

ALUMNI NEWS

PSCS | QUEST | ALUMNI



PORTRAIT OF A PSCS GRADUATE

by Manon Boudeau

June 2010

☆ Graduated from PSCS

August 2010-August 2011

☆ moved to Nantes, France

☆ attended the U. of Nantes

September 2011

☆ Started at Quest University

April 2015

☆ Graduated from Quest

During high school, Chloe Shaw discovered that she was interested in language, the process of learning languages and, in particular, how kids learn languages. Following Chloe's graduation from PSCS in 2010, she and her family moved to Nantes, France for one year. What was a sabbatical year for her parents ended up being an opportunity for Chloe to immerse herself in French culture, attend classes at the University, and care for two young French children.

Living in France helped assure her she was on the right track and in the fall of 2011 she took her newfound passion to Quest University in Squamish, Canada. She graduated from Quest this past April with a BA in Liberal Arts & Sciences, having focused on psychology and linguistics.

I caught up with her via email and she mentioned that she felt really good about her final, senior year at Quest. She received a lot of positive feedback from her teachers and thanks PSCS for helping her get there. *"PSCS prepared me for these experiences because I had developed the maturity, discipline, and work ethic to perform at the level my professors expected."*

I heard from several people that you received positive feedback your senior year!

My writing received some positive attention from a few of my professors. I helped write a group paper on the role that *gesture* served in the evolution of language and my professor liked it so much that she nominated it to appear in Quest's academic journal. Additionally, my faculty advisor and I worked on submitting my senior thesis to academic journals outside of Quest. My thesis is a journal-style paper I wrote on my research comparing early and late bilingual adults' working memory capacity. I am honored that my professors thought so highly of my work that they wanted to help me get published! I'm proud of the work I accomplished at Quest.

Can you explain the process of the "Question Proposal"?

In the spring of one's second year at Quest, everyone takes a course in which we design and plan out the rest of our time at school. The most important thing that comes out of this block is a student's **Question**. The **Question** is designed to encompass what each of us plans to study for our final two years at Quest. My **Question** was *"How does language influence children's cognitive development?"* The interest that sparked this idea came from living in France, where I witnessed firsthand how children learn language. I was intrigued by the process and whether or not it

impacted their development. Once my **Question** was stated, I had to create a **Question Proposal** that involved a literature review, the courses I intended to take to help investigate my **Question**, and five seminal readings that would help inform my **Question**. After our proposals are created, each student goes before a panel of professors and essentially defends themselves.

What happened when you presented it to the panel?

The panel either passes a student with or without revisions or, in some cases, rejects their proposal. I was fortunate enough to have mine pass without any revisions, which the panel told me is rare. My **Question** was definitely tied to my future plans; I hope to continue my research on how language affects children's cognitive development.

Did you work while you attended Quest?

For the last two years, I worked as the Senior Ambassador Coordinator in Admissions assisting the Events Director. Basically, my job entailed coordinating the 30 student Ambassadors.

Were you asked to do any specific projects?

Last October, I was very happy to be one of ten students asked to give a speech at Quest's annual Parents' Weekend. It was an opportunity for me to present the work I did with a three-year-old boy learning a second language. I discussed my research on children learning two languages from a young age and the strategies they use to differentiate the two languages. It was a pleasure to share my findings with such a wide audience.

What are your plans now?

I am applying for lab manager and research positions at universities in the United States and Canada. I am excited to continue researching how language influences children's cognitive development. It's really what I am passionate about.

How did PSCS help you prepare for Quest?

PSCS helped me develop the personal character skills that I believe were fundamental to my success at Quest. At PSCS, my teachers and peers helped me acquire a strong sense of integrity and a solid work ethic. In small classes, I gained practice supporting and collaborating with my peers. Through self-designed classes and independent studies I became a self-sufficient and productive student. I owe a lot of my success at Quest to the skills I learned at PSCS. 



WHAT IS IT ABOUT PSCS AND QUEST?!

by Manon Boudeau

Three PSCS alum have recently graduated from Quest University (Lauren Head and Alex Kahn in 2014 and Chloe Shaw in 2015). Isaac Menninga, PSCS class of 2014, recently completed his first year at Quest. **Seems to me like PSCS and Quest have a lot in common.** Although Quest is a university with a lot more students, there are major similarities between the two schools' educational philosophies, their methods of instruction, and their seminar-style of teaching. Both schools are accustomed to a small student to teacher ratio and allow students to choose their own paths. The PSCS **Senior Project** and **Credo** process also seem very closely aligned with the Quest **Question Proposal**.

Each term, PSCS students have the opportunity to pause their school schedule for a full week and immerse themselves in one topic—which is called **Intensives Week**. Quest’s approach is similar to PSCS’ except that at Quest they *only* do intensives—and call them **Blocks**.

Blocks are three and a half weeks-long and so far PSCS alum have really enjoyed this style of education, Chloe noted that, *“Intensives Weeks at PSCS showed me that I loved learning this way, throwing myself into a single topic and knowing that I can devote all of my attention to it.”*

These similarities and more have helped quite a few PSCS students make smooth transitions in to Quest—and into motivated, self-sufficient adults. 



After graduating from PSCS in 2014, Isaac Manning chose to continue his education at Quest. The **Block** program was the main reason Isaac decided to apply. For him, this model allows for total immersion into a subject and doesn’t force him to balance work from multiple classes at one time. Quest also has other advantages, namely a willingness among both students and faculty to enter into dialogue about difficult issues and work together to change behaviors to help fix difficult issues. He recently wrote, *“Quest is a place where both curiosity and cooperation are imperative. I am very satisfied with my choice, and grateful to have found myself in another place with such a sense of community.”* Isaac studies computer science, mental health, and mathematics.



Lauren Head graduated from PSCS in 2010 and went on to Quest. In her sophomore year, she wrote her own **Question Proposal**: *What is the role of empathy in the community?* This question served as her academic concentration for her final two years of college. In her **Proposal** Lauren wrote, *“I spent my senior year of high school investigating my values of empathy and community. All that I learned during that time has shaped my perspective at Quest. I learned that the role empathy plays in helping individuals cultivate respect for others is a key component to the creation of community. I learned how dialogue facilitates collaboration. I learned that respect and integrity allow communities to thrive.”* Lauren graduated from Quest in 2014, with a focus on Peace & Conflict Studies and International Development.



Alex Kahn also graduated from PSCS in 2010 and graduated from Quest in 2014 with a BA in Liberal Arts & Sciences. His Question Proposal was *“How can Non-Governmental Organizations be sustainable?”* His love of language and culture has had him traveling often since he graduated (he recently returned from several months in South America). Alex is currently seeking employment with a Seattle-area nonprofit that connects newly arrived immigrants with education and job opportunities.

32% of alum & alumni parents have donated to the pscs 2015 *kindness matters* giving campaign.

a generous pscs alum has donated **\$5000** in an effort to encourage alumni and alum family participation by June 30.

please take a moment to [donate](#) any amount in honor of your time at pscs—and to honor the education of future pscs students. 100% alumni participation. [add your name to the list.](#)