



# DIAA NEWSLETTER

May 2007

## DIAA Restructures

In late January 2007, the DIAA (Destination ImagiNation Alumni Association) was re-structured in an attempt create an organization better prepared to lead the DI Alumni. After creating new and challenging goals for this year and the future, a few pro-active leaders were put in place to begin the process of transforming the DIAA and executing a reinvigorated plan.

The DIAA currently exists as a Task Force. The Task Force will continue to run DI Alumni activities until a solid foundation for the Alumni Association has been put in place. At that time, the organization will transfer back into its old structure with a governing Board.

The Task Force is made-up of some former DIAA Board members as well as some new members who have been active Alumni in their Affiliates.

### Task Force Chair: Lara Morrell

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Lara's creative problem solving journey began 15 years ago when she was in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. In her six year competing in DI, she traveled to Globals to represent the state of Maryland four times. After graduating from high school, Lara became an Appraiser and this is her 6<sup>th</sup> year as a Challenge B Appraiser. In addition, she currently serves as the Maryland Affiliate Web Master, Alumni Rep, and a Regional Director. Lara's involvement with the DIAA last year when she was elected to the Board in May 2006.

### Task Force Member: Sarah Benczik

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Sarah's involvement in CPS programs as a team member for nine years inspired her to give back to DI, first as a team manager and Affiliate appraiser, and now as an Appraiser at Globals (structure!!) and DI Challenge Writer. Her high school team, M.Seven, won three global championships and she represented the DI Globals graduating class of 2003 as ValeDictorian. Sarah is a former member of the Indiana CPS Board, and will be moving on to graduate school in a new Affiliate this fall. Sarah became a member of the Task Force after her mid-term election to the DIAA Board to fill a vacated seat.

### Task Force Member: Jordan Cormier

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Jordan's creative problem solving journey began 19 years ago (1988) when he was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Over 11 years of competition, he represented the great state of Massachusetts 3 times at global finales. After high school he started to appraise. Filling roles as Regional challenge masters in IC, structure, and challenge A. this quickly became a state appraise position as co state challenge A and a board position for Massachusetts. DI did not stop there after a job took him to a new state he went on to take positions in Vermont as a co state challenge master for IC and a board member, while still keeping all of his positions and responsibilities in Massachusetts. Jordan's involvement with the DIAA started 2003 when he was elected the VP, in 2005 he became the President and 2006 step down to be a member of the Board.

### Task Force Member: Simon Dodd

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Simon started participating in creative problem solving 25 years ago, when he was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In 11 years of competing and 4 years of being a Team Manager, his teams placed in the top 10 at Global Finals seven times. Simon has been an Oregon and Kentucky DI Affiliate Board Member for 10 years, as well as engaging a two year term as the Alumni Association Vice President. In 13 years of Appraising he has been involved with Structure, Improv, Technical, and eXtreme Challenges, five of which he was an International Challenge Master. He

has had the opportunity to work with teams writing Central and Instant Challenges for 5 years.

### Task Force Member: David Mitchell

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David has been a part of creative problem solving for 20 years now. Currently he is in charge of running the Awards Ceremony at the Affiliate Tournament in Arkansas. This includes recording all of the regional tournaments in Arkansas and creating a highlights tape (similar to those shown at Globals) at the Affiliate Ceremony. Next year David will be and Instant Challenge Appraiser assuming he can find someone to take over his job as video-ographer. Dave was elected to the DIAA Board in 2005 and served as its Treasurer.

The DI Alumni Task Force is continuing to look for dedicated and driven members who can help us make the DIAA an active and effective organization. If you are interested in learning more about the DI Alumni Task Force or are interested in helping further the organization, please e-mail us at [diaa@dialum.org](mailto:diaa@dialum.org). We'd love to hear from you. We need to hear from you.

## DI Alumni at Globals

Are you and Alumni that is planning on attending D2K.7? If so, join the DIAA and other Alumni for the following events:

### State of the DIAA

**Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30pm in the Carolina Room at the Marriott**

Somewhat like the State of DI dinner on Tuesday, this meeting will offer a presentation by the DI Alumni Task Force on the current state of the DIAA as well as plans moving forward. Unlike the State of DI dinner, we will play some fun games for cool prizes (!), offer an opportunity for you to get to meet other DI Alumni, and be looking for your input on what you think DIAA should provide and where you think it should be heading in the future.

### Official DI eXtreme Challenge

**Thursday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 7 – 10:00pm**

Compete against your fellow appraisers in a DI eXtreme Challenge. Additional details will be available at Globals.

### Team Manager and Official Challenge

**Thursday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 8 – 9:30pm in the Presidential Courtyard**

This year the TM&O Challenge will be held in conjunction with the Improv Fiesta and is sure to be a fun time. We are looking for Alumni who are interested in participating in the challenge as part of a DI Alumni team. If you are interested in participating or for more information, please e-mail [diaa@dialum.org](mailto:diaa@dialum.org). To read more about the TM&O Challenge, go to <http://www.globalfinals.com/tmo.htm>

### Club DI: Midnight Madness / Alumni Recruiting Meeting

**Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 10pm – Midnight in the World's Fair Park**

Join fellow Alumni as well as high school and university level participants at Club DI. We will be recruiting future Alumni members and enjoying the party.

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## Future DI Alumni Recruited Around the World

In order to meet the many goals the DI Alumni Task Force has put forward, our primary goal is to know who the DI Alumni are and how to contact them. While information on DI Alumni has been collected in the past, it has been done inconsistently and a large amount of the information collected is either incomplete or missing. As a result, the first initiative of the DI Alumni Task Force is to compile a database of all the current DI Alumni and future Alumni.

In February 2007, Bob Purifico e-mailed a letter from the DI Alumni Task Force to all of the Affiliate Directors asking them to collect information from the graduating High School seniors in their Affiliate as well as from any current DI Alumni they were familiar with. Task Force members followed up with personal calls and e-mails to all of the ADs encouraging them to help collect this information, as well as explain the many benefits of a well populated Alumni database (easier to recruit Appraisers, tournament volunteers, TMs, RDs...). DIAA registration forms are still flowing into HQ. The Task Force will continue to recruit graduating HS seniors at Globals.

It is the hope of the Task Force that this method of collecting information from graduating high school seniors will become part of the standard operating procedure in all of the Affiliates so that the database can continue to grow and be maintained. In addition, the Task Force is working to put up a DI Alumni website which will include a form where current and future alumni can sign-up to become DIAA members.

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## DI Alumni, Pin Designer Extraordinaire

Across the country and around the world, DI Alumni are doing everything and anything they can think of to give back to the program and keep it fun for current participants. This newsletter's alumni spotlight features an alumna with a non-traditional approach to giving back to the program: she designs DI pins. Elizabeth Newell is what many people would call a pin-designing star, whose past pin designs include the D2k.6 Phoenix, rated "the hottest pin" at D2k.6 by Dr. Frank.



Elizabeth Newell is currently a freshman at DePauw University with a planned major in biology and pre-veterinary studies. She has been a participant in Destination ImagiNation since eighth grade, and now spends most of her DI time appraising, designing pins, emceeding award ceremonies, and serving as a member of the Indiana Creative Problem Solving Board.

Here's what she has to say:

### 1. Where are you from? (City, Affiliate)

Fishers, InDIana

### 2. How many years (and in which grades) did you participate in DI?

I was in DI for 2 years (8th and 9th grade) as a competitor and I have appraised competitions at regional and state since then (4 years and counting).

### 3. What was your favorite challenge that you participated in?

A Change in Direction



### 4. What is the strangest thing you have ever had to wear for DI?

I was a willow tree complete with fabric streamers for leaves and all the itchy face paint. I had paper fingers for branches as well.

### 5. What is your favorite thing to do at Global Finals (or other DI competitions)?

Pin trading!! I've met some people through pin

trading that have become good friends over the years. It's the most fun part of Globals, not to mention the all the great pins you come home with.

### 6. What inspired you to first start designing pins?

The first year I went to Globals I really didn't understand pin trading, so I really didn't have a large amount of pins to trade, but I saw what was being traded. I wanted a leg up on the competition the following year, so I figured I could design my own pin to represent my team. I took a drawing I had done some months before and that became my first pin. The popularity of that first pin was what inspired me to continue to design pins, first for my own pleasure and then for other teams. Since then, it has only grown.



### 7. Do you have an all-time favorite pin (yours or from anywhere)? How many pins do you have?

I can't say that I have a particular favorite, because many pins appeal to me. I am quite partial to dragons though. As for my own pins, my favorites are the phoenix and the hippocampus.

I really haven't ever counted the pins I've acquired over the years, so I'll just say towels-full, hundreds.

### 8. What does creating and designing pins entail?

Often the hardest thing is coming up with an original idea and then drawing it in an appealing way. It is time consuming as well. Drawing the design is probably the easiest part of the process, because the design then has to be scanned into the computer and made into an image there. It takes a lot of work to transform the drawing into the lines, colors and text that will comprise the final product. After that, the pin company does the rest.

### 9. How do you imagine yourself becoming more involved in DI in the future?

I just joined the DIAA, so hopefully I will be able to get involved more extensively. I plan on continuing to appraise, and I might get into some of the local elementary schools in Putnam County to see if I can get the DI program started there, because I know how great it is!

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## DIAA on the WWW

One of the DI Alumni's Task Force's goals this year was to get DIAA on-line and with the time. In particular, they wanted to put together a Facebook Group to recruit high school graduates and college students as well as put up a website to make keeping up with and joining the DIAA much easier.

In January, under the guidance of Board member Sarah Benczik, the DIAA rolled out their Facebook group called "**Destination ImagiNation Alumni (DIAA)**" which today boasts 107 members. Upon joining the group, Matt Van Nus from Kelowna, BC posted "DI changed my life. I owe everything to it" making public the feelings so many DI Alumni share. The Facebook forum allows members to share pictures of their DI experiences, post messages and get to know other Alumni within the program.

On Monday, May 7, 2007, DIAA will launch their website at <http://www.dialum.org/>. While this site is in its infancy, DIAA members can find present and past newsletters as well as news bulletins to keep them up to date with that is going on. The site also offers Task Force bios, contact information and a form for new DIAA members to join and current DIAA members to update their contact information. Keep an eye on the website because the Task Forces has big plans for its future as we continue to grow.

We encourage you all to take some time this week to check out both. Let's keep the Facebook group growing!