

Alumni

DAWSON

SARAH TAVERNETTI, class of '05



Sarah Tavernetti, 2010



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A tiny fourth grader walked through the doors of a brand new school in 2000, not knowing what to expect. Ten years later, Sarah Tavernetti is a college sophomore, studying elementary education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).

Although she began attending Dawson more than a decade ago, Sarah still has many memories of her five academic years spent at the School.

Sarah started fourth grade in 2000, the first year Dawson opened, and graduated from eighth grade in 2005. During her time at the School, she participated in many activities, particularly those involving creative and fine arts.



Fourth Grade, 2001

Eighth Grade, 2005

"I was in choir and I took ceramics, woodworking, watercolor and bead art," said Sarah. "There was also a yoga class offered for a short time, and I participated in that as well."

According to Sarah, the classes she took at Dawson helped prepare her for high school, "...especially the art classes I took," she noted. "The skills I learned in those classes really carried through when I got to high school."

Sarah admits that her weakest subject used to be math. "I hated math and really struggled with it for many years," she said. "But in eighth grade Mr. Hennemann actually taught me to love math. In fact, when I got to high school, I aced math all four years. Now, it's one of my favorite subjects."

After graduating from Dawson, Sarah attended Bishop Gorman High School, where she continued her love for the arts by participating in the school's theater program. "I was always pretty shy, so I stuck to the behind-the-scenes stuff, doing costumes and makeup," she said.

While she enjoyed high school, she also missed the closeness she felt with her teachers at Dawson. "I really missed how personal everything was, with small class sizes. The teachers truly cared about you, and it was always easy to come to them with problems or questions," she said. "It was like having another set of parents rather than teachers."

Sarah is now in her second year at UNLV, studying to be a fifth-grade teacher. She is currently observing several elementary schools in the area as part of a fall semester education class. "I knew I wanted to come back to Dawson to observe," said Sarah. "I knew from experience Dawson was a good school, so I knew it would benefit me to come back here and look at things from a teacher's perspective instead of from a student's."

Sarah spent several weeks at Dawson, rotating throughout all of the fifth-grade classrooms. While observing, Sarah noticed an important difference between Dawson students and those at other schools. "Students are able to make their own decisions, and there is a lot of student-based learning," she said. "That is definitely different from what I have seen at other schools."

"Also, the students seem so mature and respectful, and I think that speaks well for the School and the teachers," she added.

As Sarah continues her education to become a fifth-grade teacher, and possibly join the Teach for America program, she acknowledged those who have impacted her career decision. "Every teacher I had at Dawson was so inspiring and taught me what it means to be a great teacher."

For those students graduating and moving on to high school this year, Sarah offered some advice: "In high school, you have to learn to be independent. Don't be held back by what your friends want to do, or think you should do."

She added, "Take the classes you love and are interested in, don't just choose classes because your friends are in them. At the end of the day, you have to do what makes you happy and all the rest will fall into place." ■



Are you interested in keeping in touch with Dawson and your former classmates? Have you lost touch with the school and want to reconnect?

Dawson is looking to gauge the interest in hosting class reunions, and we need your advice about other fun ideas to help alumni stay connected. Alumni from all graduating classes are invited to share ideas.

Please see the "discussions" section on our Facebook page for more information. Send an email to alumni@adsrm.org to join the committee.



Interested in being listed in our Alumni Class Notes?

Visit www.adsrm.org/alumni and your updates will be added to our website and published in the next *Petroglyph*.

Kelly Bowman (attended Dawson from kindergarten to second grade) currently attends Vail Christian High School in Vail, Colorado. She loves to ski, snowboard and horseback ride in rodeos and other events. She hopes to become a neonatal nurse.



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