



NVTutoring Quarterly

Going beyond tutoring to help our clients.

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Winter 2008

*Professional,
Courteous,
In-Home Service
Since 1995*

*Elementary -
College*

On the back:

- Math Books for Middle School Girls
- Tutor Profile: Colleen Wallace

Winter Test Dates

SAT & Subject Tests:

January 24, 2009

March 14, 2009

ACT:

February 7, 2009

You Don't Have to Be Brilliant to Be Successful — Just Organized!

I often tell my students (a bit tongue in cheek) at Northern Virginia Community College that it does not take an IQ of 160 or an SAT score of 2400 to be successful in life. All it really takes is the ability to show up on time, put a smile on your face, possess a reasonable amount of intelligence and, most of all, be organized! How difficult is that? For some, it is an almost insurmountable task.

Many students attend school with learning disabilities such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or Executive Function disorders. For a large number of students, they simply have not been taught the fundamentals of note taking, test-taking, skimming vs. study-type reading, or basic organizational skills such as using an assignment calendar or monthly planner.

If your child does not show overt signs of inattentiveness, distractibility, and anxiety, an academic coach/mentor may be the solution. If, on the other hand, your child does exhibit signs of learning disabilities, testing and evaluation should be considered.

An academic coach/mentor can be the answer to your child's academic problems and resulting family tension. A good coach/mentor will be the conduit through which the issues your child faces in school will be channeled. This takes the role of "warden" out of your hands and places it firmly in the hands of a trained professional. You get your child back and your child gets the help he/she needs and deserves.

Organizational skills are critical in life, whether on the job, in the home, or in pursuit of any endeavor. Children and young adults need to be taught these skills. This instruction can happen through parental modeling, but it also must happen in school. If your child missed this opportunity in school, you owe it to your child to take corrective measures now. It is the basis for his/her future professional and personal success.

- Dr. Ralph G. Perrino

NVTS News

- We are pleased to announce that Dr. Ralph G. Perrino is currently serving terms as President, Washington Independent Services for Educational Resources (WISER) and Chairman, Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce.
- Dr. Perrino's 25-minute presentation, "Key Points to Consider When Hiring a Tutor" is available free to PTSAs in Northern Virginia. Contact us to schedule!
- Former NVTS Administrative Assistant Danielle Smallwood has launched a family- and child-oriented photography business: Photography by Danie. Visit her website at: "www.photographybydanie.com"



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**"We're All Here
for the Kids!"**

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Actress AND Mathematician?

Actress Danica McKellar, best known to you as Winnie Cooper in the TV series "The Wonder Years," is also the author of two books meant to inspire and assist middle school girls with math. Both are *New York Times* bestsellers.

Danica graduated Summa Cum Laude from UCLA with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics; co-authored a math theorem in 1998, which is now published in the *British Journal of Physics A: Mathematical and General*, and testified before the House Committee on Science Subcommittee on Technology on attracting women to science, engineering, and technology. Meanwhile she continued a successful acting career. Her message to girls is "you can do math, and smart is sexy!"

Math Doesn't Suck: How to Survive Middle School Math Without Losing Your Mind or Breaking a Nail and *Kiss My Math: Showing Pre-Algebra Who's Boss* are styled like popular girls' magazines. *Math Doesn't Suck* clears up misunderstandings about middle school math like fractions, decimals, proportions, and more. *Kiss My Math* moves on to pre-algebra subjects like exponents, absolute value, solving for x, and more.

The supporting websites ("www.mathdoesntsuck.com" and "www.kissmymath.com") provide forums, solution guides, extras, and, of course, the staple of publications for middle school girls, quizzes like "Do you hide your smarts? (especially around guys)."

- Deb Haynes

Tutor Profile: Colleen Wallace

Colleen has tutored for NVT since 2000 and taught for Fairfax County Public Schools since 1996. Her career before teaching included driving a FCPS school bus, an experience from which she gleaned many insights about student behavior.

Like many of our students, Colleen travelled extensively as a child due to her father's work in the State Department. She has lived in Iran, Singapore, Thailand, Lebanon, Panama, Paraguay, and Greece. Part of her parents' approach to education was for Colleen to visit many other countries.

As an adult, Colleen has visited France, the UK, and China because her youngest child earned the right to represent the US in rock climbing competitions. She says, "It was a lot of fun and we learned a lot about ourselves and other people. The boys even got to

climb on the Great Wall of China because a Chinese man told my boys you weren't a man until you climbed the wall...so of course mine had to do it!"

Colleen holds a Bachelor of Arts from UVA and a Master of Education from Marymount University. She is Virginia State Certified in Learning Disabilities K-12 and Psychology. She was motivated to pursue her Master's because of her desire to teach, a love of science, and the discovery that she was able to teach students who presented challenges to other teachers.

Colleen specializes in middle school science, math, and study and organizational skills. She also speaks conversational Spanish. She works closely with students, parents, and school staff to meet the needs of her learning disabled students.