

Dear Tamarack School and Community,

My name is Israel Pechstein. I graduated from Tamarack Class of 2005 with Mrs. Amy Marks. This letter is a scratch on the surface of my love for Tamarack; it is my intention to show how much Tamarack has impacted me mentally and emotionally.

After graduating from Tamarack I had many doubts as to how prepared I would be for high school. Looking back, it is quite laughable. I couldn't have been more prepared for Pius XI. I quickly found that not only was I surviving the first few weeks of school, but I was doing really well too! After speaking to my fellow Tamarack graduates, it didn't seem anyone was doing badly at all.

Throughout my years at Pius, I succeeded on more than academic levels. Tamarack planted a positive seed for relationship growth that will help me develop strong and healthy relationships throughout my life. I have made many excellent friends from around the state and nation through school and leadership conferences.

Tamarack fostered very strongly in me the desire to learn. Through this desire, I am passionate about my interests, and the subjects I enjoy range from law, to art, to language, and more in-between. Besides required classes, I'm also taking classes (and I am part of clubs) that are of interest to me and will help me succeed later in life.

I am involved in Mock Trial, which won second place in the regional tournament in 2007 at the Milwaukee County Court House. Through my interest in law I was able to attend Student Government Day, where I met the Board Supervisors of Milwaukee County and discussed issues of importance and advocated for private schools.

I could go on about my achievements and involvements in 4-H, Student Government, School Newspaper, Literary Magazine, and outside-of-school volunteer work, but that would take away from the point of my letter.

I have no doubt that Tamarack cultivated me in more than an educational manner; Tamarack truly laid the foundation for a caring and passionate individual who has high goals and strives to achieve them. I have made friends and valuable connections on a local, state, and national level, but now I wish to make them internationally. I was not just raised as a student at Tamarack; I was raised as a person, with true thoughts and feelings.

Throughout Tamarack and now into high school I have maintained an eagerness for learning language. Sra. Geiger, as some may know, is from Honduras. She helped me begin my studies of Spanish and I am proud to be going to her home country on an international study abroad trip. My early language education through songs and verses is still imprinted on me. When I forget certain words in Spanish, I sing the corresponding songs in my head.

I am so happy to have been a Tamarack Student, and now I am happier still to be an alumnus. I have always loved words, and I am adept in their usages and meanings. However, I cannot find a word, or words, that put my gratitude for the wonderful educators of mind and spirit at Tamarack into human perspective. I hope that everyone stays safe and blessed back in Wisconsin while I am immersed in a new culture, language, and people.

Warmly,

Israel Pechstein

*Editors Note: Israel had a great trip to Honduras and graduated from Pius XI High School in 2008. He is now a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin – Madison.*