



The summer before her Freshman year senior, Icina Holmes visited LEAF Charter School for the first time. She thought “ the building was really cool. I liked the machines and the open concept.” During this initial visit she also met founding director, Dakota Benedetto. “I thought Dakota was awesome. It is hard to imagine how she does all the things she does. I remember her being really welcoming.”

Over the years, Icina has really appreciated her relationship with math teacher, Shana Frank. “Shana helped me believe I was capable in math. That translated to other places in my life. I thought, well, you are just capable in general get over yourself.”

She also appreciates humanities teacher Chris Becker. “I have always loved his class. I like history and he makes it super fun. Even when he is lecturing, it

doesn't feel like a lecture. You wish he would just keep talking. He makes me want to learn more every day.”

Icina has really loved her humanity class and her economics class because both are relevant. In Humanities class, “I love the discussions we have. You should know about history so it doesn't repeat itself and it is important to know what humans are capable of, both past and present. I just think you can learn so much about life through history and philosophy.”

Icina likes her economics class taught by founding director, Dakota Benedetto because “I value security and I want to know how the system I am forced to be in works. I also like that it is very structured. I like systems. Dakota has made it fun.”

During her time at LEAF Icina has participated in an Extended Learning Opportunity(ELO) in herbalism. “For a half a year I dug up herbs, made tinctures, creams, and salves.”

What would Icina choose for her dream job? “I have many dream jobs. I would like to be a lawyer because I like arguing especially if I'm helping someone.” She would also enjoy being a Hellenistic Astrologer. Hellenistic astrology is the basis of modern western astrology.” I have learned a lot about life through astrology.” Another dream job would be to be an author. “ I would probably write about astrology and how to use it as an example of how much you can get out of one thing.”

Next fall, Icina will be heading to Keene State College. She is not sure what she is going to study yet. She has lots of things she wants to know more about . She thinks she may major in psychology or nursing.

Icina leaves the following advice for new LEAF students. “Take advantage of your independent learning time and ELO’s. The school really values hands-on learning. You have a lot more control over what you would like to learn at LEAF like through ELOs and that is really encouraged. I think we have more authentic learning here at LEAF. For example, we are learning about history in a very unbiased way and I really appreciate that. I appreciate the freedom, acknowledgement, and credit you get for the things you personally want to learn.”

5 Fun Facts about Icina:

- 1). Recently my great grandfather's book, A Death in the Family was made into a musical called Knoxville.
- 2). I like the meditations of Marcus Aurelius. His meditations about stoicism have helped me a lot.
- 3). I lived off the grid of over a decade of my life.
- 4). I am half Jamaican.
- 5). This summer I will be working as a gardener going around to different properties doing gardening.