

# THE BEELINE

## Empowerment Special Report

### Reader Note

**E**mpowerment, or “Girl Power” as it is known at Danbee, is a key and important element of the camp’s overarching philosophy. The girls who choose to spend summers inside the “Danbee Bubble” are encouraged to push beyond their comfort zone, to try new things, to embrace the experience and discover their potential.

At the same time, they are encouraged to be cheerleaders and advocates for other girls and support them in their endeavors.

Empowerment is an intriguing concept and last summer the Journalism and Media program at Danbee decided to examine empowerment from the perspective of four enormously accomplished women who became successful in each of their respective fields largely because of their own sense of self-empowerment. It was a revealing project that prompted an important discussion about how empowerment is a simple word with a not so simple meaning and is a concept that is different for everyone.

As Avery Dermer, one of the four girls who worked on that project, wrote in the opening cover story, “For the reader, you will find the one lesson that really stands out is that you cannot be empowered without empowering yourself first. In the end it comes down to the amount of faith you put in yourself.”

The directors of Danbee decided the subject of empowerment should be a continuing theme at camp. This year three former Danbee campers were invited for an “empowerment weekend” to share their views on the subject and the lessons they learned at camp that helped shape and mold those views.

Again this year, Danbee’s newspaper *The Beeline* produced a special report about empowerment weekend and more. Girls in the Journalism and Media program produced this report. Within these pages you will read about and hear from women who drew upon their sense of self-empowerment to live rich lives of success and purpose.

You will meet Sally Miller, a former Danbee camper, who during a challenging point in her life followed her heart’s desire and started a fashion line of clothes for girls in their tweens and teens that is sold in major high-end retailers such as Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale’s and others.

You will read about sisters Jessica and Haley Cohen who spent several summers as Danbee campers and how those experiences helped them develop the confidence that would guide them as they begin their careers. Haley is a global marketing assistant for Maybelline Cosmetics. Jessica, a Harvard Business School graduate, works for an equity firm in Boston.

*The Beeline* went into the nearby communities to interview

successful women and tell their stories of the role of empowerment in their lives.

There is Cris Raymond, now retired, who spent many years in the male-dominated world of publishing where she was a successful book editor for Harcourt Brace, Simon and Schuster and Vieweg Verlag in Germany. When asked who empowered her, the quick response was “myself” and that emboldened her throughout her career.

There is Julia Heaton, who heads an elite boarding school for girls in their high school years where empowerment and encouragement to find their own voice are important

elements of their educational experience. Miss Hall’s School is located in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, a 20-minute drive from Camp Danbee. Julia talks about her parents and “great teachers” who empowered her growing up and how that, along with her love of education, helped prepare her to continue the legacy at Miss Hall’s School.

Finally, but no less important, is Edith Wharton, who was born into a life of privilege and who rebelled against the social norms of her time and the predetermined roles for women to become one of America’s most iconic and famous writers. She became a leading advocate for women empowerment. *The Beeline* visited The Mount, Wharton’s estate in nearby Lenox, Massachusetts to learn about her story.

On the next page you will meet the Danbee campers in the Journalism and Media program who reported, researched and conducted the interviews for this report. As you will see by their bios, they are inquisitive and love to write. We believe you will find this report informative and insightful.

Happy Reading!

Gary Hook, Director, Journalism and Media

Jay Toporoff, Owner, Director, Camp Danbee



These six women are examples of self-empowerment. Top right: Sally Miller, Top left: Edith Wharton, Middle left: Jessica Cohen, Bottom left: Cris Raymond, Bottom middle: Haley Cohen, Bottom right: Julia Heaton

## MEET OUR REPORTERS:



**PEYTON ADLER:** Hi! I am in the ninth grade and it is my seventh summer at camp and I love it more and more each year. I loved the newspaper program from the beginning and I still do. It is my favorite activity at camp because I love to write and find out some new history about how camp started and how everything has become how it is today. I hope everyone will love the newspaper program as much as I do!



**EMMA ARABIAN:** Hi! This is my first year at Danbee and I am in the sixth grade. I enjoy all the activities at Danbee and I love trying sports and other things I've never done before. In general, I enjoy track and field, swimming, tennis, and basketball. Journalism is something I have never tried before. I love to write and I thought it could be interesting to try something new. I am very excited to start my two stories for the first two issues of the Danbee Beeline.



**SALLY BROUHARD:** This is my fourth year in the Newspaper program. I have written many stories, including a story about Crane Paper, Larry Kaplan's 50in30 fundraiser, and stories about group leaders and counselors. I am a seventh grader and this is my fifth year at Danbee. I am looking forward to writing more interesting stories this year such as a story about Sally Miller and another about Mark and Jay's jobs behind the scenes.



**AVERY DERMER (Right):** Hi, this is my seventh summer at Danbee and I'm in the ninth grade. Journalism is by far my favorite activity! You have the chance to write about a variety of different things that you are personally curious about. I'm eager to be a part of The Danbee Beeline for the fourth year in a row, and I can't wait to begin writing many articles.



**STELLA FOX (Left):** Hi! This is my seventh summer at camp! I'm in the ninth grade and I've done newspaper from the beginning and I love it! Journalism is my favorite activity at camp! I love interviewing and writing! Camp is my favorite place in the whole world!



**LULU ROSENTHAL:** Hi, I am in seventh grade at Camp Danbee. This is my sixth summer here at camp. I love newspaper, lake, fitness and sports. I enjoy writing a lot of stories. I also love hanging out with my friends.



**ZOE SWIFT:** Hi! This is my fourth summer at Danbee and I'm in the ninth grade. I like waterskiing and woodcraft, but the newspaper program is by far my favorite. I really enjoy writing, so I'm happy that journalism is offered at Danbee. I have been a part of the Danbee Beeline since 2015, and I love it!

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**PHOTO CREDIT:** Unless noted, photos were taken by Gary Hook

# Sally Miller “Do what fuels your heart”

by Sally Brouhard, Lulu Rosenthal, Marissa Miller

**T**he story of Sally Miller’s journey from camper at Danbee to entrepreneur and founder of a successful fashion line for girls is about self-discovery and the value of feeling empowered.

Sally Miller grew up being part of Camp Danbee every summer and that experience was influential in her becoming a successful fashion designer. The lessons Sally learned during those summers are reflected in the clothes she designs for tween and teen girls to help them express and feel good about themselves during an awkward and sometimes difficult time in their lives.

Sally was part of empowerment weekend at Danbee where current campers got to hear from previous Danbee campers about how the camp experience helped shape them into the people they are today.

*The Beeline* spoke with Sally during a phone interview before her visit to Danbee and also covered her talk and question and answer session with campers.

Sally, the granddaughter of Danbee’s founder Jean Bernheim, credits her Danbee experience with helping her build the self-confidence she drew upon in her daily life. She was both a camper and a counselor. Danbee, Sally said, also shaped her philosophy about empowerment. It influenced her and helped her to discover who she was.

“Camp is about exploring an empowering,” Sally said. “In every possible way. There are so many different activities that I would never have had the chance to learn elsewhere. That’s such an amazing gift that Danbee gives. Danbee has a very special spirit that connects all of camp.”

Dance was an important part of Sally’s Danbee experience.

“Dance was really where I found myself, where I could really express myself,” she said. While at Danbee she taught dance and during her time as a counselor Sally created the annual dance festival known as Dance Fest, which is a tradition Danbee still follows today.

At an early age, Sally was a bit of an entrepreneur. When she was eight years old, Sally baked cookies, and walked around her town pulling her red wagon with bags of cookies and selling them for 50 cents each.

“I was 11-years-old when I was inspired to be a designer,” she said.

That year for her class picture in school she took the money she had saved up and bought a pair of tan Frye Boots and a purple turtleneck and thought she was very stylish. The next year her mother saw in fashion magazines that Frye Boots were all the rage and purple was the most popular color. Sally’s mother said to her, “Wow, you really know trends.” Sally said that was the first time she felt she had someone who encouraged her in the direction of fashion.

Her love of fashion and passion for art continued. In high school her inspiration was her art teacher who told her that she should apply to art school and if she didn’t get in then it was no big deal and she could go somewhere else. Sally took that to heart and applied to the Rhode Island School of Design and was accepted.

After graduation from college and what she called some zigzags, Sally landed a job with Liz Claiborne in New York. She worked there a number of years and lived in a rural area of New Jersey. She was married and had two daughters, but



Sally Miller spoke to Danbee campers during Empowerment Weekend.

her marriage ended. She found herself alone with two young girls, a house, no money and a little voice inside her that said, “It’s time to start your own business.” She listened to that voice and began designing clothes in an eight-foot by eight-foot room in her house, which expanded to her basement. Her first designs were sweaters, jeans and sweatshirts. Eventually she had to move because having a business in your house was not allowed.

When she was a tween there were no cool clothes, everything was uncomfortable and pink, she said during the interview. Her idea was to create comfortable and modern clothes for tweens and teens. Sally designs all of her clothing herself. She sketches out her designs and works with a pattern maker that takes her sketches and comes with different fabrics.

“I worked with other brands and partners,” she said. “Retailers knew who I was. They were excited for me to go out on my own and they were very supportive.”

She opened her first retail store in 2008 and then in 2009 she sponsored a contest and asked girls to submit designs and the winner’s design would be put into her clothing line. A 13-year-old girl won the contest and Sally’s retailers loved the design. At the opening she told her daughters “if you build something, people will come.”

Today Sally’s clothes are sold in Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Bloomingdales, Saks Fifth Avenue and other department stores. She said she was excited when she learned that the Obama girls were wearing her clothes. Her success took a lot of hard work and there were many obstacles along the way.

“There are so many obstacles every day,” Sally said. “A lot has to do with mindset and problem solving.”

She says never give up when faced with obstacles because there always is a solution in the middle of a problem. You just have to find it. Sally believes you have to stand up for yourself.

“We have to show up for ourselves,” she told Danbee campers. “If we don’t show up for ourselves, nobody will show up for us.”

“The only way to build self-confidence,” she continued, “is through action. We can’t think our way into self-confidence.”

She said it is important to “do what fuels your heart.”

The thing Sally enjoys most about her business is connecting with the girls that wear her clothes and the retailers that sell

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## Sally Miller (continued)



"Do what fuels your heart," Sally tells campers.

her clothes. She likes seeing the way girls style her clothes.

Sally has a very strong opinion about everyone being equal no matter their gender. Watching her daughters grow up, her way of parenting is to always lead by example and telling them to never give up, that they can do anything or be anything they want.

"I believe in equality for all," she said. "I don't ever really get stuck on male or female. I always come from a place of

equality and justice for all. I haven't ever thought that I can't do something because I'm a woman. I believe girls should show up and act like they are equal.

"It's what my whole brand has always been about – empowerment," she said.

Sally said her mission is to help girls feel good about themselves. On her website, Sally states that she "is committed to making tweens and teens feel good about themselves at a time when they are rapidly changing and growing, both physically and emotionally."

Sally states she realizes there is still peer pressure surrounding how a girl dresses. Since they are getting a lot of different messages about what looks good, she believes it is important to offer clothing that helps them find and stay true to themselves.

"Everyone expresses who they are through what they choose to wear, so giving girls great choices is key."

At the heart of Sally's designs is the belief that there is nothing more important than helping to empower tweens and teens to celebrate their own unique selves.

The most important advice she would give is to never ever, ever, ever give up. Sally believes it is important to be in the present.

She also spoke about the importance of being impactful, to take care of yourself, to give of yourself and remembering to do things for other people.

"Being impactful and giving of your authentic self," she said to Danbee campers, "is a sign of how you feel fulfilled."



"The only way to build self-confidence is through action," Sally said during the question and answer session.

INSET PHOTO: Sally meets Beeline reporters (L-R) Marissa Miller, Sally Brouhard and Lulu Rosenthal.

## Jessica and Haley Cohen Danbee built independence and self-confidence

by Zoe Swift, Emma Arabian

Camp Danbee is proud of its philosophy of empowerment, or “girl power.” This year Danbee hosted an Empowerment Weekend and invited three Danbee alums to share their Danbee experiences with campers. Among these women were sisters Jessica and Haley Cohen. They spoke about the lessons learned during their years at Danbee and the influences those lessons had on their lives, instilling a sense of self-empowerment in both of them.

Haley was a camper at Danbee from 1999 to 2007, and during her time in college she had several internships at L’Oreal, which enabled her to secure a full-time role within the L’Oreal Management Development program, an 18-month rotational marketing program. She saw huge success at L’Oreal, and now is the Global Marketing Assistant Manager for Beauty and Cosmetics at Maybelline New York.

Jessica was a camper from 1996 to 2003 and in college she studied business. Following college, she moved to New York where she worked in investment banking. Five years ago, Jessica moved to Boston and her previous success helped her get into Harvard Business School, from which she graduated in May of this year. Now, she works as a vice president at T.A. Associates, a private equity firm in Boston. She said she tries to do her part to help younger women interested in careers in finance navigate the interview process and early stages of their careers. The world of finance, Jessica said, still is primarily male-dominated, so having a mentor at an early stage can be very helpful. She said one of the things that influenced her to apply to Harvard Business School was a sense of self-empowerment she got from her summers at Danbee.

When asked what skills they acquired from being a Danbee camper that they still use today as an adult, Jessica said being a camper at Danbee helped her to acquire independence.

“I think the biggest one for me is the sense of independence that you get at camp,” Jessica said. “You come here summer after summer and it’s kind of your time away from your parents and your regular household routine that you do at home. You get to do a ton of new things and meet new people and really just grow.”

Jessica went on to say that some of her friends that didn’t go to sleepaway camp had their first experience being away from home when they went to college, “which is pretty late to start finding yourself independently.” Haley agreed and said if you begin being independent earlier in life, the easier it is to leave home when you start your own career.

“It’s a unique thing,” Haley said. “I came here when I was seven, I was a Bumblebee, and so, I started getting comfortable with being away from my parents at a very young age.”

Other aspects of their camp experience all contributed to their sense of independence and confidence, too. According to Haley, the friendships she made here had a huge impact on her, and so did the Danbee spirit.

“I know we would always say ‘Ten months for two,’ but it’s actually true,” Haley said. “I would count down all year to be here, and I think it’s the friends that you make here that last longer.”

For Jessica, the bonds also were one of her favorite things about camp. “Definitely the relationships and friendships were huge,” she said. As for activities, she loved Leagues, the summer-long competition with the entire camp divided into two



(L-R) Haley and Jessica Cohen discuss how their experiences at Camp Danbee helped build their self-confidence.

teams participating in various events to earn points that determine the ultimate winner.

“I always loved Leagues,” Jessica said. “It was always just so much fun and super competitive and you get really into it. But then at the end of the day, your best friends are across both teams and it’s still one big community at Danbee. I just loved that.”

Although the friendships you make at Danbee are unbreakable, you can get caught up in little fights with your peers. For Haley, that is the one thing she wished she could change.

“When you’re here, I guess there are some things that you can be caught up in,” she said, “whether it’s a fight with a friend or something that seems so big in the moment, and honestly coming back here, in retrospect, it’s such a special thing to be here. I think sometimes over the summer you can take it for granted. Looking back, I would’ve tried to make that stuff not important at all.”

Jessica, on the other hand, would’ve tried new things, and explored different aspects of Danbee.

“If I could go back, I would try as many new things as I possibly could,” Jessica said. “Toward the end of my time here, my activity schedule was just back-to-back tennis. If I could go back I would just try to work in new activities like, woodcraft – I’ve never done it before – theater, anything. Just new experiences.”

“You have so many unique opportunities here that, honestly, after camp you just don’t have access to anymore,” she added.

Speaking of unique experiences at camp, when Jessica and Haley were asked what was one distinct memory they remember at camp, they both started laughing as Haley recalled a rather humiliating sleep walking experience. It seems that one night Haley sleepwalked into an older girl’s bunk and got into her bed. “It was just really embarrassing,” she said.

Jessica spoke of her first Leagues break, as a Honey Bumble, when Jay had told everyone that the entire camp was going to the 1996 Summer Olympics and everyone got extremely excited. “But then of course, it was all a big joke,” she said.

As sisters, they will always be there for each other, and look out for each other. They have always been close, and they

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## Jessica and Haley Cohen (continued)

agreed they both care about each other's career. They have different strengths and to this day, they help each other with strengths the other sister doesn't have.

"We both care about each other's academics and careers," Jessica said. "In different ways we've both really leaned on each other. She [Haley] has a lot of strengths, such as her creativity, that I don't have and vice versa."

Jessica spoke about working for a skincare and beauty company as an MBA internship where she "constantly" called Haley for advice with her presentations, etc. Haley talked about having an older sister, and things that you would only go to a big sister for.

"Having an older sister, I feel like I call her and text her every day for help with stuff like, 'Should I send this email?' or 'How should I phrase this?' or 'What should the subject be?'. Just random questions that I would only go to her for," Haley said.

But there are some things that you have to do yourself. There are some challenges you must overcome on your own without help from sisters. For Jessica it was applying to and being accepted into Harvard Business School, one of the most prestigious business schools in the world. One of the things Jessica had to rise above was the competition to actually get into Harvard Business School, and how to make yourself look different among a group of highly talented people.

"Harvard gets a ton of finance applications – people that look very similar to me on paper," Jessica explained. "So, that's definitely a challenge – like, how do you get yourself to stick out among people who are all very successful individuals."

But more than that, finance also is a very competitive industry. So even after business school she constantly is trying to learn more and improve on certain skills to be as successful in the industry as she can be.

"Finance, at least typically, is a male-dominated field" Jessica said. "So, naturally being a female in a male-dominated field – or being a minority in any situation – can be really hard at times, but it also can be a huge opportunity and a differentiator. It's all about the way you approach situations. For me, I have always found that keeping a positive attitude and finding trusted mentors have been hugely impactful on my career."

Haley, who works at Maybelline, does not have to navigate a male-dominated industry. Quite the opposite, in fact, but still, there are challenges.

"There are always going to be a lot of big personalities and people with varying opinions or views on certain topics," Haley said. "Finding a way to navigate those situations, especially in as big a corporation as L'Oreal, can be a challenge, as well. And I think Danbee really did help with that because this is an all girls camp, and now I'm working on a team that's almost all women."



Zoe Swift asks Haley about her Maybelline experience.



Haley and Jessica Cohen are interviewed by girls in Danbee's Journalism and Media Program. (L-R) Zoe Swift, Avery Dermer, Peyton Adler, Stella Fox.

# Cris Raymond “Believe in yourself”

by Avery Dermer

Cris Raymond has lived a life of inquisitiveness and adventure amidst the male dominated publishing world she was a part of for many years. She has many fascinating stories to tell from her publishing world experiences, as well as lessons she has learned that have helped her throughout her life and contributed to her sense of self-empowerment.

During her career Cris faced multiple obstacles and dealt with many unfair situations that were based solely on her gender. As she grew older, she began to notice changes, differences and also things that have remained the same in our society. It all began with her fascination with words.

*The Beeline* interviewed Cris on the spacious porch of The Mount, which is the estate of the great American author, Edith Wharton, who was a strong example of empowerment in her day. Cris is a member of the Board of Trustees for The Mount.

Beginning in the second grade Cris had a very strong love for words. She adored them and paid close attention to every word that went into every single sentence she heard. Her love for words began with poetry. Cris said that writing poetry was an activity she enjoyed doing, but was certain that none of her poems would ever be capable of seeing the light of day. Her love for words also came from reading so many books. After identifying what she loved to do, she had this thought in the back of her mind of working at a card company. One day Cris saw all of the funny and cute cards in the store and thought, “Wow, I could do that!”

Eventually her idea of working for a card company faded and instead she wanted to be in an environment where she would be seriously involved with words. That’s when Cris realized she wanted to work in book publishing.

Cris’ formal education also prepared her well for her chosen field. She is a 1955 graduate of Miss Hall’s School. Located in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Miss Hall’s is an elite boarding school for girls in ninth through twelfth grades with empowerment as the foundation of its approach to education. According to bio information on The Mount’s website, Cris, as an undergraduate, “studied at Barnard College, Chatham University, and Oxford, and she did graduate work at New York University. Cris also produced a book titled “Where Can I Get a Phoenix,” which is a collection of five years of artwork produced by kids who lost a parent in 9/11 and who for one week each summer came to America’s Camp hosted by Mah-Kee-Nac in nearby Lenox and then at Danbee.

Cris began her publishing journey by first working for Harcourt Brace from 1959 to 1961. She then moved on to Simon and Schuster and remained there for nine years from 1961 to 1970. At both places her salary was \$74.00 per week.

While at Simon and Schuster, Cris volunteered to read various mysteries and write a summary about the novel. One author she read was Agatha Christie, a very successful and famous mystery writer. Cris explained that she enjoyed doing this day after day and truly never got bored. Cris also noted that all the salesmen were male while the women were copy editors. In other words, the women would read everything making sure that there were absolutely no mistakes. In Cris’ words this was a good job for women because, “women have a sharper eye for detail.” Yet, women did not enjoy the same status within the company as men.

One story Cris remembers clearly happened at Simon and



“Language is living,” Cris says. “I like it to be correct.”

Photo courtesy of Cris Raymond

Schuster in the art department, which focused on the cover design for the books. One day, Cris received a cover of a dead blonde woman lying in a field of daises. The art was impressive, but the story was all about a brunette woman lying dead in a library. That was one of those times when Cris had to step in and fix the mistake. So, she called the art department and explained that the cover of this book did not correspond to the story in the slightest.

Cris realized she had a skill for detail during school when she worked at a bank. The bank was in Pittsfield and her job was as a teller, which meant she made sure every single penny was accounted for. Cris related this to her future job of being a book editor by saying that, “In a bank I keep track of every coin. In a book I keep track of every word.”

Throughout the interview with Cris she made it very clear that in a sentence every single word counts.

After working in the high pressure world of book publishing in New York, Cris moved to Europe with her husband and got a job at Vieweg Verlag, a German publishing company that specialized in international scientific publishing. This company was the first publisher of Albert Einstein.

Another chapter of her life involved working at Tanglewood, which is a performance venue for many talented artists and also is the summer home of the Boston Pops Orchestra. She is writing a book about her experiences there. Cris worked backstage in many different shows preparing the people who were taking the stage next. One night she had a soprano who was about to have her solo. Halfway through the show the conductor was switched, so the performer became nervous that her aria would be at a different tempo and she couldn’t go on stage. She spoke a limited amount of English, but Cris heard the words she knew represented anxiety. Cris then drew upon her knowledge of German and said the aria would be at the same tempo. She explained that this conductor was just as ready and prepared as the previous one. The soprano calmed down and left it all on the stage by singing her heart out. This was one of the times when Cris realized that “you have to put the right words, in the right sentence, at the right time.”

While she is retired, Cris lives a very busy life. In addition to her work at Tanglewood and at The Mount, she also was a writer

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## Cris Raymond (continued)

and editor of a magazine for the Norman Rockwell Museum.

"I'm trying to cut back," she said.

It is her fascination with words and love of language that have shaped how she views what is happening with language today.

"Language is living," she said. "Words go out of fashion. Words go into fashion. I like it to be correct."

"They've done away with copy editors," she noted. "It's okay to start a sentence with conjunctions. Nobody knows what the objective case is, nobody cares anymore. People don't care about language."

In the future Cris thinks that the whole idea of biographies will vanish because of the lack of letters and journals for writers to look back on for reference.

Throughout her publishing career, one that was dominated by men in leadership positions who often didn't view women as equals, Cris learned the importance of having a sense of self.

When asked who empowers her, Cris quickly answered with "myself."

"If you were to look in the mirror and you don't respect that

person looking back at you," she said, "then you have a problem."

Cris made it clear that you need to be your own biggest fan and that you are one of the key people that needs to empower you. Cris also said her grandmother empowered her. Her grandmother made it clear that she was the most beautiful, smart, sweet, girl out there.

"Nobody has ever had the power to diminish me because of my grandmother," Cris said.

She believes that everybody needs someone to believe in him or her to make it possible to believe in themselves.

Cris was asked what advice she would give to tweens and teens like the girls here at Camp Danbee. She took a minute to consider the many lessons she has learned throughout her life and finally decided on one.

"Believe in yourself," she said. "Don't let anybody interfere with that because if you don't believe in yourself, who can believe in you?"



Cris Raymond produced this compilation of five years of artwork created by America's Camp kids who lost a parent in 9/11.

Photo courtesy of Cris Raymond

# Julia Heaton At Miss Hall's every girl has a voice

by Stella Fox

The mission of Camp Danbee is to empower girls and young women to become their best selves and give them the courage to do what they believe in. A 20-minute drive from Danbee is another center for girls with a similar mission. Located in Pittsfield, Massachusetts is Miss Hall's School, an all girls boarding high school, with day students.

Since its founding in 1898, Miss Hall's has been preparing and empowering young women to meet life's challenges beginning with a strong educational foundation. The website for Miss Hall's states that its mission is to help the girls develop a sense of self-confidence for "when they will be expected to communicate effectively and authentically, voice opinions with resolve and respect, and be comfortable having influence, leading change, and contributing boldly and creatively to the common good."

This philosophy is similar to Danbee's where, the camp's website states, "Campers learn to communicate and trust each other. They make connections, build relationships, hone life skills, and develop self-esteem and confidence. "Girl Power" encourages a "Yes I Can!" attitude. When there is no glass ceiling and the sky in the limit, all things are possible."

Miss Hall's is known far and wide. There currently are 210 students enrolled, one-third of these being day students and the other two-thirds are boarding students. These students represent 14 states from Maine to Florida and Virginia to California and hail from 21 countries around the world. Some students come from as far as 5,000 miles away. For many students who come from other countries it's their first time being out of their home country. The students reflect a broad diversity that is an important part of the educational experience at Miss Hall's. Forty percent of the students are international and 25 percent are students of color.

Leading the school and its staff as they go about their mission is Julia Heaton, who is the eleventh head of Miss Hall's school. She has a B.A. in American Studies, with a concentration in African-American History, from Yale University. She also holds an M.A. in Educational Leadership from Columbia University Teachers College.

*The Beeline* interviewed Julia in the comfort of a large lounge area in the school's main administration building.

As Julia works to create an environment where girls can feel empowered, she draws upon her own experiences growing up and those who helped empower her.

Julia said her parents were very close and so supportive. She also had "great teachers pushing her" and she mentions her senior year English teacher "who was so passionate" about the subject. Another great teacher she mentions is her math teacher during her sophomore year in high school.

"In high school we see girls talk themselves out of hard math and science," she said.

Being a teacher and getting into the education field was something Julia always knew she wanted to do. Growing up in Newton, Massachusetts she went to public school and had never seen a boarding school until Miss Hall's.

School was one of Julia's favorite things growing up; she loved being a student, but also enjoyed playing school when she was little. When she was an undergrad at Yale she took a semester off to go to Kenya where she hoped to make a difference. There she lived with a family and taught in a small



Julia Heaton meets with girls from Camp Danbee during interview about Miss Hall's School and empowerment. village. Julia noted how she had never traveled in East Africa and been to a place where she was so different. It was her first time going to a developing country and it opened her eyes to the privileges she had.

After college Julia spent 16 years teaching at schools in New York City, including Manhattan Country School and Little Red School House. Julia loved her life in New York City. A friend gave Julia's name to someone searching to fill a top job at a high school in Massachusetts.

Julia wasn't looking for other jobs when contacted by Miss Hall's. She made a visit to the school in November 2012 and as she learned about the school she was interested and inspired. Hearing a student from Miss Hall's talk about how she was uncertain and not focused on having a voice in ninth grade, but transformed into someone with a voice who gained the skills to be a leader throughout her four years at Miss Hall's really convinced Julia she wanted to be there. She loved how that was a big purpose and mission at the school. Julia then made the decision to move her family to Massachusetts and looking back Julia says, "it was worth it to leave New York."

At the time Julia thought she wasn't ready to move, but she said there are studies about women thinking they're not as prepared as they really are for new opportunities and this was exactly what was happening to Julia. She realized she was ready and was excited for this new challenge that she was about to take on.

Miss Hall's school is different from other boarding schools because of the strong community and sense of girl power. Julia noted how the school community is supportive of change and one of the core values is respect. Everyone will have a voice at Miss Hall's, Julia said, and it is safe to be themselves. During orientation, sports practices, and anytime at school students are always encouraged to be leaders and speak out.

There are programs at the school providing opportunities for that to happen. For instance, each year the student council comes up with ideas for that year's theme and the whole school votes together on it. This coming year's theme is advocacy, meaning how you can advocate for others and yourself by speaking up. The school will watch screenings; have alumni talk about the theme and have activities lined up around the theme of advocacy.

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## Julia Heaton (continued)

Another leadership opportunity at Miss Hall's is the Horizons program. Every Thursday, each student will do service based work. This is done through internships on and off campus, volunteering at local nonprofit organizations and career-related opportunities at many area businesses.

Miss Hall's comes with a high tuition. The comprehensive fee for resident tuition is \$57,750 and \$35,000 for day tuition. Sixty percent of students receive some form of financial aid. The school actively seeks a diverse student population and the school wants everyone who is accepted to have access to coming. When students apply to Miss Hall's they submit their grades, an essay, recommendations, take the Secondary School Admissions Test and have an interview. It is recommended that students spend time on campus with students prior to applying. Julia said she looks for students who are excited to be at a place where empowerment is a big priority and people who will be successful there. On average about 48% of applicants are accepted and of those, half choose to attend.

One advantage Julia says the school has is being all girls. "There is comfort here because it is all girls," Julia said.

At the school gender identity and what it means is important, Julia said. There are many ways to be a girl and not everyone is the same. It is a shared experience. Everyone doesn't always have to fit into the same box; it's okay to be outside of the box, Julia said. Making all these things clear at Miss Hall's is her goal.

"There is comfort here because it is all girls"

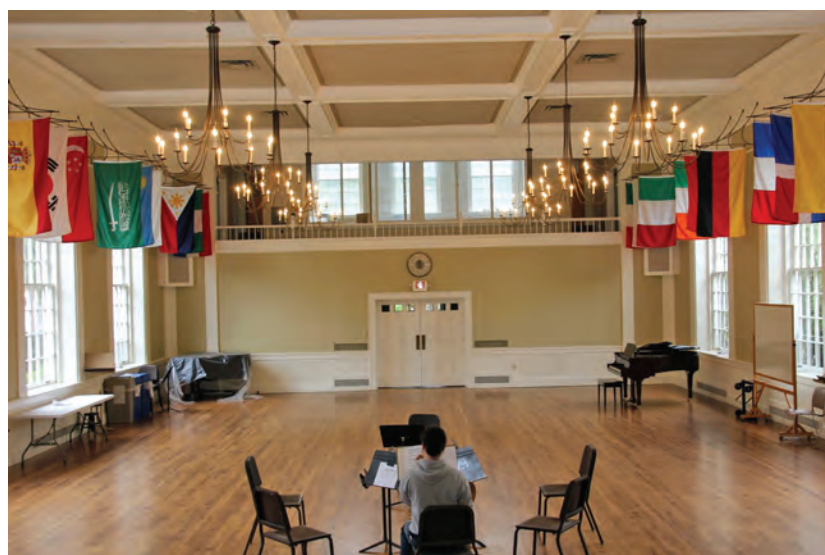
- Julia Heaton

Julia said she wants all the girls at Miss Hall's to gain a voice and find themselves. She wants students to learn, get excited, and form an opinion on women's rights. Julia believes there is a lot of work to do to gain equal rights, but there are greater challenges for women in other places and she wants students to understand that.

As with Camp Danbee, girls are becoming empowered every day and girl power will always be an important part at Miss Hall's School.



(L-R) Eliza Lakritz, Stella Fox and Avery Dermer from Camp Danbee meet with Jayme McGuigan '18, School President, in the common room of a new residence hall during a campus tour of Miss Hall's School.



Student practices music in Centennial Hall.



A scenic view of the Elizabeth Gatchell Klein Arts Center.



A view of The Quad behind the Miss Hall's School main building.

# Edith Wharton Like no other woman of her time

by Peyton Adler



Edith Jones 1862-1937;  
Edward Harrison May (1824-1887),  
Oil on canvas, 1881,  
The American Academy of Arts and Letters,  
New York City; Gift of Edith Wharton, 1930

**E**dith Jones was born in 1862 into an upper class New York City family at a time when stringent social norms and protocols dictated what her future would look like. Born with a spirit and determination that were ahead of her time period, she spent years rebelling against those strict rules of society to become a leading advocate of women empowerment.

Edith's parents were George and Lucretia Jones, whose wealth and social stature meant that she was

born into the right family to learn proper social etiquette.

Edith overcame her mother's wishes and the admonitions of people around her to become one of America's greatest authors at a time when writing just was not something acceptable for women to do.

*The Beeline* visited The Mount, the name of Edith's expansive estate in nearby Lenox, Massachusetts where Anne Schuyler, director of visitor services, gave us a tour and provided insights into Edith's life.

Edith was like no other women in her time period. She paved her own path to fame as an author. She wrote more than 40 books, including *House of Mirth*, *Ethan Frome*, and *Age of Innocence*, which was made into a movie in 1993.

Edith didn't like the social restrictions and expectations for proper behavior of the upper class society where she lived, especially how they affected women.

An example of such restrictions can be found in the biography *The Brave Escape of Edith Wharton* by Connie Norhielm Wooldridge.

"Edith's baptism took place at Grace Church in New York City, which had society's stamp of approval," Wooldridge writes. "Her parents' names were listed in the registry as 'George F. & \_\_\_\_\_' because Lucretia knew a woman's name must appear only at her birth, her marriage, and her death. Lucretia Jones was always proper."

When she grew older, Edith rebelled against these social norms in many ways big and small. For instance, in Edith's time it was traditional for the mother's carriage to always be in front of the daughter's. In an act of defiance, one time Edith drove her carriage in front of her mother's.

Edith spent much of her early childhood in Europe where her family lived at various times in France, Italy, Germany and Spain. It was during this time that Edith learned to speak French, Italian and German.

She always was a curious child who loved to read. She spent many hours in her father's library reading as much as she could. She also had a strong imagination and often was

inspired to make up her own stories. This was a concern for her parents who worried their daughter might be smart.

As Connie Wooldridge writes, "Edith promptly began devouring adult classics. That created even more worries for her mother. It was believed at the time that a young lady could destroy her health by learning too much. Even worse, what if all this reading meant Edith was intelligent? Nothing was harder than to marry off an intelligent daughter."

Edith's mother did not support the ideas her daughter was embracing, but, according to Wooldridge, "she kept a notebook of Edith's poems." At the age of 16 Edith's first book of verses was published under the name "Anonymous." Edith was denied getting credit for her work because the family wanted to avoid criticism of allowing their daughter to write. Additionally, Anne Schuyler explained, Edith also was only 16, female and the family was concerned about its privacy, also part of the social norms at the time that said a woman's name appears in print only at birth, marriage or death.

Most women were married by the age of 23 at that time, but Edith was not. Her mother was in fear that Edith wouldn't get married and would start her own path with no husband and with the "old maid" label. Eventually she was pressured by family to marry Edward "Teddy" Wharton. Edith Jones was now Edith Wharton. Although they were not madly in love, Teddy was supportive of Edith's work while they were married.

Theirs was not the best of marriages, but, according to Anne Schuyler, Edith and Teddy filled their years together with lots of travel, houses, the outdoors and many dogs. At The Mount there is a cemetery where they buried four of their dogs.

They both slept in different rooms and when touring The Mount you can visit Edith's suite, which included a bedroom, office and a bathroom. Edith would shut the door and wouldn't allow Teddy in most of the time.

Edith also enjoyed architecture and gardening and had a strong interest in design. She liked structure, symmetry and balance, Anne said. Not only did Edith rebel against the social customs of her time, she also objected to the way houses were decorated.

"Edith had no use for conventional decorators who disregarded the structure of a room," Wooldridge writes in her biography, "and, in Edith's words, filled every corner with 'wobbly velvet covered tables...and festoons of lace.'"

"Edith loathed the way her mother's generation hid a house's architecture under a bunch of things," Wooldridge continues. "She thought houses, like people, should be honest about what they were."

In 1901 Edith bought 113 acres in Lenox and, Anne noted, Edith's love of structure, balance and symmetry in architecture was instrumental in her design of The Mount and the surrounding gardens.

Anne said The Mount addressed Edith's needs as a designer, gardener, hostess and writer, with the latter being the most important.

She put her heart and soul into the house. Edith loved to garden and gardening is one of the things that made her who she was, as well as writing. The Mount was where she was able to do what she really loved. Anne said Edith wrote some of her best works at The Mount, including her very successful breakout book *The House of Mirth* in 1905. In that book she

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# Edith Wharton (continued)



The main house as seen from the walled garden on the property of The Mount.  
David Dashiell, dashiellphoto.com

drew upon her knowledge of the social class she grew up in to write about the hypocrisy and corruption of the upper class of New York at the time.

Edith's intellectual drive was enormous. She loved science and evolution, Anne said, and she was impatient with people who weren't interested, like her husband. One day, Anne said, Teddy asked Edith why she loved these subjects so much. He did not object to her being interested in such subjects, Anne explained, it was just that he was not.

Edith was an admirer of Henry James, who also was a successful author. She and James became close friends and would engage in long discussions. James would visit Edith at her home and help fulfill her intellectual drive.

Over time Teddy's behavior became erratic, which today would be diagnosed as bipolar, Anne said, and his mental health started to fail. Teddy and Edith lived in The Mount for 10 years until 1911 when they sold the property. Two years later in 1913 Edith and Teddy were divorced.

Not only did Edith go against the social norms of the time regarding what woman should and should not do and became a very successful author, she also learned how to handle her own business affairs and became a successful businesswoman.

After her divorce, Edith moved permanently to France. According to Anne, while Edith's drive for intellectual fulfillment in America was a challenge, France offered a different setting for her. The French, Anne said, admired intellectual women, of which Edith was one. Plus, she was viewed as the odd American, which the French found acceptable.

World War I broke out in 1914 and Edith began sending articles to *Scribner's Magazine* in New York detailing what she was witnessing. She also was called upon to become involved with aid agencies to help in the war effort. One request, according to Wooldridge in her biography came from the French Red Cross to raise money from donors to fund a workroom to pay unemployed women to make bandages, sock and sweaters. Edith agreed.

She realized it was important for people in America to know what was happening in France.

"If Edith's donors were going to keep giving," Wooldridge writes, "they had to know how urgent the need was. Edith began a new kind of writing: reports to contributors. It wasn't as satisfying as writing fiction, but these reports and her articles

for *Scribner's Magazine* took up the bulk of her writing time. When she wasn't writing or fundraising, she worked."

She also convinced *Scribner's Magazine* to send her to the front during the war. She travelled to the front five times and, according to Anne, wrote perhaps her best non-fiction book "Fighting France" in 1915.

After the war ended in 1918 Edith returned to writing fiction. She again drew upon the familiar world of high society. *The Age of Innocence* would be the name of the book. As Connie Wooldridge writes, "*The Age of Innocence* seemed to pour out of Edith. She completed it in just over seven months. It was much more than a simple story about the rigid manners of an earlier time. It had something to say about the postwar world in which her readers lived."

Published in 1920, the book was an enormous hit and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Edith Wharton was the first woman to receive this honor. Edith also was the first woman to receive an honorary degree of letters from Yale University.

She would write nine more books until her death in 1937. Again, Edith was like no other woman of her time period. Through her published words and her actions, Edith was an example of empowerment for other women to show that women could be strong, independent and smart and chart their own path.



Books line the shelves in the library at The Mount.



Original papers of Edith Wharton's are displayed on the bed in her suite at The Mount.