers, and reminisce over old yearbooks and slide shows.

Our next alumni get-together is planned for May 10, 2014.

We hope to see many of you then!

Preschool teacher, Wendy Akin, and alumnus, Tyson Henry, peruse old yearbooks.

Director, Sue Henry, Stephanie Allen-Adams and alumna, Tryn Harper, watch videos from years past.

Alumnae, Shoshana and Shaina Adelman, Isabel Brown, and Sydney Abdo reminisce in the garden.

Alumni gather in the Middle School room with Middle School teacher, Angelo Piersanti, for a slide show.