

Building Great Minds Saving Great Spaces



The Campaign for Wye River Upper School

... because not all great minds think alike®

As long as great minds don't all think alike ... there's a need for Wye River Upper School.

When two people express the same idea, we laugh and say “Great minds think alike.” ***But, do they?***

In fact, it is rare that two or more thinkers and problem-solvers see things in the exact same way. The reality is that great minds don't think alike.

In today's world, we place an increasing value on creativity and diversity in solving complex problems, whether in business, the professions, the sciences or government. Today's most successful organizations, Google, Pixar, W. L. Gore and Facebook, to name just a few – do not expect their employees to “think alike.” Instead, they encourage innovation and the creation of multiple strategies to meet the demands posed by global economic competition, pressing social and environmental problems, and rapid technological change.

While most of the mainstream educational establishment has lagged behind, Wye River Upper School has embraced the value of diverse learning styles and creative approaches to problem solving. Unconstrained by the conventional orthodoxies that inhibit most public, independent and parochial schools, Wye River has built a new model that brings out the true potential of many students who would otherwise have been consigned to an educational

experience dogged by frustration and defeat.

With nearly 10 years of actual, practical experience, this model is no longer just a theory or a hopeful idea. Wye River Upper School is a proven, working model for secondary education that is now seeking the stability of a permanent and sustainable new home.



STUDENT SNAPSHOT:

Claire struggled in school from the beginning of first grade. With a preliminary diagnosis of ADD, her parents agreed to try medications to help her stay on task, unfortunately with little effect. Soon, every school day was a miserable day – not only for Claire but for her family. Further testing revealed that Claire's apparent ADD was really a mix of learning differences, including a short-term memory deficit and an auditory processing delay. At Wye River since 9th grade, she has benefited from specific teaching strategies that complement her learning style and she has maintained a strong GPA. She also has gained the confidence to participate in sports, and to set an example of acceptance and cooperation among her fellow students.

The Scope of the Problem

In the U.S. each year, more than six million secondary school students with average to above-average intelligence don't "fit in" to the traditional academic setting.

Conventional education is failing such students, not for lack of ability or ambition on their part, but for lack of effective teaching strategies that suit their particular strengths and needs. For these students, learning differences can lead to poor academic performance and other problems that discourage success in school and in life.

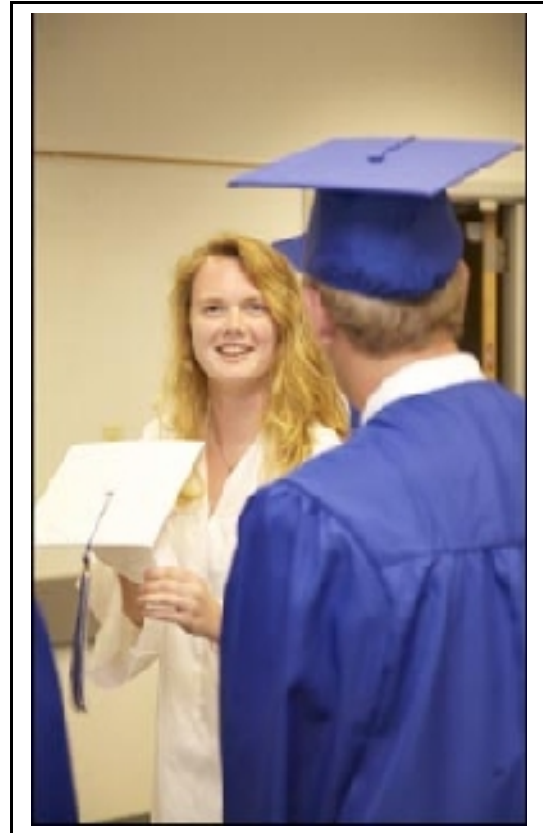
These are the students for whom Wye River Upper School was created. Since 2002, it has been Wye River's mission to serve students who have the ability and desire to learn, and who can succeed in an environment that identifies and develops their strengths and interests, while strengthening their learning challenges and weaknesses.

"New students often arrive at our school very frustrated by their lack of success elsewhere -- in some cases, they are even antagonistic toward teachers and staff.

But soon they realize that we are genuinely invested in our students as well as in the subjects we teach, and their resistance gives way to cooperation and engagement.

Graduation is always special to me -- seeing students and their parents revel in a proud moment that at times, had seemed out of reach."

-- *Wye River Guidance Counselor*

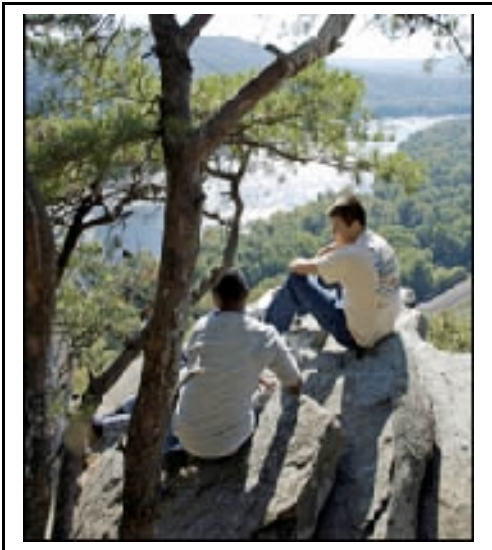


The Why of Wye River

Wye River Upper School is an independent, college preparatory day school enrolling bright high school students who would benefit from small class sizes, individualized teaching strategies and experiential learning, including -- but not limited to -- students with diagnosed learning differences, including ADD, dyslexia and Asperger's Spectrum Disorder.

We appreciate and value students with spirit, energy and creative thought processes.

Our approach is simple and straightforward: We find our students' strengths and strengthen their weaknesses as they prepare for college, career and life.



“In most schools, there are a few ‘signature kids’ -- kids who stand out and get teachers excited. At Wye River, every student is a signature student. It’s a matter of listening and talking to each one as an individual, identifying strengths as well challenges, and teaching from there.”
--Wye River Mathematics Teacher

About Wye River

Wye River Upper School is evidence of the power of two motivated mothers in search of a high school program in which their sons would be valued, nurtured, and inspired to succeed. Each boy had his own gifts, interests and goals, yet neither was likely to thrive in any kind of school, large or small, where traditional teaching strategies and uniform classroom models prevail.

Early in 2002, Chrissy Aull and Patricia McGlannan outlined their vision, shared it with others, formed a board, applied to the Maryland State Department of Education, and raised just enough money to pay the first month's rent for space at Chesapeake College. That September, the new Wye River Upper School opened its doors to nine students.

What started out as a dream on a shoestring has flourished beyond all imagination. Wye River graduates now

number more than 45, and the School enrolls students from both sides of the Bay Bridge, some traveling well over an hour to and from school.

Thanks to the success of our graduates, the enthusiasm of our students and their families, and the innovation and creativity of our instructional strategies, Wye River Upper School now enjoys an excellent reputation as an outstanding high school for students who learn differently. Our curriculum highlights rigorous applied math and science; classic and contemporary literature; fine art, photography, music theory and performance; foreign language study; and relevant and engaging social science coursework. Each of our students follows an individualized plan of study designed to support his or her growth in organizational and study habits, communication and problem-solving skills, confidence and teamwork. All students participate in athletics, including soccer, basketball, walking/running, and tennis.

No longer an untested theory or idea, Wye River has proven its model in the real world.

In order to develop and grow, the School now seeks to establish a permanent home that will accommodate the full spectrum of diverse learning styles and experiences that its students require.



STUDENT SNAPSHOT:

Peter, who graduated from Wye River in 2007, is now a third year student at Garrett College in McHenry, Maryland.

His goal of attaining an A.A. degree is within sight. An emigrant from Romania at age nine, Peter spent several years learning English and overcoming the challenges brought on by his early life in a Romanian orphanage. At Wye River, he found the small and nurturing environment that encouraged his confidence and self-esteem. His mother, who had researched boarding school options as well as day schools, remains convinced that without Wye River Upper School, Peter's college study would hardly have been a dream much less a reality.

Teaching – Innovation and Excellence

The heart of Wye River Upper School is our faculty. From the school's founding in 2002, our teachers' expertise, dedication and inventive approaches to teaching and mentoring young people have been the mainstay of the school's success. Most hold graduate degrees or are pursuing advance study, and all continue to benefit from specialized, in-service training in areas related to teaching students with learning differences and attendant psychological and social issues. Several faculty and staff have forged partnerships with nonprofit and business organizations that not only bring real-world perspectives into their classrooms but also provide applied learning opportunities. All are inspired to maximize the full range of their capabilities in service to our students by taking on multiple roles in the school's

academic, extra-curricular and athletic offerings.

Parents new to the Wye River community often express surprise at how smoothly their son or daughter settles into the school environment. We believe that it is not only the small classes and specialized instructional strategies that account for our success, but the multi-faceted roles and exceptional teamwork embraced by faculty whose commitment is to teach and mentor non-traditional learners, and whose enthusiasm is fueled by the success of each Wye River student.



“Teaching at Wye River is exciting, because our students are so diverse and we have to find the ‘right’ strategies and techniques that will enable each one to learn and progress. We also have to be willing to work one-on-one with students as well as in groups. Each of my students has taught me something new about how challenging life can be, in ways that I would never have imagined.”

– *Wye River History Teacher*



Building Great Minds, Saving Great Spaces: A Bold Vision in Clear Focus

While our students continue to thrive, Wye River Upper School has the opportunity and obligation to bring its innovative approach to secondary education to a full-time, permanent facility of its own. This will enable our extraordinary resources of students and faculty to flourish in an environment that is better suited to their needs -- both now and in the future -- than the temporary facilities the School has occupied at Chesapeake College.

Wye River's greatest need AND opportunity is its own campus and facility designed to meet our unique academic and administrative needs.

With an ambitious goal of \$5 million to be raised in five years, Wye River Upper School's *"Building Great Minds, Saving Great Spaces"* campaign is designed to

raise the awareness and support needed to meet these challenges.

Achieving the Campaign goals will secure Wye River's leadership in the field of secondary education for students with learning differences, and ensure that families throughout the metropolitan D.C., Annapolis and Delmarva regions will have an alternative to conventional education.



STUDENT SNAPSHOT:

Now a junior at Davis and Elkins College in West Virginia, Missy is a talented vocalist and pianist. Her early formal music training had gone almost unnoticed at her large suburban Maryland high school, but a mild mood disorder and a disabling joint disease seemed to make her stand out all too easily. Once enrolled as a sophomore at Wye River, Missy refocused her energy toward her passion for music and musical performance. By joining the school swim team, she nurtured her joints and improved her stamina -- and in her senior year, she joined the women's basketball team. Missy graduated from Wye River with a belief in herself and her abilities that are the foundation of her success in college.



Creating a Wye River Campus

Since 2002, Wye River Upper School's location at Chesapeake College has enabled our students to enjoy the advantages and amenities of a college campus. Here, our students have become capable, confident learners who are familiar with the demands of a college setting.

As the College's space needs have expanded, however -- and as Wye River's growth and evolution have stimulated a need for greater autonomy and flexibility -- the School has envisioned the creation and development of our own school campus.

That vision is now becoming real. Having acquired the former National Guard Armory Building in Centreville -- just a few miles from our current college location -- Wye River is moving forward

with the design, rehabilitation and renovation of this historic structure into a vibrant campus facility that will accommodate the school's diverse academic and extra-curricular programs and its growing student body. It is, at once, a daunting and exciting challenge.



STUDENT SNAPSHOT:

A lovely teenager with a hunger to learn, Suzie had been identified as academically gifted, but she came to Wye River unable to name any friends with whom she spent time. Suzie is on the Asperger's spectrum - her struggle with social interactions set her apart from her peers, and she had been teased and bullied at school.

In frustration, she would lash out in the classroom, and her grades -- along with her spirit -- suffered.

Recognizing Suzie's potential, Wye River accepted her in the 10th grade. By the time she graduated in 2010, her academic record was outstanding and she had developed her considerable talents, for example, by writing a "blog" in Latin and by enrolling in pre-Calculus. She also had assimilated into a group of friends who welcomed her in projects, in theatre productions and at lunch.



About the Armory

Built in 1926 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Armory was chosen not only for its ideal location in downtown Centreville (making it accessible to students from both sides of the Chesapeake Bay) but also for its excellent fit with the School's mission and values. Preserving and revitalizing an existing, historic facility -- rather than building from scratch -- complements Wye River's strong curricular emphases on sustainability and "green" values and on understanding and protecting the ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay region.

A major factor in the decision to purchase the Armory building was its obvious and excellent potential for adaptation to school use. With 20,000-square feet of interior space, some major amenities are already in place -- most notably a great room, including a gym and a stage that, once renovated, will host athletic events, guest and student performances, graduation ceremonies and other school events.

Additionally, the Armory's location in the heart of the Queen Anne's county seat will greatly increase our students' opportunities for "real-world" experiential learning in business and government organizations, many within

walking distance of the Armory's front door.

For the residents of Centreville, the Armory will be transformed from a vacant eyesore to an attractive and energized learning center that contributes to the educational, cultural and commercial viability of the town center.



"Last year in World Literature, one of my students told me that to him, reading was

like 'eating glass.' As the term progressed, he read Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, and most of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. This year, while reading *Hamlet*, he commented that he's looking forward to seeing Claudius get what's coming to him."

--Wye River English Teacher

The Armory Renovation Plan

The two-phase renovation plan, to be funded by "*Building Great Minds ~ Saving Great Spaces: The Campaign for Wye River Upper School*," is now in progress, beginning with plans for hazardous materials removal and abatement that will facilitate the creating of a full schematic design, including:

- Classrooms with full technological capabilities to support our school-wide "paperless" curriculum accessed through Apple laptop computers
- Sound-proof music suite, including practice studios, a recording studio and state-of-the-art hardware
- Science laboratories with research equipment, including lab tables, power outlets, sinks, storage lockers and safety equipment
- Visual arts studio equipped for instruction in drawing, painting, sculpture, pottery and multi-media art forms
- Reading and Resource Center equipped with technological support for reading access and improvement
- Guidance center including space for counseling, college advising and a private rest area
- Faculty Center including offices and conference rooms that accommodate tutorial and small group instruction, teaching resources center, and kitchenette

- Administrative suite – including offices for Head of School, Academic Dean, Finance Director, Development Director, Admissions Director, and Conference Room
- Improved stairwell and a new, full-service elevator (as required by the American Disabilities Act)
- State-of-the-art geothermal heating and air-conditioning systems, and energy efficient lighting and window replacement
- Outdoor gardening area



"Wye River's small classes enable me to choose books that are written at or above grade-appropriate reading levels, as well as to teach students how to use their strengths to understand what they read and to relate their own knowledge and experience as they interpret meaning."

– Wye River Reading Teacher

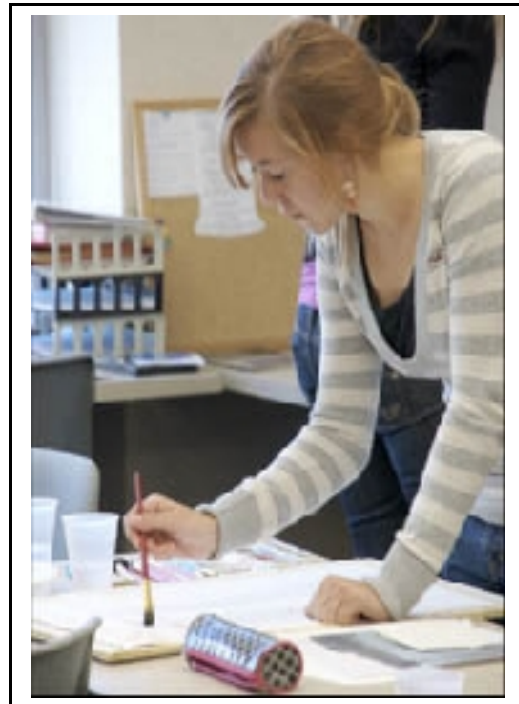


Strengthening Our Core Values

In addition to realizing the bold vision of a new school campus, reaching the “*Building Great Minds. Saving Great Spaces*” campaign goal of \$5,000,000 will enable us to build on Wye River Upper School’s strengths by:

- Maintaining our commitment to no more than 15 students in a class, most in classes of no more than ten
- Assuring that our faculty are well trained in the rapidly evolving field of learning differences
- Expanding and refining both our course offerings and teaching methods with the needs of today’s teenagers in mind
- Developing our use of technology and individual laptops across the curriculum
- Creating and nurturing a culture that models, teaches and rewards a strong commitment to environmentally-friendly design, construction and stewardship

- Supporting our students’ success by facilitating dual enrollment in classes at Chesapeake College
- Serving students from diverse family backgrounds and circumstances, including those with limited financial resources



With your help, Wye River Upper School will achieve the dream of transforming the old Centreville Armory Building into our new school home, strengthen our faculty and our curricula, and increase our enrollment to no more than 100 students, and we will continue to pursue our mission: “to discover through innovation, to develop through rigor, and to celebrate creatively the strengths of our students, while preparing each for success in college, career and life.”

Building Great Minds. Saving Great Spaces.

The Campaign for Wye River Upper School offers a variety of named gift opportunities for donors seeking to honor or memorialize special individuals.

We would be pleased to discuss these options with you!

Building	\$2,000,000
Great Room / Gymnasium	\$500,000
Performing Arts Stage	\$250,000
Reading and Resource Center	\$75,000
Music Suite	\$150,000
Art Studio	\$150,000
Classroom Lab (1 of 6)	\$75,000
Board / Conference / Lounge	\$75,000
Faculty Center	\$50,000
Administrative Suite	\$50,000
Outdoor Teaching Garden	\$25,000
Outdoor Courtyard	\$25,000