

PUBLIC ALLIES FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AT EAGLE ROCK SCHOOL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Meet the Fellows

Class of 2006/2007



The Public Allies Fellowship Program at Eagle Rock School & Professional Development Center offers young leaders interested in youth development and educational change an opportunity to serve at a nationally-recognized residential high school located in the Rocky Mountains. Eagle Rock School was founded in 1993 to offer young people ages 15 to 21 an opportunity to experience academic success while promoting community, integrity, and active citizenship. An innovative curriculum draws extensively from Eagle Rock's mountain setting, emphasizing environmentalism, outdoor education, active learning, community service, and traditional academic subjects. The Professional Development Center provides prospective and employed teachers with opportunities to develop innovative curricula and teaching methods that can be used to better serve the needs of similar students in their schools.

Spencer Christensen, 22, grew up in Oakland and Mill Valley, CA. He recently graduated from Wesleyan University with a BA in sociology. Through the sociology department he developed a passion for Community Studies by working with The Oddfellows Playhouse, a youth theater in Middletown, CT. In collaboration with the playhouse, he performed a series of studies on arts-based after-school programs in the northeast. His work ultimately aided the Playhouse in creating a peer-mentoring program. As the Service Learning Fellow, Spencer hopes to share his passion for community-based action and empowerment. He plans to integrate his background in sociology to offer classes dealing with social justice and inequality.

Esperanza Gallón, 23, was born and raised in Cincinnati, OH. She attended Miami University in Oxford, OH in 2005 and graduated with a BA in Middle Childhood Education with a focus in Language Arts and Social Studies. She is Public Allies Cincinnati 2005-2006 Alum and worked at Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, a non-profit law firm. She did paralegal work for Guardian ad Litem (attorneys for children who are involved in children services through abuse and neglect cases). She also taught summer school reading to fifth graders and was a Crisis hotline counselor. Esperanza intends to go to graduate school after her time at Eagle Rock to study Counseling and a possible dual program with Children's Law. She plans on using her experience to open a children's home for abused and runaway children. Her hobbies are reading, singing, and watching movies.

Molly Goulden, 23, grew up near the Puget Sound in Washington State and is a recent graduate of Grove City College, which is located near Pittsburgh, PA. She has worked in numerous positions involving youth in sports. Most recently, Molly worked as an adventure-based counseling facilitator at George Junior Republic in Grove City, PA where she used team-based initiatives to encourage self-empowerment among youth. As the Human Performance Center Fellow, Molly hopes to learn more about the integration of experiential education with athletics and health. She is very excited about being at Eagle Rock and finding her area to contribute to the community.

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Scott James, 28, grew up in Waukesha, WI. He graduated from Bradley University in Peoria, IL with a BA in English and Secondary Education Certification. After teaching in a public high school for one year, he decided to pursue some of his curiosities, working over the next five years in a variety of settings. His travels have allowed him to work as a whitewater rafting guide in Colorado, a cook in Alaska, an outdoor educator and program designer in multiple settings throughout California, and a factory worker throughout the Midwest. He sees all of these experiences as valuable along the path as a lifelong learner and an engaged human being. At Eagle Rock, Scott wants to learn from students, promote creative writing in all forms, and examine various methods of teaching writing and literature.

Denise Lord, 25, originally from Alaska (but more recently from Oregon), graduated from Kalamazoo College with degrees in Spanish Language and Literature and International and Area Studies. While in school she spent four months living in, and writing an ethnographic study about, the U.S.-Mexico border region. She also lived in Quito, Ecuador for a year, attending a local university and working on an integrative cultural research project involving concepts of gender and beauty in Ecuadorian society. After graduation, Denise began to pursue a career in education, supporting and teaching non-English speaking students. As a Fellow, she hopes to gain more classroom experience, and looks forward to incorporating her love of cultures into the language classes at Eagle Rock.

Emily Matuzek, 23, was born in Minneapolis, MN and raised in Omaha, NE. During her time in college, Emily worked with students with Autism, and developed an interest in educational practices to serve atypical students. In 2005, she completed her BA in Linguistics to graduate from Rice University, and was awarded a Zeff Fellowship for independent travel. During her year abroad, Emily lived in three distinct cultures as a way to better understand the supports available to families with children with Autism. Now, as the Professional Development Center Fellow, Emily orients visiting educators to the philosophies and practices of Eagle Rock School. During her time here, she hopes to find her niche in the educational field, and learn from students how to create an effective learning environment.

Sarah Pieplow, 25, was born in Sioux Falls, SD and graduated Middlebury College in Vermont. She holds a BA in music with focuses in native and postcolonial literature, and French. Sarah taught middle school music on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota; interned in vocal music and English at DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, NY; and worked as a waitress in a smoky Vermont bar and an organic vegan restaurant. While at Eagle Rock, Sarah hopes to expand her experience and confidence in the classroom while integrating global literature and music, racial stereotyping, and colonial histories. She also looks forward to fostering student creativity and critical thinking; learning the banjo, the upright bass, the viola, perhaps the accordion, and working on her cello.

Emily Roh, 26, is a native of Los Angeles and a graduate of UCLA where she majored in Asian American Studies. While at UCLA, she became involved with student organizing and advocated for the integration of a diversity requirement into graduation requirements. Also a Public Allies Los Angeles alum, Emily worked at the Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center where she coordinated and trained volunteers to provide conflict resolution services to low income, monolingual residents of Los Angeles County. As the Societies and Cultures Fellow, Emily hopes to utilize her myriad of interests and experiences, as well as her passion for social justice, to provoke critical thought in students.

Spruce Schoenemann, 25, was born in Vermont and grew up playing in the woods, rivers, and meadows of Pawlet. After graduating from Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA with a BA in Geology and Environmental Studies, he started working on Tall Ships in the Pacific Ocean incorporating his passion for the natural world with hands-on learning. Over the past 3 years he has worked for a number of Outdoor Education organizations including the Student Conservation Association and Outward Bound. As the Science Fellow at ERS, Spruce is excited to challenge his students to think of science not as an isolated field but as a way to go about life, with an inquisitive approach to everything. He hopes to gain experience teaching in the classroom and developing interesting science curriculum.

Ben Shear, 22, grew up outside Boston, MA and attended the F.W. Parker Charter Essential School, a partner of Eagle Rock School. In June of 2006 he graduated from Dartmouth College with a BA in Philosophy and minor in Mathematics. During college, Ben became interested in education after mentoring students in an Outdoor Leadership program and student teaching high school math. He was drawn to Eagle Rock by the educational philosophy and the mountainous setting. At Eagle Rock, he is excited to work with the math Instructional Specialist in designing an alternative math curriculum based upon solid conceptual and practical understandings, which he believes all students can attain. He hopes to gain valuable experience both in the classroom and as a mentor and participant in the community as a whole.

Suzanne Sustaita, 28, is from Connecticut and graduated from the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford in 2005 with a BFA in Photography and a minor in Art History. Suzanne was a member of the Public Allies Connecticut class of 2006. At her placement organization, Artspace, she served as a volunteer coordinator for New Haven's City Wide Open Studios, while also playing an integral role as a co-instructor for the teen docent program. Suzanne brings a variety of unique life experiences to Eagle Rock, including time spent serving in the United States Army National Guard. She has volunteered for such organizations as Habitat for Humanity, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, and the Institute for Living, exploring art therapy with youth. At Eagle Rock, Suzanne hopes to strengthen the photography curriculum by applying her knowledge and passion for the subject.

Marli Williams, 23, grew up in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago, IL. She is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire where she received a BA in Outdoor Education. For the past 3 years, Marli has been pursuing her passion in the field of outdoor education through many avenues including Wilderness Therapy and Adaptive Outdoor Programming. As the Outdoor Education Fellow, Marli works with the new student wilderness orientation program and offers academically integrated adventure activities throughout the year. Marli is really excited to expand her knowledge base as an instructor and is looking forward to being apart of creating opportunities for students to make positive changes in their lives.

