

MEET ALUMNA TAYLOR RISO '08



Born in San Francisco, Taylor has spent most of her life in Portland where she graduated from St. Mary's Academy in 2008. Taylor has always been involved in her community. She served as captain of the varsity soccer team and as chair of Doernbecher Week at SMA, and now volunteers at the Oregon Food Bank and coaches youth soccer. After graduating magna cum laude with a B.A. in environmental studies from Lewis & Clark College, Taylor worked for an environmental nonprofit in Sydney, Australia. She currently serves as Marketing Coordinator at Waterleaf Architecture, a local architecture firm. Taylor is St. Mary's Alumnae Advancement Council's newest member, offering her positive energy and service experience to the St. Mary's community.

Q&A

St. Mary's Academy: *How did you make the choice to come to St. Mary's?*

Taylor Riso '08: I attended a public middle school, and didn't find it academically challenging. One of my classmates decided to go to Jesuit High School, which made me think that a private school would be a great fit for me. I visited Jesuit and really liked it, and then my mom told me about St. Mary's Academy. After my shadow day at SMA, I was St. Mary's all the way! Moms really do know best.

SMA: *What is your favorite memory from St. Mary's?*

TR: I loved playing soccer here. Sharing the field with my team, traveling for games, competing against great players - it was so much fun. As for a precise memory, the lacrosse team won state in 2008 during my senior year, and it was such an exciting time. The whole school cheered them on during their game - we were all so proud!

SMA: *How has St. Mary's prepared you for college and the work place?*

TR: St. Mary's was the perfect balance between a challenging work environment and a supportive community. Entering college, I knew that I had an advantage over my classmates. I could see the big picture, I understood time and project management, and I always challenged myself to do better and make the most of my education. Because SMA is such an intense experience, I learned how to keep a good balance between study, extracurricular activities, and friends and family time - something that has been so helpful in college and my professional career.

SMA: *If you could give SMA students any advice, what would it be?*

TR: My main advice would be to fully enjoy your four years here. When you get to college, you will feel nostalgic and miss the supportive community, your classmates, and your teachers. Make sure you enjoy your time at St. Mary's and make the most of it!