

## Then and Now: **The Alumni Corner**

by **Susan Black**

Brother and sister, Rich and Lauren Lampasi, were two of the first elementary students to attend Cottonwood School when it opened in 1995. Rich graduated from Cottonwood School in 1998 and attended Lincoln Middle School. At Lincoln he played the trombone in the marching band and also took interest in guitar and piano. Rich attended St. Pius High School where he was on the Honor Roll, lettered in Speech and Debate, and wrote for the school newspaper. Upon his graduation from St. Pius, Rich attended Syracuse University where he managed the women's field hockey team for 2 years. He graduated cum laude in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in sports management and a minor in marketing.

Lauren also attended Lincoln Middle School after graduating from Cottonwood School in 2000, and then went to Rio Rancho Middle and High Schools. Lauren was on the Varsity Tennis team at Rio Rancho during 9-12 grades. She also became active in Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central New Mexico and served as a big sister during her senior year. Lauren attends University of Connecticut and is spending this semester in Rhodes, Greece studying the history and culture of the country. She is majoring in Communications and plans to graduate in May 2011.

Rich mentioned that he believes his time at Cottonwood helped him to be organized, self-reliant, self-regulating and independent. He especially remembers the Senior camping trip to Chaco Canyon.

Lauren too has fond memories of her Chaco trip and also credits Cottonwood with exposing her to many creative outlets. She believes Cottonwood helped to cultivate an overall appreciation for the arts. In addition, Lauren mentioned that Cottonwood left her well prepared academically for middle school and encouraged a respect for diversity. In a parting thought Lauren said, "I love the Montessori system and how it teaches kids to manage their time on their own."



**Rich Lampasi**  
Cottonwood  
School 1998  
St Pius 2005  
Syracuse  
University 2009



**Lauren Lampasi**  
Cottonwood  
School 2000  
Rio Rancho H.S.  
2007  
U. of Connecticut  
present