



# SCHOOL DIRECTOR OPENING *(for July 2019)*

## OUR SCHOOL

Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School (HVS) provides innovative, age-appropriate learning opportunities for students from kindergarten through high school. Our approach is rooted in the educational insights of Rudolf Steiner and promotes artistic, academic, physical, and moral growth. Situated on a certified Biodynamic® farm, our unique environment supports healthy connections to the natural world and provides opportunities for hands-on learning in collaboration with the farm enterprises. Our integrated curriculum cultivates social responsibility, personal integrity, intellectual curiosity, and practical capacities that prepare our students to best meet the challenges of the world today.

## ABOUT THE AREA

HVS is located in Harlemville, New York, which sits on the borders of Ghent and Hillsdale in rural Columbia County, approximately two hours from New York City and one hour from Albany. The nearby city of Hudson with its hip and emerging cultural scene is only 20 minutes from campus. Columbia County, located in the northern end of the Hudson Valley, is noted for its rural character with magnificent rolling terrain and river views. Farming is vibrant, with almost 60% of the land engaged as cropland, making farm-to-table a daily occurrence. The rural character is complemented by a wide array of

entertainment, art galleries, historic sites and outdoor adventure, from skiing to hiking to mountain biking.

## THE POSITION

HVS seeks a School Director to lead the school in the evolution of its successful collaborative leadership model. Working within the circle of executive management, the director is supported by the school's chairing faculty. This is an exciting time to be in leadership at Hawthorne Valley as it continues to develop and expand its distinctive farm-based integrative curriculum. The School strives for excellence in holistic education and seeks to provide children with learning opportunities rooted in the world around them. The Director is responsible for overseeing the administrative staff, ensuring smooth operations at the school, communications with the parent body, and adequate training and resources for faculty to provide this diverse, quality education to their students.

For a full description of the school, see <https://school.hawthornevalley.org>.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

Rolling, with the appointment to begin during the summer of 2019.



## MISSION

Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School nurtures the artistic, academic, physical, and moral development of the growing child through an age appropriate curriculum inspired by philosopher and educator Rudolf Steiner. We strive to create a healthy and balanced learning environment where children build living connections to the natural world while cultivating social responsibility, personal excellence, and the practical capacities to meet the challenges of the future.

## HISTORY

HVS, founded in 1973, is one of 900+ schools throughout the world composing the Waldorf, or Rudolf Steiner, school movement. The movement began in Europe in 1919, and there are now approximately 190 Waldorf schools and developing initiatives in North America.

HVS is part of Hawthorne Valley Association, Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that was chartered and incorporated in 1971. Other initiatives of Hawthorne Valley include:

- Hawthorne Valley Farm, a diverse 900-acre Biodynamic® farm with a dairy herd, small livestock, vegetable gardens, Farm Store, Creamery, and Bakery;
- Place Based Learning Center, offering experiential learning opportunities to children and adults through summer camp, visiting classes, vocational training, and workshops;
- Farmscape Ecology Program, conducting on-farm research, education, and outreach that combines an understanding and appreciation of the natural world with a realistic approach to agriculture;
- Adonis Press, publishing and distributing books on phenomenological and social sciences;
- Alkion Center for Adult Education, offering foundation studies in Anthroposophy and Waldorf Teacher Training;
- Center for Social Research, studying new social and economic forms that foster social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and empathy;
- Free Columbia, a quest into the heart of artistic action and the relationship between money and art;
- Walking the dog Theater, creating theater events that inspire, entertain, and build community.

These seemingly diverse activities blend together under the commitment to renew society and culture through the integration of education, agriculture, and the arts. HVS is able to utilize the expertise of

colleagues who work in other Hawthorne Valley initiatives to create rich learning opportunities for our students (see examples below).

## THE SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

### ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AID 2018-19

Enrollment: 275

Early Childhood (Ages 3-6): 45

Lower School (1-8): 158

EARTH Program: 15

High School (9-12): 57

Average size graduating class: 18

K-12 Tuition: \$11,490 - \$21,620

HVS Operating Budget: \$3,485,900

Endowment: \$673,412

Financial Aid: \$1.22 million aiding 58% of students

Student/Faculty Ratio: 9:1

Total Number of HVA Employees: 202

HVS Faculty & Staff: 60

## FACILITIES

The Main school building houses grades 3-12. The kindergarten complex has 3 classrooms, including one with a puppet theatre, and a lower school handwork room with adjacent offices. The lower school building houses 1st and 2nd grade, the Assembly Hall, and teaching kitchen. The administration building includes offices, meeting space, and the school store, which carries Waldorf-inspired toys, games, and craft supplies. The newest addition to the campus is the net positive energy Practical Arts building, which contains studios for woodworking, clay, and an outdoor sculpture pavilion. In addition, there is a forge/metalworking building. Outside there is a soccer field and volleyball, four-square, and basketball courts, as well as fields, forests, and streams.

## AFFILIATIONS AND ACCREDITATION

HVS is a full member of the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America (AWSNA) and an accredited member of the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS). It is chartered by, and registered with, the New York State Board of Regents, under whose jurisdiction it awards diplomas.



## STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF HAWTHORNE VALLEY SCHOOL

HVS is embedded within Hawthorne Valley Farm – a working 900-acre Biodynamic farm. The school's curriculum is integrated with the farm, making for an unconventional learning environment. The benefits of integrating farm and school are many:

- Outdoor activity balances classroom activity;
- Working with animals develops sensitivity, compassion, and a sense of responsibility for, and appreciation of, all living beings;
- Tending the land awakens children's sense of wonder and deepens their connection with nature and understanding of earth stewardship;
- Hands-on agricultural and environmental learning experiences deepen meaning and comprehension of sciences, including zoology, botany, ecology, geology, physical science, and chemistry;
- Practical lessons learned on the farm prepare children for diverse tasks in life by contributing



to the development of well-balanced individuals: guiding and educating the whole human being – head, heart, and hands.

As part of Hawthorne Valley Association, our students and teachers also have access to a range of research and enterprise initiatives, including:

- Farmscape Ecology Program (FEP), a research and outreach program dedicated to encouraging an informed compassion for place, staffed by a wildlife ecologist, an ethnobotanist, and an anthropologist. As part of their mission, the staff works with the teachers in the school to offer curriculum integration and enhancement. As an example, for the past two years, FEP has piloted a high school phenology curriculum whereby students act as citizen scientists to help gather data for a statewide “Progress of the Seasons” phenology project in partnership with the New York Phenology Project. The goals of the project are to raise awareness about climate change and encourage people to make their own observations
- of seasonal changes (both as an exercise in mindfulness and as a contribution to a nationwide citizen science effort). Students are encouraged to make their own comparisons of the current and historical timing of events in our region. Such place-based experiences can be powerful reminders that climate change is not something that only happens far away.
- On site Creamery and Bakery, where cheese, yogurt, sourdough bread, and other value-added products are produced. These enterprises offer students opportunities to apply mathematical and economic concepts they’re learning in the classroom in real-world settings.
- Walking the dog Theater, a small professional theater whose director teaches drama in the school and leads the twelfth grade class play each year.
- Farm Store, our full-line organic/natural food store that sells all of the products grown and produced on the farm, hundreds of locally

grown and produced items, and regional organic and Biodynamic brands. This retail enterprise offers real world business and retail educational opportunities. Students are able to see the entire food value chain - from seed to fork.

- Interdisciplinary Teaching: The high school seniors' Economics Block is taught by the Association's Executive Director, Martin Ping, who brings to bear his experience as the leader of a nonprofit organization, as well as his relationships with many local and national organizations, like the Slow Money Alliance and Ethical Markets. In addition to traditional economic theories and systems, the block includes an investigation into new and creative economic ideas and models to promote a healthier, more balanced society. The block is supplemented by readings and small group discussions, field trips, independent research, and renowned guest speakers like Peter Buffett, Matt Stinchcomb, and Judy Wicks, to name a few.

## STUDENTS

The projected enrollment for the 2018-19 school year is 275. In the past year, there have been 95 new student applications, with an acceptance rate of 76%. The main points of entry are the Early Childhood (47% new students) and 1st grade (50% new students). Excluding the 1st grade, the Lower School, High School, and EARTH program each had new student enrollment between 12-14%. The school mainly draws its student body from across Columbia County and neighboring Berkshire, Dutchess, and Ulster Counties, with a few high school boarding students from New York City and countries such as China, Germany, and Afghanistan. A significant number of families have moved to the area from NYC, in part to attend the school.

Because of HVS's commitment to welcoming all children to experience the richness of our educational offerings, we have a high amount of socioeconomic and cultural diversity in our student and parent body, with 58% of families receiving some level of financial support. Twenty-eight of our families receive over 75% tuition adjustment in order to attend our school. We also welcome students from Afghanistan, China, and more through our home-based boarding program. The Class of 2018 had students representing seven countries. Some of these students join us as full-pay, while others come on partial scholarship. All, however, contribute to

*"I appreciate that the breadth of the curriculum enables everyone to find where they excel and asks everyone to fully explore what it means to be human. The students develop practical skills, artistic outlets, and a thinking that is grounded in direct observation and experience. As a teacher, I work within a curriculum, but have the freedom to bring the material that I think is most relevant to and most enriching for the children in front me."*

-Kevin Kilb, 2018-19 1st Grade Class Teacher

creating global awareness, sensitivity, and empathy throughout our school community.

In recent years, students have been accepted to colleges including: Boston University, Cornell University, Fashion Institute of Technology, Grinnell College, Ithaca College, Juilliard School of Music, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, McGill University, New York University, Northeastern University, Oberlin College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Smith College, Syracuse University, University of California at Berkeley, University of Rochester, and many more.

## FACULTY AND STAFF

HVS has 26 full-time faculty, 2 full-time student teachers, 2 three-quarter time faculty, 1 half-time faculty, 19 part-time or adjunct faculty, and 4 full-time administrative staff. Of that staffing, 1 student teacher and 3 full-time teachers are with the EARTH program which has a very high teacher-to-student ratio due to the needs of the students served. We are also supported in overall administration, marketing, development, financial services, and human relations by Hawthorne Valley's central staff who provide these services across the organization.



## **GOVERNANCE & SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

### **HAWTHORNE VALLEY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Legal and financial authority for HVS rests with the Board of Trustees of Hawthorne Valley Association (HVA). The Board of Trustees maintains the focus on the school's mission, has the legal responsibility to provide oversight of the legal and financial affairs of the school, strategic planning, budget approval, fundraising leadership, and risk management.

### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

The importance of clear, consistent leadership that serves the needs of the students and families is foremost in the structure of HVS. Our school leadership works to assure that curricular decisions are made in a manner that provides for a positive, supportive, and safe learning environment that meets the standards of Waldorf education and serves the particular mission of HVS. To that end, there is an Executive Team consisting of the School Director, the Council of Teachers Chair, and the Kindergarten, Lower School, and High School Chairs (Level Chairs). This group is responsible for oversight of day-to-day management of the school.

## **FACULTY & COUNCIL OF TEACHERS (COT)**

At HVS, the administration and development of the educational pedagogy are faculty led. The COT is responsible for reviewing and planning educational programs in the school. The COT reviews and affirms the mission of HVS. In conjunction with the school director, they uphold the vision and values in support of the mission. There is a weekly full faculty and staff meeting. There are also weekly meetings of the High School, Lower School, and Kindergarten levels led by their respective chairpersons, where specific issues dealing with those three areas of the school are discussed.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

HVS offers students a Waldorf curriculum designed to meet the needs of the developing child and young adult. The curriculum is highly interdisciplinary, blending academics with lessons in the fine and practical arts, nature and farm-based activities, and class trips.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM**

The Early Childhood Program offers opportunities for families with children from birth to 6 years. There are three mixed-age classes for children ages 3 to 6

*“I love that my children are learning academics in such innovative ways: gaining a deep understanding of geometry with a class building project; or fractions through baking; or an astronomy block capped off by a campout in which they take turns mapping the night sky and drawing the constellations...It’s a magical place to be a student.”*

-Christina Lowery, HVS Parent

years, various parent-child programs for parents with children from birth to 3 years, and parent-support classes and workshops throughout the year.

Hawthorne Valley’s Early Childhood Center seeks to create an environment where the young child can slow down and experience a different reality. The rhythms of life, from the cycles of the day to the seasons of the year, teach us principles that underlie healthy growth. For the young child whose body is growing and changing at a remarkable rate, the continuity of life rhythms provides strengthening reassurance and a healthy foundation for physical development.

Through daily activities of meaningful work, the children gain self-esteem by experiencing interconnectedness and feeling that their work is needed in the world. The ability to take the time to give care is essential. While children need to feel cared for and loved, they also need to be able to foster those sentiments towards others.

## **LOWER SCHOOL**

As children enter the elementary school, they are guided by a Class Teacher in Grades 1-8. Students and teachers develop a deep and enduring relationship through the shared experience of the main lesson curriculum, where one subject is taught for the first two hours of each day in blocks of three to four weeks. During each Main Lesson block, the children make their own textbooks, full of illustrations, from

subjects presented by the class teacher. It is the goal of each class teacher to bring the curriculum to her/his class in ways that will excite and engage the students.

In the middle grades at Hawthorne Valley, Waldorf education makes many worlds come alive. Students often see themselves in the curriculum, as an industrious Roman, a medieval scholar, a daring explorer, and a Renaissance artist waiting to emerge. Learning takes place both in and out of class, as students navigate the world of social relationships, fostering respect and collaboration among peers.

## **EARTH PROGRAM: EDUCATION AND RENEWAL THROUGH THE HANDS**

EARTH is a farm- and nature-based education program that serves children for whom a traditional classroom setting is not ideal. It is an alternative full day program offering hands-on discovery learning in a small, mixed age setting. The program cultivates responsibility, consideration, and clarity through recognizing each student’s best qualities, while helping him/her overcome weaknesses. EARTH’s approach is unique, drawing on academics directly from what we do and observe.

The curriculum follows nature’s seasons. Areas of study include Shelter, Bees, Gardening, Apples, Grain, Cows, Sheep, Horses, Cultivation, and Field, Forest, and Stream Ecology. Each block is a sequence of hands-on tasks, followed by academic and artistic lessons drawn from the work itself. The experience of the day is as a whole, where the hands and whole body are exercised, the mind sharpened, and the soul enriched. There is ongoing care for the program’s animals, learning space, gardens, and fruit trees.

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

In the High School, the curriculum is structured in a block system, with each block taught by an individual with mastery in the field. The students are given individual faculty advisors who guide, instruct, and support these young men and women from Grade 9 until graduation in Grade 12.

The academic focal point of a Waldorf High School is the Main Lesson, an hour and 45-minute concentrated lesson at the beginning of each school day. Each Main Lesson block presents one of the “core subjects” (English, Mathematics, History, Humanities, or Natural Sciences) for a period of three to four weeks.



In addition to the Main Lesson, each student attends between 15 and 20, 45-minute academic skills classes per week, covering World Languages, additional English and mathematics study, and enrichment classes. While the language and math courses are continuous throughout the year, selected skills classes in the humanities may last for a term before changing focus. The enrichment classes, some of which are required while others are electives, are taught in blocks. Each student also takes four one-hour classes per week in the fine and practical arts.

Each High School student participates in a one-week practicum in grades 9-11. All High School students take part in chorus work. Grades 10 and 12 participate in a major drama production. Seniors are required to work on a year-long independent study project culminating in a public presentation. HVS also provides an exchange program, which has placed our students in Waldorf schools across the world.

**ATHLETICS**

Hawthorne Valley – aka, The Wildcats – has the distinction of being one of the smallest member schools in the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) in the entire

state. HVS participates in the Central Hudson Valley League (CHVL) for Boys’ and Girls’ Volleyball and for Boys’ and Girls’ Basketball. Our students run Cross Country in the Patroon Conference and play soccer as a partner of the Roe Jan Soccer Club in the Capital District Youth Soccer League.

**AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

In addition to the sports program, HVS High School offers a wide range of after school activities. Students are required to participate in at least one activity per year. Activities typically include: Drama Club, Drawing and Painting, Social Action/Amnesty International, Yearbook, Student Council, Homework Help for Lower School Students, Jazz Club, Literary Journal, and Creative Writing.

**WALDORF EDUCATION**

Waldorf education is grounded in the life work of Rudolf Steiner. It aims to both nurture the innate moral strength of children and to facilitate free and individual thinking. In a Waldorf school, teachers recognize the child’s intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual capacities. Artistic, cognitive, and practical lessons nurture the potential and



uniqueness of each child. The curriculum of a Waldorf school is designed to meet the developmental stages of the child. Out of the teacher's initiative and sensitivity, the subject matter is shaped to suit the background, varying academic abilities, and individual qualities of particular classes and students. Whatever the subject matter of a particular lesson, the teacher's art is to make it come dramatically and vividly alive.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AWAITING THE NEXT SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Building on a solid record of success over 45 years, HVS is now facing several important opportunities, which, in addition to routine oversight and management, will require the Director's time and attention:

**Enrollment Growth:** In recent years, HVS has drawn increasing numbers of families from NYC who are in search of a creative education for their children that is designed to nurture individuality along with social responsibility. The Director will work with the Director of Admissions and faculty members to continue the recruitment of such families as well as those who are long-time residents of Columbia County.

**Middle and High School Curriculum:** HVS is undertaking a review and re-envisioning of its High School program during this school year. The Director

will work with the high school team to make the renewed vision and program development a reality over the coming several years and integrate it with Waldorf principles as well as with established academic expectations at both the High School and Middle School levels.

**Developing a culture of compassionate communication and conflict resilience:** Over the past year, the school has undertaken professional development to build capacities in compassionate communication and restorative practices in education. This is an ongoing project that requires consistent attention and practice. The Director will support the continued development and implementation of restorative practice across the school.

**Boarding Students:** HVS currently enrolls 5 boarding students, who live with neighboring families. Boarding students, many from outside the U.S., have helped to increase the diversity of the HVS student body. The Director will explore possibilities for expanding the boarding student population, and assist the Director of Admissions with recruitment.

**Financial Stability:** As with all independent schools, HVS's budget is largely tuition-driven. The Director will be expected to work with the PTA and alumni as well as with HVA's Development Office to continue the recent trend toward supplementing tuition income with monies garnered through fundraising and grants.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Director is responsible for all aspects of the school's operation, from admissions and fundraising to faculty recruitment, development, and supervision.

- The Director works closely with the Council of Teachers (COT) to ensure excellent instruction across the different grade levels, with particular attention to classroom observations, the mentoring of new teachers, and the continuing professional development of experienced teachers. The Director chairs the Teacher Development Committee. He or she partners with the COT in the recruitment and hiring of new teachers. In cooperation with the COT, the Director also monitors school discipline policies, guaranteeing that the values of HVS and HVA – respect for all people and for the environment, tolerance for diverse opinions and perspectives, and a commitment to non-violence – are embraced in all that goes on within the school community.
- Parents play a very important role at Hawthorne Valley, staying in close touch with faculty members and volunteering for fundraising events such as the annual Yuletide Fair. The Director meets frequently with individual parents, and helps to facilitate open and constructive communication between parents and teachers. He or she also works with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to organize discussions of pedagogy, child development, and other topics as well as other parent-organized events.
- In addition to being an active member of the Council of Teachers, the Director chairs regular meetings of school's executive team, consisting of the grade-level heads (Lower and Upper), and meets regularly with the Director of Admissions, the administration team, and the PTA chair. This role is also a member of the coordinating council (known as the Interbranch Management Group) of HVA.
- The Director is responsible for developing the school's annual budget, which must be approved by the HVA Board of Trustees, and for monitoring expenses throughout the year.

- HVS is accredited by NYSAIS and AWSNA, and the Director is responsible for all necessary reports, and is expected to be one of the school members that can serve as a spokesperson for the school at meetings, conferences, and public events.

## **WHO SHOULD APPLY?**

The School Director represents an extraordinary career opportunity for a creative and visionary educational leader. The Director should be a unifying leader and a community builder, who likes to work collegially, and who listens carefully and communicates effectively with fellow educators, parents, students, and alums.

Dedication to Waldorf education and knowledge of anthroposophy as related to child development, is essential. Waldorf training and administrative experience is necessary; prior experience within a Waldorf school, as an employee or a parent, is a plus. Prior evidence of success as an educational leader is important.

Excellent managerial skills are a must, including the ability to recruit, hire, and inspire teachers and staff, while also having the ability to mentor and evaluate effectively, and enforce standards of accountability.

The willingness and capacity to lead institutional advancement and advocacy efforts is key.

Financial acumen is essential.

Bachelor's degree is required, MA/doctorate is preferred.

This is a year-round position.

To apply, submit an application package including:

- Cover letter
- Current résumé
- Statement of educational background and philosophy
- References

All materials should be transmitted via email attachment to Lauren Wolff at [lwolff@hawthornevalley.org](mailto:lwolff@hawthornevalley.org). Applications will be considered on a rolling basis, with the position to start July 2019.

Hawthorne Valley Association is an equal opportunity employer.