



Riverview School and Cape Cod Community College Post-graduate Opportunities

Michael Simmons
Reporter



The author, Michael Simmons, at the CCCC cafe

The Riverview School is in East Sandwich, MA. The school was designed for special needs students. There are two programs offered within the Riverview campus. One of the programs is for students in grades 7-12. The other program that I attended is called the Grow Program, which teaches independent living skills to students between ages 17 to 22. Some of the Phase One, Phase Two, and Phase Three classes I took on campus at the Riverview School Grow Program include: Math, Banking, English Language Arts, Communication and Literacy, Personal Financial Money Management, Communication and Transportation Access, Pathways to Employment, Looking in the Mirror, Travel Training, Advanced Math Concepts, Current Events, Recreational Fitness, and Health and Wellness.

Cape Cod Community College (CCCC) has a program called Project Forward. Riverview students have the option of participating in Project Forward, which teaches vocational skills in several different work areas, including Animal Care, Basic Foods, Health Care, Office Technology, Maintenance and Landscaping, and Basic Retail. After year one, Grow students pick one of the areas to specialize in. I specialized in Office Technology in year one and Cafe Operations/ Customer Service in year two. I also had to take three years of Life Skills classes at CCCC, which were about preparing for how to keep on task at the job, and how to maintain a positive attitude on the job. I also took some CCCC Project Forward electives, such as Art Appreciation and Digital Graphics. In Art Class, I learned about sketching, watercolors, and hands-on projects. In Digital Graphics, I learned about audio editing and powerpoint presentations.

I had some very positive experiences at the Riverview School and at CCCC Project Forward. I learned so many life and vocational skills that will help me for the rest of my life. I had many Riverview School Grow Program internships; my favorites include: Double Tree Inn, Cape Cod Wildlife Center, and the Breakfast Cafe, where I worked as a Cashier, Order Taker, and Drink Prep. At CCCC, I enjoyed my internships at the Waterhouse Leather Company, the Seashore Cafe, and the mailroom. At Riverview and CCCC, I made a lot of friends that I always keep in touch with. I enjoyed all the social activities and classes, especially going to the wellness center and participating in the Congo line. The best moment of my life was being selected to be a peer leader at CCCC Project Forward.

An interview with Mr. and Mrs. Simmons concerning their son Michael's Riverview Experience:

1. Why did you choose Riverview for your son? – We were looking for a school where Michael would have a chance to have a college like experience. In particular we wanted him to have an opportunity to learn independent living and vocational skills.

2. How was it for both of you when your son moved to Riverview School? – It was hard to see him go since he had only been away on his own for a handful of overnights. We were excited for him though, since we felt the school was a great opportunity for him to further grow and develop important life skills.

3. How did your son do at Riverview? – We felt Michael did very well at Riverview. It was a great experience for him. He has made some lifelong friends. He also learned many independent living skills and had numerous jobs and internships which should help him in finding future employment.

4. Are you happy with your son's Cape Cod Community College and Riverview School experience? Would you recommend it to other parents? – The Cape Cod Community Project Forward program is a terrific program for introducing special needs children to a variety of job and career experiences and expanding on those areas of interest. Michael was fortunate to attend Riverview School. It is a great school and we would highly recommend both programs to other families.

Quote of the Week

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Art of Dining

Kristy Twaalfhoven, Junior
Reporter

To dine: to eat the principal meal of the day (Dictionary.com).

When we hear the term "dine," we commonly think of eating a main meal, such as dinner. The idea of dining always seems to be associated with poshness. This association may be because when we picture people dining, we often picture well-dressed people chatting over gourmet meals, sipping wine and using flashy silverware. Or, this association may be because a dining room is typically the nicest, best-kept room of a house or hotel. Whatever the reason may be, dining is always made out to be a big, fancy ordeal.

However, in my house, we consider dining not an ordeal but rather a necessity of everyday life. To my family, dining means taking the time to slow down and come together over a meal. This meal may be a warm, home-cooked meal, a shared takeout pizza, or even a simple lunch sandwich. The type of food is irrelevant. What we find most important is that we are pausing our busy schedules in order to spend a moment with each other. Often times, if we are dining at dinnertime, we discuss what we did that day. Other times, someone brings up an interesting topic, and we have a long, deep discussion or debate about that topic. And sometimes, we may not say much at all. We eat our meal in relative silence, save for the clink of silverware against plates. Nevertheless, we are together. Though the location matters less than our togetherness, there is one key aspect of dining that must be mentioned: we dine without electronics. I cannot recall a single time when my family and I ate a meal together while watching television. TV dinners were first introduced to me at friends' houses. Phones are also out of the picture, regardless of whether we are at a restaurant or at home. It's not that we would be shunned for texting at the dinner table. We simply do not consider using a phone, because we know that this moment together is precious. When else during the day do we have the chance to live completely in the present, sharing a moment with those most important to us?

As a result of being raised to value the act of dining, I try to slow down over a meal even when my parents aren't around. For example, last week when I put together a salad at lunchtime, I made sure to make enough for my sister, laid out two placemats and invited her take a break from studying in her room and come dine with me. We ended up sitting in the kitchen together for over an hour, chatting about her new college life and my junior year.

Lastly, when we dine, we appreciate the meal, and value the quality. Meanwhile, when we eat a meal on-the-fly, while doing homework, or watching a movie, it's easy to forget to be grateful that we are fortunate enough to even have food! Dining allows food to not only nourish our bodies with nutrients, but also to nourish our souls with gratitude, our minds with a moment to reflect, and our relationships with quality time together. So next time you grab a plate of leftovers on your way to the couch for a movie marathon, I encourage you to think twice. Consider nourishing your body, soul, mind, and relationships. Consider the art of dining.

Jefferson Forum Winter Clothing Drive

Jefferson Forum Community Service Club is holding a winter clothing drive for the 2000+ students who have moved from Puerto Rico to Massachusetts in the wake of Hurricane Maria. They are in need of jackets, mittens, gloves, scarves, and other warm clothing. You can drop off all donations to the main office at Marblehead High School.



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