

Her dream of opening a school to come true

HOPKINTON — Parents will have a new alternative for educating their middle schoolers with the opening of the Beech Hill School in 2012. Beech Hill is an independent middle school and the brain-child of Emily Ricard, a business-woman turned teacher who dreamed of one day opening her own school and has made that dream a reality.

Ricard was an assistant vice president in the cash equity trading department at Merrill Lynch in New York City when the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks happened.

"After September 11, I left New York and became a teacher," said Ricard, who attended Wellesley College, New York University and the University of Melbourne in Australia. She taught math in a public high school in the city, but really wanted to come to New Hampshire where she had spent many summers growing up.

When a former private school building in Hopkinton came up at auction, she jumped at the chance.

"I walked into this building and thought, 'Wow, this would be a very inviting place to teach and to come to school every day,'" said Ricard, and with the help of her brother, who is well versed in real estate, she bought the building for \$410,000, and the Beech Hill School was born.

The Beech Hill School will educate sixth- and seventh-graders the first year and will expand to include eight grade the following year. It will be an intimate setting, fewer than 80 students at first, with a sharp focus on academic excellence and creative thinking, said Ricard.

For more information, visit www.thebeechhillschool.org.

— Nancy Bean Foster

Plymouth State is creating sales leaders

PLYMOUTH — Beginning in 2003, Robert Nadeau, director of Plymouth State University's Professional Sales Leadership Program, was selling insurance when he started to pursue his MBA at PSU.

His professors immediately picked up on his energy and expertise, and invited him to guest lecture in their classes. Enjoying the interaction with students, Nadeau realized that his interests lay more in the classroom than in the boardroom. Nadeau left the corporate world in 2008

to teach full time in PSU's College of Business Administration and quickly proved himself to be committed to student success.

"The number one job for college graduates, according to the Department of Labor, is sales or sales support," he said. "Yet not many universities train people for sales. I saw a tremendous opportunity for PSU and our students."

With enthusiastic support from PSU's administration, Nadeau developed what would eventually be the curriculum for the Professional Sales Leadership program. Nationally, there are only 60 sales programs out of nearly 4,200 universities.

Nadeau and the other faculty impress upon their students the importance of ethics and professionalism. "I'm always telling my students, 'Your name is all you have,'" Nadeau said. "Know your competition, and be honest if your solution isn't the best fit."

To learn more about the program, visit plymouth.edu/go/coba or contact Robert Nadeau at ranadeau@plymouth.edu.

New England College adds 7 MBA programs

HENNIKER — This spring, New England College will launch seven new MBA programs, the first of their kind at the college. All seven programs are currently enrolling and will be offered in a number of delivery formats.

Among them are MBA programs in digital and social media, strategic leadership, healthcare management, health informatics, sport and recreation management, and project management.

For more information, visit www.nec.edu/now or contact the Office of Graduate Admissions at 428-2252.

Sant Bani principal helps Bhutan project

SANBORNTON — The principal of the Sant Bani School, a private school that serves students in kindergarten through grade 12, has been working with leaders and educators in the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan as they work to align their educational system with their country-wide measure of Gross National Happiness (GNH) instead of the traditional Gross National Product (GNP).

An article Dr. Kent Bicknell wrote after his most recent trip to visit schools in Bhutan is featured in the spring issue of the National Association of Independent School's magazine "Independent School." In April, Dr. Bicknell will be participating in a conference

at the United Nations hosted by the Bhutanese government on the topic of spreading the GNH worldwide. Tilton school head helps design tests

A Tilton educator will have a hand in crafting the rigorous test that determines entrance into the day and boarding schools around the world.

The dean of faculty at Tilton School, Michael Landroche, was asked to help compile test questions for the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT). The test is given to students applying for admission to independent schools across the country and around the world, according to school officials. It is a selective admission test, given to students applying to independent schools for grades 6 through 12 and is applied in two levels: a lower level for students in grades 5 to 7, and an upper level for students in grades 8 to 11.

"Admission offices at hundreds of independent day and boarding schools around the world rely on the SSAT to help them match students with schools," school officials said in a statement.

The test is administered and created by The Secondary School Admission Test Board. The board initially put out a call searching for "exemplary" teachers in math and humanities. The board selected test writers based on their experience, education, and subject matter expertise, Tilton officials said.

— Melanie Plenda

Students design a curriculum that meets their needs at Proctor Academy

By BARBARA LEECH
Special to the Sunday News

ANDOVER — With a school philosophy based on balancing environmental responsibility, educational programs, experiential education and community and residential life, Proctor Academy in Andover has turned traditional education inside out.

Having opened its doors to students in 1848, Proctor offers over 125 individualized courses and though the school does not have a business dress code as many college preparatory schools do, it has plenty of academic structure, according to Chuck Will, director of communication and 35-year educator at the school.

"Proctor offers a curriculum that appears to be designed for a school that is much larger than 357. The result is that each student can meet college preparatory requirements while designing a customized Proctor experience," he said. "It's the opposite of 'one size fits all,' in fact; we're encouraging each student to become a truly unique individual."

Will says that the structured education of the school is based on lots of open communication. The school prides itself on ruling with values (honesty, respect, compassion and responsibility), not by strict regulations.



A student at Proctor Academy is studying math while learning navigation as part of the Ocean Classroom academic sailing adventure for 23 Proctor students each fall term, an extension of the school's "learn by doing" approach to learning.

Proctor is located on 3,000 rural acres 30 minutes from both Concord and Hanover and about 90 miles from Boston. The student body is made up of about 270 boarding students and 75 day students. Approximately 45 percent are female and 55 percent are male. There are 82 full-time teaching faculty at the school, of which more than 60 percent hold advanced degrees. Small classroom size offers a 5:1 student-to-teacher ratio.

According to Will, Proctor

prides itself on the active nature of "learning by doing." The term "experiential education" means studying a plot of Proctor woodlands for evidence of distinct wildlife populations, working a lathe in woodshop or role-playing a key senate debate.

Students are encouraged to take on leadership roles on campus by providing a tour to visitors, weeding the school's organic garden, volunteering to help out at the local elementary school or helping organize their dorm's recycling program.

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Robert Nadeau is director of Plymouth State University's Professional Sales Leadership Program.

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