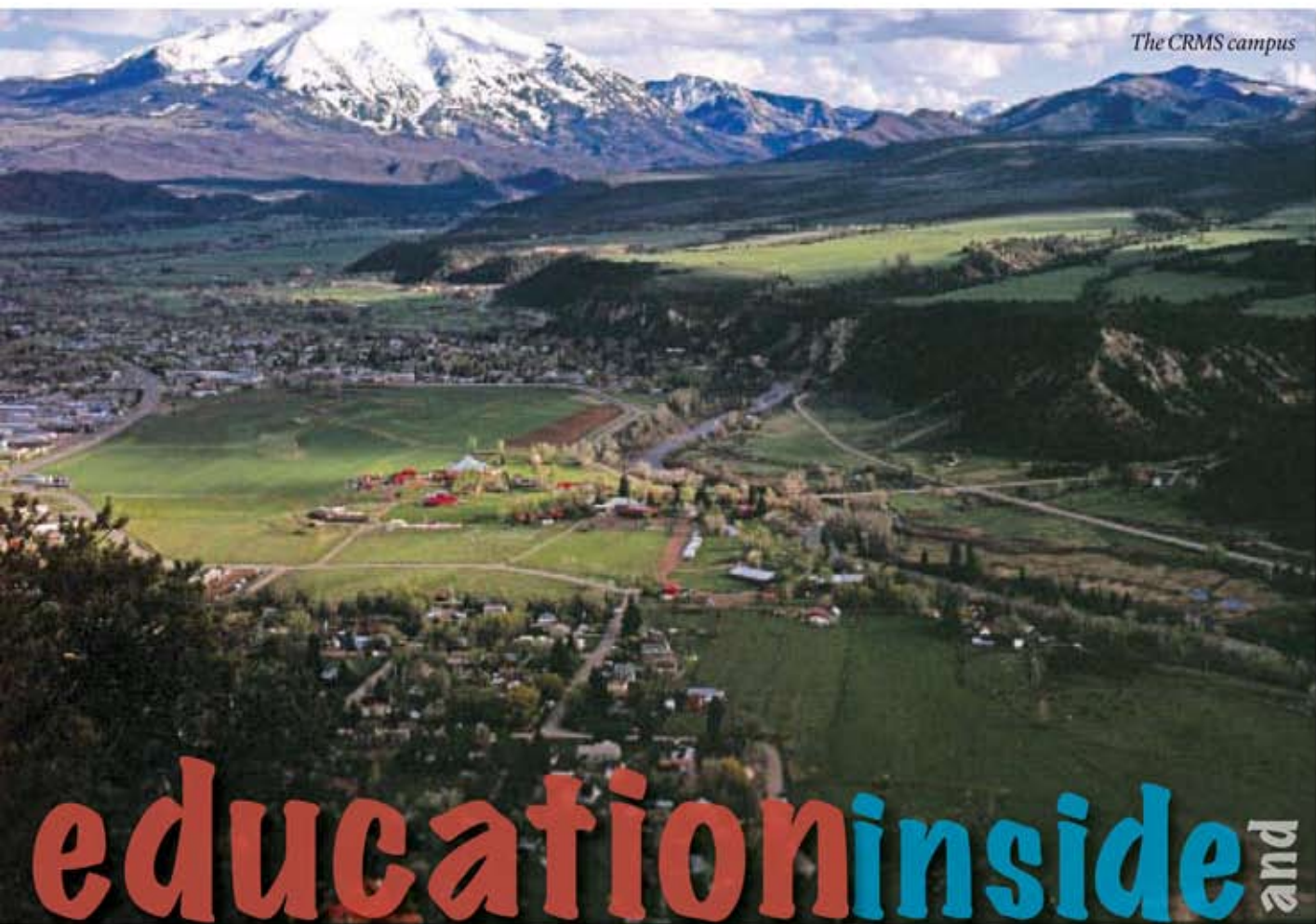


The CRMS campus



education inside and

OUT

Conrad Anker, world famous mountaineer and adventurer, has conquered the highest peaks and was part of the team that discovered George Mallory's body on Mt. Everest.

Yolanda Gomez Toya, a Jicarilla Apache girl from a reservation, graduated from Princeton University and now has a career in public health. Two totally different lives and goals, but with one thing in common: They both graduated from Colorado Rocky Mountain School (CRMS). Not familiar with CRMS? This unusual school is

By Kara Haines | Photos by Phil Haines

disguised as a 350-acre working ranch. Smiling teenagers informally interacting with teachers, young children of the resident faculty playing on the spacious campus, cows mooing in the background — not your typical high school!

As you make your way to class, you can't help but gaze at towering Mount Sopris, which dominates the view to the south, or look to the north at the impressive red-rock cliffs. Located in Carbondale, 30 minutes northwest of Aspen, at the confluence of the Crystal and Roaring Fork Rivers, many would call this place a slice of heaven.

*The original 1897 barn,
now used for school and
community activities.*



We have John and Anne Holden to thank for the vision that became CRMS. Former teachers at Vermont's Putney School, they wanted to start a school in the West, teaching college-prep academic courses balanced with community service, physical activity, and an appreciation of the environment. When CRMS started in 1953, there were 19 students. Those students, faculty, and staff helped build and maintain the school, just as everyone associated with the school has done since. There are faculty/student work crews to perform, or assist professionals, in every task, up to and including the construction of a new building. Today, with 165 students, the Holdens' ideals are just as important. In 2001, CRMS formulated the current five-year plan. Several goals have already been met, including the construction of a \$3.2 million classroom building, and the refurbishing of the vintage 1897 barn, which houses a computer lab, the library, stage presentations, and other activities. Other goals include increasing endowment to support maintenance for the new classroom building and to further strengthen support for student financial aid, as well as faculty salaries and professional development.

Each school year begins in August with all students who are new to CRMS, regardless of grade, participating in Wilderness



Kara Haines, born in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, has traveled to many parts of the world with her family. She attended school in Westminster, Colorado and Southlake, Texas before becoming a day student at Colorado Rocky Mountain School in Carbondale. She and her dad share a home in the beautiful Crystal River valley near Redstone, CO.

Session: 10 days of backpacking in a wilderness area near the school, including a few days of community service work for the U.S. Forest Service, and a 24-hour 'solo' experience. In his 2004 address to new students and parents, Head of School Andrew Menke said, "Wilderness [Session] is a microcosm of the experiences you will have at CRMS: Appreciation and respect for our natural environment, hard work, stretching your capabilities, forming strong bonds with new friends, and living events which will become lasting memories." After Wilderness, new students are ready for life as a member of the CRMS family. A typical academic class has about ten students, arranged in a circle to facilitate discussion. Open minds and brilliant ideas develop, allowing individual characters to bloom. Free expression is important in the arts as well. Blacksmithing, jewelry making, and glass blowing are available, along with more typical options. Free expression can also occur in a terrain park!

CRMS maintains a fleet of vehicles to take groups of students and their coaches

"As a first-year junior, I know the differences between CRMS and a typical high school. The classes are more challenging and the homework can pile up, but for first time in my life, I have school spirit! I've never felt more prepared for life."

Kara Haines will be a senior at Colorado Rocky Mountain School in the fall.

out to enjoy the abundant athletic opportunities in the area. Teams of mountain bikers, kayakers, rock climbers, skiers, and snowboarders leave the campus at least two afternoons per week. It doesn't matter if you're a beginner or on the competitive team, there is a coach and a bus for you. There are also competitive soccer teams. All this thinking, working, and playing is fueled by a very competent and dedicated kitchen crew. Three meals a day, with herb teas, apples, and oranges available almost any time. And just to make sure things stay focused, there is a mandatory formal dinner and all-school meeting every other Wednesday. Since most of the faculty lives on the campus, help is never far away. Students can contact their



Art Adobe, built by faculty/student crew in 1962. The skylight is made of melted kayaks.



Spring planting by members of gardening crew.

(advertisement removed)

teachers and receive very sincere assistance. The small classes and relaxed relationship with teachers promotes a close bond. The comfort you get from knowing that the teachers really care about your success is indescribable.

nathan

first-year junior;
boarder from Telluride, CO

"My solo on Wilderness allowed me to become one with nature in a way that I had never experienced before. That would have to be my most memorable experience." "CRMS has prepared me not only for college, but for life." "The hard work has strengthened my mind, worn me out, and prepared me for life; it is absolutely worth it!"

sebastian

second-year senior;
boarder from Stockholm, Sweden

"CRMS definitely prepared me for college and the years ahead with a good all-around education and leadership building. This school makes you a stronger person and builds character through all the challenges and opportunities provided."

jae won

fourth-year senior;
boarder from Seoul, South Korea

"I actually like going to class because it is a comfortable place to discuss the subject matter with your friends. The class size allows you to get more in touch with the teachers, creating a personal bond."



Student kayakers heading for afternoon practice.

About Colorado Rocky Mountain School:

Colorado Rocky Mountain School challenges students in grades nine through 12 to excel in a college-preparatory academic curriculum balanced within a program of the arts, athletics, physical work, service to the community and enriching wilderness experience. Teachers and administrators at CRMS

believe in education of the whole person, and graduate students with a strong sense of self-worth and a lifelong passion for learning.

To learn more about this unique, independent boarding and day school, call CRMS at 970-963-2562 or visit the school's website at www.crms.org.

Source of information: The CRMS Web page and recruiting brochures, as well as the personal experiences of Kara Haines. Article checked for accuracy by Susan Linden, CRMS Director of Communications, and Andrew Menke, CRMS Head of School. Permission for recognizable photo images of students and campus, as well as interviews, given by Susan Linden and Andrew Menke.

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