

Adam Smith '95

Adam Smith '95 first came to Benchmark in second grade after his parents became aware that he learned and processed information differently than most of his classmates. Though the change of schools was confusing to him at first, Adam said it ended up being a blessing in disguise as he discovered his learning style, interests, and passions.

He said it was specifically in science class with Mr. Warren Young where he first discovered his fascination with taking things apart and putting them back together. From there, Adam's interest in art and design grew into what would become his career path.

In fact, what Adam remembers most is the long-lasting impact his Benchmark teachers had on him. He said that his biggest issue in school settings was "finding it difficult to concentrate," but that his Benchmark teachers "really did a good job of making class interesting." Adam also recognizes how his Benchmark teachers inspired both curiosity and self-confidence. "My teachers always pushed and prompted curiosity and helped me to think critically, and I've certainly taken those things with me," he said. "I also remember a certain warmth and patience among the

teachers, and that they made me feel so much better about my situation, cared for, and more confident."

Utilizing his new found confidence and his passion for structure and process that he first recognized at Benchmark, Adam pursued a study of sculpture and graphic design at the University of Hartford and then acquired a BFA in industrial design from the Rochester Institute of Technology. "Mr. Young deserves some, or all, of the credit for my pursuing that line of work," Adam recalled.

Following college, Adam spent some time working as an apprentice woodworker before starting his own company, GlueLine Inc., in 2004, where he designed and built furniture for several Philadelphia bars and restaurants. "A lot of my artistic and design work revolved around my interest in processes, which is why I was so absorbed in woodworking, because there was so much process involved," Adam said. Though his company was very successful for several years, a downturn in the economy made it difficult to sustain.

While he had a few rough years transitioning careers, Adam recently became a home inspector, and said that



he absolutely loves this new line of work. "It took me about a year to figure out that I wanted to be a home inspector, and I'm really glad I did it," he said. While very different from his artistic past, Adam said that he has found that his learning differences have helped him in this new career path as well. "Because I learn differently, I've learned that I also communicate with others differently than most people, which has been a benefit to me as I work to educate my clients about my findings."

Adam continues to dream big and even aspires to one day own his own home inspection firm. "My advice is to stay close to the things that drive your passion," he said. "The closer you stay to those passions, the happier you will be."

