

LAUREN (KASNETT) NEARPASS '03

TURNING A LOVE OF SUMMER CAMP INTO A CAREER



Lauren (Kasnett) Nearpass '03 recognizes that formative work occurs when students are in school but believes the environment

of summer camp is equally important, giving kids a different platform to grow and build new skill sets. "Summer programs and time spent away from home provide kids the space and freedom needed to create their sense of identity and learn life skills in a different kind of educational environment," she says. In 2013, Lauren blended her love of summer camp, marketing background and desire to start her own business. With her mother Susan, she founded Summer 365 (www.summer365.com), a free advisory service specializing in sleepaway camps and summer programs, trips and travel for children ages 7-18.

From traditional sleepaway camps, sports and specialty camps to performing arts, community service, enrichment, language immersion, and outdoor adventure programs, Summer 365 has first-hand knowledge of the best sleepaway camp and summer programs across the country and around

the world. Lauren and her team guide families through the search process to plan dynamic summer experiences. "We are matchmakers, culling through the vast amount of choices and information to simplify the process and find options that best fit with a child's personality and interests," says Lauren.

"As a child, I loved my summers away at camp, but never expected to turn this into a business," Lauren says. Upon graduation from Emory University in 2007 with a psychology degree, she was uncertain about her future plans and how to combine her love of children and interest in marketing into the ideal job. Through extensive networking and an open mind, Lauren secured a job with a brand licensing company and for six years, she thrived, learning about topics including sales, strategy and client services. In true entrepreneurial spirit, Lauren parlayed that into her own business venture and she hasn't looked back.

Personal foundations laid during Lauren's eight years as a student at

Bullis became catalysts for her professionally. "Bullis is a unique environment that encouraged my independent and intellectual thinking. Little did I know I was honing important life and business skills that were integral in my entrepreneurial pursuits and prepared me to lead a company." Whether it was Mr. Andy Marusak '66 in the classroom or Coach Kathleen Lloyd on the athletic field, she "continually felt challenged to be a creative and critical thinker." Lauren also valued the strong emphasis placed on community building at Bullis and says giving back has remained a core value, personally and professionally, ever since. "Summer 365 is committed to making children's summer experiences

cornerstones of their growth and development into young adults," she says, "so the Give Sum scholarship fund was created—we partner with organizations that help fund camp adventures for underprivileged children."

Lauren's mantra—"the journey is the reward"—carries her through each day. "This experience of running Summer 365 is just incredible, and each stage of my life, from Bullis to Emory to previous work experience, has been a stepping stone guiding me to this great reward."



Top left: Lauren's senior portrait from the 2003 edition of *Roll Call*. Above, left: Lauren and her mother Susan discuss packing for camp on a WBAL-TV segment. Right, Lauren catches up with a camper at Point O'Pines Camp in Brant Lake, New York.