

**What does Envirothon mean to you and how did it help shape you as a person or professional?**

I wasn't athletic in high school, so Envirothon gave me a team and the challenge I needed. I learned a great deal about wildlife, aquatics, soils, forestry, and current environmental issues and honed the skills to communicate that information with others. Envirothon set me on a path to becoming a teacher and to examining my own impact on our Earth. It connected me to life-long friends and allowed me to collaborate with my younger siblings, who followed me to compete at the state and national level.

**1. What inspired you to participate in Envirothon?**

I connected with Mr. Moran during the agricultural education portion of freshman life skills class. I expressed interest in environmental issues and he invited me to come after school and check out our Envirothon team, which had just returned from winning a national title.

**2. What year and what school did you attend when you participated?**

Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Falls Village.  
I participated all four years, 2008 to 2011.

**3. What were the locations where you competed in CT Envirothon(s)?**

Northwest Park in Windsor, Sessions Woods in Burlington, Deer Lake in Killingworth, and Rocky Neck in East Lyme.

**4. Which workshops did you attend – and can you give any specific feedback on them? For example – did you learn any skills that you currently use?**

I attended nearly all workshops offered between fall 2007 and spring 2011. Forestry and soils were my favorites. They were an opportunity to learn directly from experts in their fields and to engage physically with the material. Learning about trees by walking through the forest and observing their properties is so different from studying a textbook or watching slides. There is no substitute for standing in a soil pit, identifying each layer, and texturing by hand. These workshops inspired me to prioritize experiential education in my own teaching.

**5. What college or institution of higher learning did you, or are you attending, and the area(s) of study? 6. What degree(s) do you hold?**

B.A. Communication, Minor in Environmental Studies — Southern Vermont College 2014

M.Ed Science Education — University of Massachusetts, Amherst 2018

**7. What is your current career?**

I run a private tutoring company based in Santa Barbara, CA.

**8. How did your CT Envirothon experiences impact your life? (Career wise, Environmental Awareness or some other way?)**

Envirothon (and Mr. Moran's brilliant, patient teaching) drove me to become a teacher. Though I left the classroom after 7 years to pursue private tutoring and educational consulting, I remain passionate about environmental education. I am a Leave No Trace Master Educator, a board member of a small wildlife conservation foundation, and a summer program facilitator at a wilderness retreat center.