



# LILA Alumni Newsletter

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

November 2016

## School Updates

**GREAT START TO THE YEAR!** LILA first opened its doors in 2004 with 177 students. Today, we're happy to enroll over 1000 students in grades PreK through 12th grade, with teachers and staff from 11 countries around the world. Fifth grade has been reunited with Main Campus, and Upper Campus is quickly filling up with over 249 middle school students and 36 high school students! While our first group of high schoolers is relatively small, they are excited to be here (and so are their parents!) Most are former students returning to LILA to complete their education in an internationally-minded, language rich environment.

**CAMP DRAGON'S INAUGURAL YEAR!** LILA's international language and cultural exchange program, "Camp Dragon – Mandarin By The Lake," brought 18 Chinese students ages 10 and up and their chaperones to Forest Lake for two weeks in July. The day camp was presented in partnership with the Chinese Society of Education, the largest academic organization in China. During the camp, the Chinese guests taught their American "buddies" about their language and culture in the mornings, while the American students shared local activities and tours of the area, including visiting the Minnesota Twins facilities at Target Field, packing meals at Feed My Starving Children, and taking a field trip to the Mall of America. Local

**10 YEARS**  
*and counting!*

For 10 consecutive years, LILA has received the School Finance Award from the Minnesota Department of Education, which recognizes public schools that achieve state financial compliance, have a positive fund balance, and demonstrate financial stewardship through board and administration attendance of finance training.



families hosted the guests in their homes. At the Closing Ceremony, students presented what they learned and exchanged emails to continue their new friendships.

**LILA NAMED INTERNATIONAL PEACE SITE BY WORLDCITIZEN.ORG!** The five Peace Actions defined by World Citizen are: seek peace within yourself and others; reach out in service; protect the environment; respect diversity; and be a responsible citizen of the world. The Peace Actions echo LILA's mission to prepare our students to become global citizens and the principles of the International Baccalaureate curriculum. LILA invited guests to paint a thumbprint onto a peace symbol canvas to represent their commitment to promoting world peace.

**LILA received the 2016 Business Innovation Award** from the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce this week at the Chamber's Annual Meeting! LILA was nominated by Chamber members for "demonstrating innovation... through the successful launch of an innovative new product or service and/or through a consistent commitment to supporting and encouraging innovation within [the] organization." Thank you to all of our staff members, parents, and students who have believed in LILA's innovative approach and our mission to prepare "tomorrow's critical thinkers and global citizens through language acquisition and inquire-driven study."

Please help spread the word to  
*give children the world!*  
Share out tour dates with  
potential LILA families.

**Lower School Tours:**  
Mon., Nov. 14, 8:30 a.m.  
Fri., Dec. 9, 8:30 a.m.  
Mon., Dec. 12, 8:30 a.m.  
Tues., Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Wed., Jan. 4, 8:30 a.m.  
Wed., Jan. 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Thurs., Jan. 12, 8:30 a.m.  
Thurs., Feb. 16, 8:30 a.m.  
Mon., Mar. 20, 8:30 a.m.  
Wed., Mar. 22, 6:30 p.m.  
Tues., Apr. 18, 8:30 a.m.  
Thurs., May 11, 8:30 a.m.

**Upper School:**  
Thurs., Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m.  
Tues., Dec. 6, 8:30 a.m.  
Mon., Jan. 9, 6:00 p.m.



LILA has received a 2016 National Best Practices Award from Character.org for our "Make a Difference" I-Term class, taught by Jennifer Wurscher (shown far left) with class members.  
*Congratulations!*



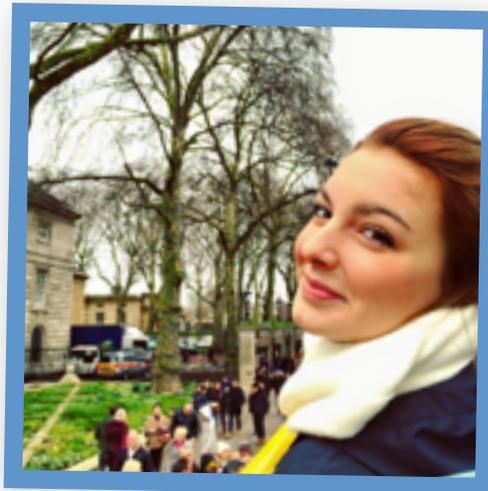
United Nations headquarters in New York, representing Djibouti, spring 2016.

## ALUMNI Spotlight - *Emily Stachel*

Hola! I am a 2007 LILA alum: my sixth-grade class was the first to graduate from LILA. Since 2007 I have been quite busy! I continued my Spanish into junior high where I was a member of the Southwest Junior High Spanish club as well as a member of student council. In high school, I was able to take my Spanish even further, completing many college credits in Spanish, as well other AP and CIS courses. In 2011 I attended a missions trip to Puerto Rico as a translator. This past May I graduated from Winona State University a year early with honors and was happy to secure a place on the dean's list, I double majored in political science and Spanish language studies. While at Winona state I was president of the Spanish language club, a member of the national honor society Pi Sigma Delta, and was a delegate for the school's Model United Nation's club, participating in the 2016 New York conference.

Today I am back at LILA working full time as the site supervisor for the Explorer's club, it is a very unique experience to be a part of the LILA community as an adult, and it is great getting to see the ways LILA has changed over the years, as well as getting to know some of the great families and employees that make up LILA. I love being able to use my Spanish on a daily basis, and watch students grow and go through the same immersion environment as I did. While working, I am also studying for the LSAT in hopes of attending law school to study immigration law or human's rights, a career where speaking a second language will greatly benefit me.

Although I only attended LILA for a short time it has had a *momentous impact* on my life. As a child *LILA opened my eyes* to a more global perspective, something that I would not have received at a traditional elementary school. Through LILA I gained a great deal of respect for my global community, as well as the Spanish language and culture. I have created a network of people abroad as well as at home from individuals I met while at LILA, and these connections have already had a positive impact on my career. I am a person that loves learning, travel, and new experiences, I credit this to my three wonderful teachers I had while at LILA, Profe Katie Tauer, Profe Ellen Aschim, and Profe Teresa Nelson. These three teachers had a love for life, learning, and the world that was contagious. Through LILA I have been not only been able to *thrive academically* but also an as individual. LILA gave me the ability to learn in a wonderful, open community but it also helped me find my passion. My life has been shaped by the two years I spent at this school, and I am excited to continue to experience the ways in which LILA will influence my life.



Traveling through Europe, winter 2016.

## FORMER STAFF update - *Seth Ericson*

What have I been up to, since I left LILA in the summer of 2013? Our family relocated to St. Peter, MN, where my wife Siri began a job as Chaplain at Gustavus College. I was a stay-at-home dad for almost a year, and feel fortunate to have done so...it was a great experience! After that I got a job as District Technology Director at Sibley East Schools. Just recently I began a new gig as Systems Librarian for the regional Library System. I am in charge of the library automation system, technology staff development, and the Google Apps infrastructure. With two kids - a 7-and 2-year old - I definitely stay *busy and inspired*. I channel those experiences into an off-beat "Daddy" blog.



I think back on all that I was able to do and learn as a Technology Coordinator at LILA, and say "wow!" It was quite an adventure. From the birth of LILAVISION to the adoption of Google Apps for Education, we went through some *amazing* changes. As a Technology teacher, I was able to watch the *students grow* and develop into real-world *thinkers* and *problem-solvers*. I tried to be as creative as possible, thinking up ways to challenge and inspire their learning.

With LILAVISION, using the concepts of IB's PYP curriculum, we constantly devised new ways of presenting, constructing, imagining, and refining our approach. I am thankful for the LILA staff, who appreciated my "unique" sense of humor, and allowed me to be myself — I will always treasure that. *LILA taught me to be a student of the world*, engaging life with open-mindedness and curiosity. Even now, I use that philosophy to raise and guide my children.

LILA will always have a special place in my heart! Feel free to contact me — I would love to hear from you! Cell: 651-206-0261 — Email: [seth.r.erickson@gmail.com](mailto:seth.r.erickson@gmail.com) -

Blog: [www.azurebelly.com/daddyflow/](http://www.azurebelly.com/daddyflow/)

The Alumni Newsletter is sponsored by the LILA Foundation which is made up of a group of parents who value the quality of education LILA is providing their children so much so that they are committed to building an endowment to ensure financial stability for LILA's future students.

PLEASE help us connect with other Alumn, former staff, families and language ambassadors. Forward this newsletter and they can sign up to receive the next edition using

[this link!](#)

### Once LILA family, *always* LILA family!

Please know you are always welcome to participate in all our evening events.

*Save the Dates!*

1. December 8, 2016 at 9 a.m. - 1st Annual Grandparent's Breakfast Fundraiser — [RSVP here!](#)
2. April 22, 2017 at 6 p.m. - Foundation Gala. Check out the Foundation website for more information.
3. June 2, 2017 — Family Fun Night.