

Hometown Pride

A Winnetka college student reflects on what growing up New Trier means to her, especially now that she's living 700 miles away.

At college, I tell people that I am from Chicago. I soon realized that most people thought that I literally lived in the city of Chicago, so then whenever people would ask me where I was from, I would say I live in the same town that *Home Alone* was shot. It is a fun fact to say that several popular movies were filmed near me, but it wasn't until I left home that came to realize what actually makes this area unlike any other.

What makes our New Trier towns so special? It might look like another cluster of suburbs. After all, there are enclaves like New Trier all across America. Before I went away to a school more than 700 miles away, I thought New Trier was a great place to grow up, but unique? Not so much. Two months in, I not only started to miss my hometown of Winnetka, but I missed other quintessential places in New Trier.

I may have had deep-dish pizza, chocolate-chip pancakes, and some pasta at school, but it didn't compare to Viccino's pan pizza, Walker Brother's chocolate chippies, and O'Neil's linguine with basil pesto. And it's not just the food. I missed the shopping as well. I love the specialty stores that are full of interesting things I can buy and save for gifts, or bring back to school to decorate my room.

Certain places may make me happy, but the people in New Trier have truly changed my life. Growing up, I did theater, and met so many people dedicated to the community. Everyone involved in the Children's Theatre of Winnetka gave countless hours each week to focus on the musical. When I went to New Trier, I found myself at home with the performing arts department. Every day, I learned from motivated and inspiring teachers who were passionate in education and the arts. When I was stressed and upset, it was my theater teacher who helped me get through my hard times. This is quintessential New Trier — dedicated people who care about the community.




PHOTO: LENSWORK STUDIO

The quote on the wall in my kindergarten classroom read, "We are all friends when we make memories together." I put the people and places together to create memorable experiences. I may not know everyone in the community, but I know that we share similar memories.

It's going to Homer's after a social dance in middle school; going to Gillson Park in Wilmette for the fireworks on the 3rd of July, and Duke Childs field in Winnetka for the 4th; getting excited that the Dairy Queen in Wilmette has

finally opened its doors for the summer.

Describing the New Trier Township is difficult: Yes, it's a group of towns that feed into one large high school, but it also is a community. Each town in New Trier is unique with interesting shops, restaurants and *people*, but putting all of them together is what makes it special. 

Grace Sweeney is a 2008 graduate of New Trier Township High School. She is a junior at Elon University in Elon, N.C., majoring in broadcast journalism.