



LEAF Senior Alex Frazier spent last summer at the Advanced Studies Program at St. Paul's School in Concord. Alex says her experience at ASP was "life changing." The competitive ASP program brings together talented rising seniors from all over New Hampshire for 6 weeks of immersive academic study and college preparation.

Alex chose Molecular Biology for her major study. "We started by reading a 500 page book called The Gene: An Intimate History by Shiddhartha Mukherjee. We learned about Eugenics and Crispr. Crispr is a technology that can be used to edit genes. Crispr will be used to help cure cancer." Along with lots of reading, they also did experiments. "We grew little worms and different bacterias. One of our assignments was to grow some glowing algae. I was successful growing the glowing algae, not everyone was."

ASP also offers a writing class for all of the participants. In general Alex says she was not a fan of writing before ASP. Alex says she can visualize what she is reading better and she left ASP with a college essay ready to submit.

Participating in the ASP program also gave Alex a chance to experience living in a dorm and socialize with new people.. Alex sums up her experience at ASP by saying "you want to be present the whole time because you don't want to miss anything. It is completely amazing."

On her first visit to LEAF Alex thought LEAF was "very cool, very chill, very alternative and hippy dippy. They also offered French which was a draw for me. I had been taking French and I wanted to continue."

Alex shares a love of biology with former STEM teacher Joe Quimby. "He always believed in me. He always thought I was smarter than I believed I was. He has that mystical energy. He knew how to adapt to everyone's learning style."

Humanities teacher, Chris Becker "has made a difference for everyone. He is easy to talk to. I learned a lot. His voice is memorable. I remember everything he taught me."

Alex has taken a variety of classes with founding director Dakota Benedetto. "I took 3 years of art with Dakota. I like the way she teaches. She is good at explaining the how and the why. Dakota is very confident and very straightforward. She is a very comfortable person to be

around. She lets people have their own creativity and add their own flare. Alex has also studied French with Dakota. "She is very good at teaching us how to learn a language and she explains it very well. She teaches it so well we can't fail."

Chemistry was Alex's favorite class. "I understand the numbers and molecules. It just clicked in my brain."

Alex's dream job is to be a surgeon who fixes scoliosis. Alex has been accepted at all 4 colleges she applied to. She has decided to attend Franklin Pierce University next fall." Franklin Pierce was my first choice. I want to be a surgeon. I liked how small Franklin Pierce is. The Health Science program has good professors. I love the dining room! Overall it is a nice environment."

Some of Alex's favorite memories of her time at LEAF include people jumping into the snowbank in winter, March Madness when she collected sap and made maple syrup and building a catapult in STEM class. Her favorite field trip was to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Before they went they watched the documentary "This is a Robbery: The World's Biggest Art Heist." " It was really cool."

Alex has the following advice for incoming LEAF students: "Get involved with board meetings because they make decisions for the school and you can be a part of that. The student to teacher ratio is so small, you really get to know your teachers. The teachers at LEAF can adapt to your learning style and there are a lot of support people. There are not that many people so you can make closer connections. Everyone is open to having a new person in the community. People will invite you to sit with them if you are sitting alone. The community is welcoming. Also having a stage is a plus; it is very cozy and comfortable. LEAF is great. I love it."

5 Fun Facts about Alex:

- 1). I like drawing people.
- 2). I hate cooking yet I always end up in the kitchen.
- 3). I want to be a doctor.
- 4). I am allergic to lavender.
- 5). Everlong by the Foo Fighters is my favorite song.