



# LILA Alumni Newsletter

3rd Edition - LILA Foundation Alumni Newsletter

June 9, 2017

## LILA Recent Highlights

**Destination Imagination (DI) goes to Globals!** - LILA's Destination Imagination Team, Aluminum Linoleum, advanced to DI Globals May 24 -27 in Knoxville, TN! Owen Berg, Mason Janu, Hailey Gregory, Hannah Parke, and Grant Schwidder will compete in the improv skit category, representing MN among 45 U.S. states and 14 countries at the event. DI is an after school club that is a fun, hands-on system of learning that fosters students' creativity, courage and curiosity through open-ended academic Challenges in the fields of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), fine arts and service learning.

**Best Practices** - LILA won a Minnesota "Best Practices" award in character education for our "Dot Dragon" project. Congratulations to LILA art teacher Kirstie Alwin (shown

center in blue) and all of the LILA students, staff, and parents who participated! Governor Dayton proclaimed May 25 Character Recognition Day in honor of the award recipients and the work we do to help promote positive character development.



*Congrats to Aluminum Linoleum and Mr. McNaughton*



Alumni spotlight

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## We want to hear from you!

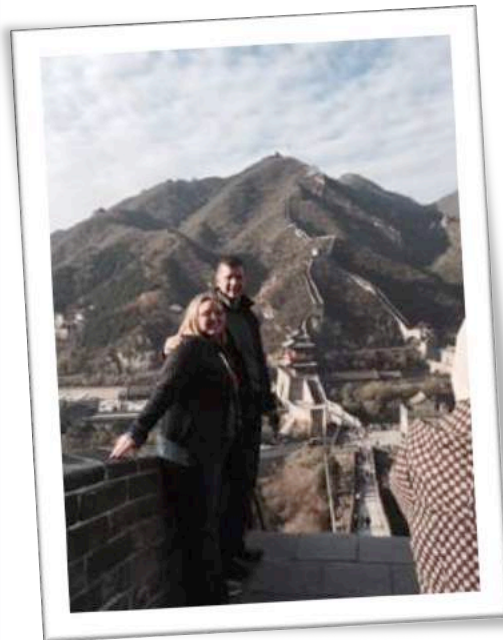
What have you been up too? What opportunities has a second language presented? How has the IB attitudes and attributes served your student in life after LILA? If you have a story to share, please go to [www.mylila.org](http://www.mylila.org), and click on the link under "Sharing your LILA Story with Us." We will feature one LILA alumni in every edition.

## Highlights Continued...

**U of M Partnership** - LILA is excited to work with Dr. Lisa Kihl at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities and her students in the Sport Management capstone class to help us develop and expand our Upper School (grades 6-12) athletic program. Here's a picture of one of the student teams presenting suggestions for operational best practices. Our learning never stops!

**School Board Makes International Connections** - LILA teacher and board member Profe Kaari Rodriguez and LILA board member Dwayne Green recently returned from a tour of schools in China, sponsored and paid for by the College Board and the Hanban, the headquarters of the Confucius Institute in China. Our two LILA representatives joined other administrators and board members from across the U.S. to gain a better understanding of the educational system there and help build international connections with

Chinese students and teachers. Thank you, Kaari and Dwayne, for being open minded, risk-takers, inquirers, and communicators— modeling the IB attributes inherent to global citizenship.



## LILA Kids do Great things!



Kalley Berg (left) and Anna Navratil (right), former LILA Students were instrumental in planning May's student walk-out to support FLPD. This event was quoted as the tipping point that reversed the City Council's decision to disband the Police Department in Forest Lake. Here they are photographed with Jana Shortal from Kare11 News.



Congratulations to LILA fifth-grader Kailyn Wittrock, a winner in the MN Twins Jackie Robinson Essay Contest (shown with her dad, Profe Jeff). Way to go!

YMCA Forest Lake honored its first-ever recipient of the Youth Thrive Award to Savannah Stuttgen, a junior at LILA's Upper School.



## Support LILA while shopping!



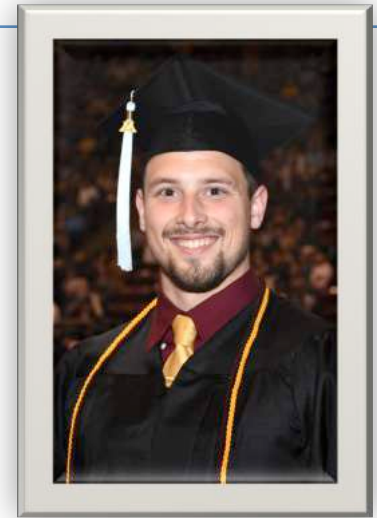
Click the box to the left, then shop on Amazon like you normally would. A small amount of what you spend will be donated back to LILA!



Dakota Overland, 8th grade, is sponsored by Federal Premium as a competitive shooter. She sees IB attributes in her sport. She says, "You must be a Risk-Taker because when shooting a competitive course of fire you must take risks to attempt to gain points in the competition."

## Alumni Spotlight – STEFAN ALBRIGHT

Hola hola coca-cola! I am a 2008 Lakes International Language Academy alum: my sixth-grade class was the second class to graduate from LILA. Since then I have accomplished so much. After LILA I continued my Spanish education into junior high and in high school. I was able to take my Spanish even further, completing college credits through CIS courses. While in Junior High, I decided to make my Eagle Scout Project a service project for LILA, helping with landscaping since it was a newer school at the time. In 2015 I took a Spanish CLEP test to gain more college credits. I graduated from Anoka Ramsey Community College with my Associates Degree Spring 2015, and this past May, graduated from The University of Minnesota a year early with honors and was happy to secure a place on the dean’s list. I majored in Human Resources and Development. While attending the U, I was a member of the national honor society Tau Sigma, and worked at my local YMCA as a Head Lifeguard and Personal trainer where many times I was called upon to translate for a Spanish speaking family. Today I am Human Resources Assistant for Goodwill Easter Seals where I help the less fortunate find jobs. I use my Spanish on a daily basis to help those in need. I love being able to use my Spanish on a daily basis, and help people.



Stefan Albright as he Graduates from the U of M

Going to LILA as a young student has helped me be successful in my career and I am extremely grateful. LILA helped me understand that people come from different backgrounds and that everyone is unique in their own way. I gained a great deal of respect for anyone who I come into contact with. I am a person that enjoys learning, and helping people whenever and however I can. My favorite teacher from my time at LILA would be my first, Profe Amy. I came to the school a little late in my 3rd grade year and switching schools was a big thing for a little boy. She was very kind and patient with me and my learning and I honor that by showing the same kind and patience to those who help. I am forever grateful for LILA for helping me be the person who I am today in many aspects of my life. Even though it was only 3 years, LILA has open many doors and I am happy that my family and I chose to go here.

**Congratulations to former LILA students, NOW 2017 high school Graduates!**

 Anna Navratil U of W Madison	 Andrew Croft St. Olaf	 Cameron Strand UMD	 Lauren Kuchenmeister UMD	 Grace LaNasa St. Olaf	 Gabby Headley Bethel University	 Luke Palm UMD	 Tommy Maurer Montana State University
 Kalley Berg U of M Mpls	 Andrew Espinosa Northern Michigan University	 Mika Peterson U of W Madison	 Harley Lundmark	 Anna Sherman U of M Mpls	 Heidi Wiese Roosevelt University Chicago		



## Former Staff Update – GAIL WILKEY

Saludos LILA folks! It's hard to believe it has already been four years since I moved away! Probably because I feel that there is always a piece of LILA with me.

I teach at Prairie Woods Elementary in the New London-Spicer district. We have 588 students in our K-4 school. I transitioned from third grade at LILA to fourth grade in New London. My fourth graders were quickly introduced to Morning Meeting, and many still say that it is their most favorite part of our school year, along with reading a morning message daily. Gracias, LILA, for introducing me to Responsive Classroom!

One of the first friends I made at my new school was the K-4 Spanish teacher, of course. It didn't take us long to start a new after-school activity called Spanish and World Cultures Club. Together, we also applied for a grant and organized a field trip for Fourth Grade to attend a Latino dance performance at the Ordway Theatre with a stop at the Mill City Museum. Some of our fourth-graders had never been out of the county, so we thought this was an important eye-opening experience for them! Looking ahead, I would love to add a stop at LILA to a future field trip.

This year was a transition year for me. With teacher movement I was able to accept the K-4 Spanish teaching position. Now instead of having 22 names to learn a year, I have almost 600 to keep track of. With ten classes coming and going through my room everyday, I am learning to be more punctual (probably hard for many of you to believe)!

I have stayed active with teacher mentoring, summer tutoring, and literacy curriculum development. The need for communicating with Spanish-speaking families has grown significantly in our school, so I now serve as our interpreter. Last year, with our Superintendent, we formed a committee to bring Q Comp to our district and just completed our first year in Q Comp with peer reviews and SMART goals! A new professional endeavor for me is involvement with our teacher union, Education Minnesota. I make it a point to speak very highly of my charter experience at LILA and preach the importance school choice and educators building each other up, regardless.

I love living in a small community where I run into my students all the time, and where the only traffic woe is being stuck behind farm equipment. It is really nice to be close to my mom, sister, niece, and nephews. I now have more time to dedicate to photography, and in the summertime that means senior pictures, family sessions, and weddings. Although I don't get to visit LILA as often as I'd like, I do stay in touch with much of my LILA family. I especially look forward to our summer cabin get-togethers!

The eight years I spent there has shaped me in so many ways, and I am forever grateful, especially to Cam, Shannon, Pat and Frank for their guidance, support, and opportunities! Muchas gracias! I'd love to hear from students, families, and colleagues! [gailwilkey@gmail.com](mailto:gailwilkey@gmail.com)



Profe Gail's 2011-2012 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class

Thank you for taking the time to read our third newsletter edition of the Alumni Newsletter. Thank you for your past contributions and support. It takes more than a budget, staff and a building to create a place like LILA. It takes a whole community of diverse people coming together for a common cause.

If you are not currently on our email list, visit [www.mylila.org/get-involved/lila-foundation](http://www.mylila.org/get-involved/lila-foundation) to sign up.