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The interview of the Dwight School 11th grade dean, Ellen Sayers

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How Art Affected Our Life Way Of Life

By Reuben kai Lin Zhang Nov.16,2017



an image of an installation, titled Labyrinth, which is made from pieces of earth that are arranged on the floor and glued to the wall. It was about 10 ft. X 16 ft X 8 ft. Ms. Sayers invited the audience to walk through the installation, allowing them to decide if they wanted to walk on the pieces of earth, thereby changing the work, or not. Ms. Sayers was inspired by rangoli art of India, and sand paintings of Tibet.



Tuesday, November 21, 2017

Dwight Athletic Season Concludes with Historic Firsts!

The fall season did not fade away quietly — instead, it roared to a close with new records and championship wins!



Tuesday, November 21, 2017

We're Thankful!

Dwight families from preschool grade 12 donated 540 pounds of Thanksgiving food to the New York Common Pantry, which provides meals to people in need.



Friday, November 17, 2017

Celebrating What Makes Timothy House Students Unique

It's OK to be different!

Art had always played an enormous role in our life. No matter what we do, there is always something that relates to art. People cannot live without art; art is the elements that elevate our life. Otherwise, we would just live in a black & white world. As many others had said, art may be too spiritual that can have no relation to the reality. Bringing these questions to Ellen Sayers, the 11th-grade dean of the Dwight School.

Vital Stats

NAME: Ellen Sayers

From: Brooklyn

Current Job

11th grade dean

Career History



- Ellen Sayers joined Dwight in 2000 as an IB Visual Arts teacher and became Dean of grade 10 in 2005.
- As an artist, Ellen received her Master's of Fine Arts from Pratt Institute, as well as studied at The Studio Arts Center International
- Recently, Ellen is earning masters degree in Educational Leadership and Management from the University of Bath, UK.

On November 13th, I had the amazing opportunity to make an appointment with Ms. Sayers, to have the chance to interview her about some academic field questions, personal question, as well as some tips on preparation for seniors. This interview is for my EAL project. My EAL project is about setting up an interview and ask question and record them on a paper. Since I am recently learning conditional grammar, I will be using conditional grammar as a fundamental element in the final product.

Fresh start

Ellen Sayers joined Dwight in 2000 as an IB Visual Arts teacher and became Dean of grade 10 in 2005. She currently teaches art to grades 9 and 10, and is the IB Personal Project Coordinator, as well. Outside of her work at Dwight School, Ellen makes her own art at her studio in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Her multi-media works are inspired by her love for nature and have been shown in New York City and the surrounding area. (From the Dwight website)



Is there any difference comparing from your start at Dwight and now?

Oh yes, there is definitely huge changes. Back when I started, there was not a big diversity in the school, and the concept of school's education also enhance through the flow of time. The biggest change has to be the focus in Dwight school

As a specialist in artist field, do you prefer visual or auditory art when you are relaxing?

I have to say I do enjoy both form of art as a way to rest mentally. I think I prefer slightly more at the auditory art, when I am relaxing, I like to listen to some jazz and alternative rock.

How long did you work in Dwight as a teacher and what was your first position at Dwight?

I worked as a 10th grade dean at the beginning of 2000 at Dwight. Then I became to a art teacher for 9th and 10th grade. And I was also the IB Personal Project Coordinator, as well. I really participated in all roles that is available, and as you know, now I am currently the 11th grade dean.

Main question

Why did you become an artist in the first place?

Well, first, my parent were designers for furniture, so they gave me the start of entering the artist world. But I think that it also has to do with me, I tend to value myself more towards a artist type of person. Personally enjoyed and just love working

If you could name some elements that influenced your art, what would they be?

My parent's career, that really made me exposed to art in my childhood. And since I like to travel and see things, that will also gave me impact on the art that I create.

If you had the ability to decide again, would you still become a dean?

Yes, I would want to become a dean. Before my teaching career, I was also a coach for a period of time. Dean is very similar to a coach, where the dean manage for the whole grade, get in touch with student, fix issues and organize. Still, the first time that I became a dean was challenging, but at the same time, it helped my to develop further more self-discipline.

If you were to give advice to tenth graders about how to survive in the IB program, what kind of advice would you give?

The most important is to fully trust oneself, give credit and confident to what they can do and are able to do. To achieve this confident, setting small goals will eventually build up the confident by nailing each small goals you set for yourself.

If you had the choice to go back, would you still become an educator full time rather than an artist full time?

Yes, I would still become an full time educator rather than an artist full time. The main reason behind this was all about the paycheck, which is a practical reason. Back in the time, it is expensive to live New York, especially you also need to pay for all kind of other things like health insurance.

If you had the chance to pick a new school, would you still pick an IB based school?

I think it really depends, however, I enjoy working at an IB school. I am the type of person that love traveling, so I would love to embrace the diversity in an Ib school. And the way that IB school does not have a solid right answer, that is just like how art works. People will view things in a different perspective, and Ib encourages student to

If there were any similarities that been an artist and a dean, what would you think they are?

Artist and dean, they required different part of brain, where "dean" uses his left brain most of the time and "artist" requires more on the right side. But they both need to be a creative thinker. As an artist, one has to be creative in older to produce a art work. So as a dean, must be creative in those problem solving. Beside creativity, discipline and sense of humor are the two elements

If you were to give advice to me as a eleventh grader, what piece of advice would you give to me.

Meeting each deadline, creating a schedule that will help you to become more organized. And also try to develop a study habit that you can keep by yourself, that way you will have a constant and solid amount of work time to spend in the academic field.