

In Her Own Words

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So what made you decide to be a teacher?

When I was in sixth grade, the teacher had whoever finished his or her work first walk around and help the others. That was when I first realized that I liked to show and explain things to others.

And you were always the first one finished, of course?

[laughing] Yes, usually the case. I was president of the Future Teachers of America in high school. When I got to college though, I hadn't necessarily decided on any career. But a professor asked me, "Have you ever considered teaching?"

Where were you born?

I was born near Princeton, New Jersey. I went to public school. I came to Duke as a freshmen, and I have stayed here ever since.

Explain to us about your Duke

affiliations and affinity.

I stayed at Duke for my whole career. My BA, masters and doctorate are all from Duke. I received the doctorate there after I was married; more recently, I have also set a number of my juniors on the 'right' path!

So how long have you been here at Science and Math?

I've been here since the school opened in 1980.

Wow, so that means you've been witness to many changes around here.

Yes, things have changed. We have changed many buildings that are currently being used, especially [she gestures to the office area]. A lot more courses, more faculty members and of course, more students have been added. We actually just started out with 150 juniors, and everybody knew everybody. With all the additions, it looks and feels different, but the one thing that has-

n't changed is the students [smiling broadly]. They are just as much fun to teach.

You travel a lot, Dr. Wilson. Tell us about that.

My love for history actually came from traveling as a child. I had seen all forty-eight states, been to Mexico and Canada, and been to Europe three times with my family. We spent one summer in the Caribbean Islands. On our trips, we did things like follow where Abe Lincoln had gone, because my father was also a history major and he was very interested. I remember the Tower of London. They told me the story of Henry VIII and his six wives and I just thought 'wow,' and I loved it.

Then my husband and I traveled to Europe a lot. I taught in England in the summer for six or seven years, and I taught in Portugal for one summer. After I was through teaching we'd go somewhere, like Prague or Germany or Spain. I have been to a lot of

places in Europe. Last summer I finally made my fiftieth state. I had been to Hawaii years ago, but this past summer I finally went to Alaska.

Is there any place you'd really like to go?

I would love to go spend more time in Eastern Europe and Russia. I would very much like to see Vietnam because Vietnam was the crisis of my generation.

What type of things do you remember about Vietnam?

It was a time when the generations were split: the children from the parents, the parents by and large supporting the war and the children not. Seeing our contemporaries going off to a war, many of them doubting whether we should be fighting that war, if it was the right war at the right time at the right place; that was hard. [pauses] Then I think the saddest thing was, whether you agreed with the war or not, the way we treated the veterans. I

think they fought for their country regardless of whether I thought it was the right war at the right time at the right place. We should have treated our veterans much differently than most Americans did.

What advice would you give to our students here and our generation?

There is one thing: as you get older you realize how short life is. My parents used to say it, and I'd brush them off, but now I see how important it is to live every day and take advantage of every opportunity. There are a lot of opportunities here and there's also going to be a lot of opportunities when you go off to college and for the rest of your life. You need to be willing to take advantage of those opportunities, because they may never reappear. Most of you must be risk takers or you wouldn't be here. There are a lot of opportunities to which you say, "I'll do that next year." You probably need to do it now.

Letters to the Editor

Now \$850 per student later, people are starting to realize that some administrators are not as good at math as the rest of us.

At the beginning of the year I wrote that the school was going to incur financial problems if they kept spending money the way they were. I said that before we even got to school but people just ignored it. Now \$850 per student later, people are starting to realize that some administrators are not as good at math as the rest of us.

Why did the administration feel that money grew on trees? They put doors between each hall in Hunt that have been of no use to anyone in Hunt, or anywhere else in the school for that matter. Then there is the Hunt classroom that had so much money poured into it, yet has served no viable purpose since its completion save for a grotesque monument to the school's practice of wasting money.

There are other things such as painting the walls every week, a \$600,000 house for Dr. Boarman, money used on Distance Learning (why not spend money on the students who actually go here and instead charge the ones who don't), and vandals within our school. One cannot directly blame the administration for

vandals, but due to their attitude it can easily be seen that vandals might have feelings they wish to express.

While a certain amount of our monetary woes are a result of a poor economy and the September 11 aftermath, the treasury was in a downward spiral before that happened.

Another feasible point of income: student cars on campus. Dr. Boarman continually laughs at this idea, but let's be realistic here. It would be incredibly easy for the school to set up cars on campus (they do a fine job for prom, just extend that to the rest of the year) and would be infinitely more beneficial for everyone at the school. It saves SLIs and students trouble, can eliminate some loops and expenses, and can provide a lot of revenue by charging for parking permits. I know it would be worth a lot for me to have a car here, and I'm sure many others feel the same way.

In the end though, while I may be thinking realistically, the school is not. It has been my experience (and others' as well) that the administration seems to be very uncompromising and possesses a "holier-than-thou" mentality that will be its eventual downfall if it continues to squander opportunities and money.

DAN PIERGALLINI
Class of 2002

But I'm proud and pleased to come in dead last because I'm the Slackers poster child.

Never one to rain (drip drip drip) or reign (to govern) on anyone's parade, I feel impassioned to make a statement on the tee shirts I've seen worn by members of the senior class. Taking the logo of a popular candy bar and modifying its name to celebrate a life changing milestone is a clever example of ingenuity. On the surface, it's a nice laugh. However, the underlying pretence may allude to a façade that may mask a visage that grins and cries. Is the class 2 O-OOOO2 facing a world that is a plethora of nihilism and destruction? With the economy at a brand new low, the unemployment rate at a brand new high and the real world looking like a Tom Clancy novel or a Jerry Berkheimer movie, a logical answer would be a simple yes. Having said that, in today's time, is mediocrity a celebratory cause? Our institution is analogous to the Olympic training camp in Colorado. Athletes are trained among the best to be the best. Enter the candy bar, Slackers. In the last leg of the race, a runner realizes he's going to come in dead last at the Olympics. It dawns upon him, I gave up everything: 10 years of junk food, late parties, let alone a significant other to come in dead last. But I'm proud and pleased

to come in dead last because I'm the Slackers poster child. Granted I'm the first to admit that life is too serious to be taken seriously; but at the same time as one laughs, one shouldn't be the butt of the joke. Let us not forget the complete ad

campaign for this tee shirt the class of 2002 is wearing: Not Going Anywhere for a While? Try a Slackers, whoops, I mean Snickers.

R. ROBINSON
Instructional Technologies

Letters Policy

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the stentorian

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