

Jessop Burrow

9<sup>th</sup> Grader

Leland and Gray Middle and Union High School

Townshend, Vermont

Before I came to Leland and Gray I was bullied for being different in ways I was told I shouldn't be, but when I got here I knew something was different. I joined the HEY! programs looking to make new friends and one program caught my eye. That program was LGTV.

LGTV is a program that teaches you the basics of filming and editing while also letting you be on the school news, in a short film, or even let you make your own show. At first I was a bit scared that I would be bullied again, but over time I realized that I was safe and that nobody really cared about my differences in a bad way but that they liked my differences and accepted me for who I was.

From that point on I slowly came out of my shell and found a new confidence that I didn't know I had. I also realized I had found a new passion for informing and entertaining people on camera. If I had never joined LGTV I would have never known that I might want to be a talk show host. Thanks to the HEY! programs like LGTV, I didn't care what people thought of me unless the comment was positive, and I was able to come out of the closet to my friends, family, school, and work. I have found a second family in the HEY!!! programs.

Ashley Hescoock

12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School

Townshend, Vermont

I have been an Elementary school counselor for about four years. My role as a counselor varied from helping kids with their homework to leading my own activities in arts and crafts or group games.

As a senior I have been granted a fabulous forever opportunity from an eighth grade volunteer through 11<sup>th</sup> grade. This opportunity is one which I hope many more years of seniors will get to say they have been a part of. For me being an Elementary counselor has been very important, if I had not been offered this experience I may have never known that my dream was to be an elementary teacher.

At first I took this opportunity as solely a chance to earn money and that is all I ever thought it would mean to me. After being involved for about four years I can proudly say that for me the experiences I was given mean way more to me than the money. Being a role model and a mentor for these children was often times the highlight of my day. Being a counselor taught me patience, persistence and appreciation. Patience because we all know that children aren't always the best listeners, persistence to constantly have faith in these kids and to teach them to never give up on themselves, and appreciation for these children because as hard as it is to see now, someday these kids will be adults running the country, voting, and making all these decisions. So it is important that we educate them with all the building blocks to succeed but also the manners and logic to do what is right.

Education isn't everything. It did not teach me that I wanted to be a teacher-- experiences did. These after school programs are not only an experience for me but for the children, one which I know they love. I am so thankful for all the people that made this all possible for me and I am so glad that living in a small community these options are available.

Anastasia ( Nastia) Stevens

10<sup>th</sup> Grade

Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School

Townshend, Vermont

My first experiences in afterschool were in Virginia, where I lived after being adopted from Russia. The elementary school in Virginia had more than 750 kids and they offered very few afterschool activities. Each activity could only have 12-15 kids chosen by lottery. When I was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, my parents organized and taught an afterschool cooking club for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. I was their helper. That started me thinking that maybe I would like to explore careers in working with kids.

Moving to Leland and Gray in Vermont 3 years ago, I was amazed to see how many afterschool activities were offered. I wanted to do them all. So I have tried. Over the past 3 years, I have participated in LGTV, Dungeons and Dragons, Ultimate Frisbee, Computer Refurbishing, Environmental Club, Ukulele, Theatrical Lighting Workshop, Jr. Iron Chef and many more. Two years ago our Jr. Iron Chef team went to a statewide competition and we won!

In addition to afterschool activities, last summer I was a counselor at Leland and Gray's Summer Education Exploration Camp for incoming 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. I loved working in the program and that helped me to decide to work as a counselor at the Townshend Elementary School. I love teaching little kids about art and how to cook every Monday and Wednesday in their afterschool programs.

I cannot wait to see what new things our school offers and I am looking forward to more afterschool activities until I graduate.

Kaylah Jacobs

9th<sup>th</sup> Grade

Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School

Townshend, Vermont

Hello my name is Kaylah Jacobs, I'm a freshmen at Leland and Gray High School, and have been participating in the Hey After school programs since seventh grade. The most memorable programs for me are CLEA, the community service program, and math tutoring.

Once every month on a Monday CLEA members would go across the street and cook dinner for families in the church at the food shelf. This was so eye opening to me because I was able to see first-hand the struggles of others in my community, for something so simple as feeding their loved ones. I'm no longer in CLEA, but I've continued to do community service/ volunteer work.

Being a math tutor has taught me patience, trust, and appreciation. I learned that to truly teach a young adult you must have a lot of patience. Teens become distracted easily and you truly have to take a deep breath and calmly bring them back to the task at hand. I learned trust because I must trust that the students will take what I helped them with and apply it to their work by themselves. This was hard for me because I was always worried I wasn't helping them and they would just forget what I said two seconds later. My experience as a tutor taught me great appreciation for not only math teachers, but teachers everywhere. I do enjoy some math, but I would never want to be a teacher. Later in life I hope to work in the business field and apply math there.