

ALUMNI PROFILE: MONICA KAITZ, CLASS OF 1994

The most important gift I took with me from EB was a certain international flavour. My closest friends at EB (and later FAIS in San Francisco) came from such places as Taiwan, Iran, the Philippines, Finland, France (of course), and the exotic Orinda; a pretty incredible list. Along with the coursework and foreign teachers, this opened my mind to a wider perspective. All of the sudden, history included Europe (with all its Louis) as opposed to simply the U.S.

Another hallmark of EB that I didn't fully appreciate until later was the discipline inherent in the French school system. The French teachers I had didn't demand respect, they expected it... as if it were a given. They simply couldn't imagine you would behave any other way. This is not the impression I get from accounts of my college friends' grade school experiences. While I can't say that at the time I appreciated not getting away with much, in hindsight it certainly seems more conducive to character-building than the alternative. Thus, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the wonderful teachers, French and American, at EB to whom I owe what has become a full, fulfilling and auspicious beginning to my life.

So what have I done with all this international flavour and iron-clad character? I started the French Club at my alma mater Amherst College, spent the requisite year abroad in Paris at the Sorbonne, studied opera in Milan at La Scala, and just graduated from the post-baccalaureate premedical program at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. To save airfare, I managed to ride home from Baltimore to San Francisco on a bicycle just this past summer (I recommend) and plan to join another FAISer to do the AIDS ride from San Francisco to L.A this June. Having so many international friends and relatives means I get to visit them all, so I was recently in Perth, Australia, visiting. So, currently, I'm back in the Bay Area studying for my MCAT in April. After five years on the East Coast, it's nice to be home for a while. My sister, Diana, is on the alumni committee at E.B., so hopefully we both will see any and all alums at our house for the next communal gathering (I make a mean moussaka).

