

# CAPITOL SCHOOL STUDENTS THEN & NOW

## Kelsey



### AT CAPITOL SCHOOL...1993

As a baby, Kelsey had frequent ear infections. When at the age of one year she didn't seem to be developing any language, as her older brother had done, her parents began to become concerned. They thought perhaps the fluid in her ears was preventing her from hearing well. "Even after having tubes, she didn't say anything; she was just a silent child." She was tested at the UT Speech and Hearing Center at around age 16 months. The tests showed an expressive language delay. She began individual therapy on a weekly basis. At the end of the semester, the therapist indicated Kelsey had apraxia and might one day, with a lot of training, be able to speak normally. On the other hand, she warned that she might have to learn sign language in order to learn.

The Stewarts took the next step by seeing Dr. Karnik, who indicated that her social behavior was rather advanced, and her receptive language was very good, but her expressive language was seriously delayed. Further testing revealed she couldn't manipulate her tongue on one side of her mouth as easily as she could on the other side, and she was incapable of making closure with her soft palate, which is crucial to the formation of certain sounds. Dr. Karnik recommended further therapy.

Because of the severity of her problem, Anna began searching for a private therapist, who started working with Kelsey twice a week. They heard about the Capitol Kids School program and set up a visit to come observe the class. "I went in with Elyse (Anna's sister), and my husband, Jeff to visit Amy and Ellen's class. We knew before we left that we were going to put Kelsey there. We didn't even have to go out in the hall to confer. It was really obvious that it was going to be the best we could find. I felt like they were people I could trust with my child."

Kelsey began at Capitol Kids when she was 2 1/2 years old with a spoken language that consisted of "Momma", "Daddy", and "no". She would grunt and point and could understand what she wanted. Working in conjunction with her private therapist, the therapists at Capitol Kids began to help Kelsey master one basic sound at a time. By the age of four years old, "although she still has some mild articulation problems, for all practical purposes, Kelsey now has the speech of a normal child".

"There's no question," says Anna, "Capitol Kids has been a godsend for Kelsey."



### TODAY...

Kelsey Stewart, 21

Following my preschool years at CSA I went to public school in Eanes ISD, graduating from Westlake High in 2007. I am now a junior in the graphic design program at Texas Christian University, where I am proud to say that I have made the Dean's List every semester. I love camping, live music, spontaneous dance parties and hosting the occasional dinner party with friends. I spent last summer studying in Budapest and I am currently searching for a graphic design internship for this upcoming summer.

I have always looked back on my time at Capitol School fondly. It was one of the few places where as a child I felt "normal," accepted. Capitol School provided me with a network of love and support that helped me flourish in every way I needed. Not only did they give me a chance to live to my fullest potential but they taught me that there is no limit to that potential and that is something that I carry with me still today.

