

## Growing a Girl: A Success Story

By Lee Borrowman

Those with young daughters know that we face unique challenges raising a girl in today's society. We want them to be strong and confident, kind and gentle, comfortable with their appearance and free from body-image issues. As with our sons, we hope they will have lots of friends, do well in school, find extracurricular activities that they enjoy, and happily accompany us on family vacations well into their teens. As unlikely as it seems, this does in fact happen here in Lamorinda, on a regular basis. With the possible exception of the family vacation. A case in point: Alicia Salmeron, the incoming Student Body President of Campolindo. A bold young woman, she is best characterized by her leadership and determination to make the world a better place, enjoyment of close friendships and a strong dislike of materialism. Unable to choose one or two activities on which to concentrate, Salmeron is one of the busiest teenagers in Lamorinda.

Salmeron was the Junior Class President last year, as well as President of the Interact Club, a Rotary-sponsored community-service group. She spends over 200 hours a year as a volunteer. A strong athlete, Salmeron participates in soccer, cross-country and track, and travels around California refereeing competitive Class 1 youth soccer tournaments, including the U11 Girls State Cup Final. She has received multiple awards both for her volunteerism and as a referee.

Campolindo Principal Carol Kitchens is looking forward to working with Salmeron this year and describes her as, "A well rounded, positive, energetic and caring individual. She works hard as a student and athlete and is the kind of leader that is committed to the school and the students she represents. She sees the big picture and works tirelessly to include all students in the activities at Campolindo. She is a strong and open communicator who will continue to bridge the connection between the administration, teachers and students."

After attending the Rotary's Camp Royal Leadership Award Conference and UC Berkeley's Nor-Cal Experience earlier this summer, Salmeron is currently continuing her community service work in a village in Honduras through Amigos de Las Americas. As she prepared to leave home, she was less fearful for her own safety than she was concerned that "something might happen to someone in my family while I'm there, and I won't know about it."

What drives this dynamo to take on so much? "I just really enjoy all of it," she says. "I want to help people; I love volunteer work, and being involved." Her biggest problem? "Time; there's never enough. And I'm not good at saying 'No.' I need to make more time for my family."

Ana Perez, Salmeron's mother, says, "She's doing what she needs to do, and is learning from the world around her, not just from books and teachers." Perez



Alicia Salmeron

Photo by Lee Borrowman

is proud of her eldest daughter, and continues, "She's very open, and has a strong desire to learn and to do new and different things." Perez also says nobody's perfect, "Her room is a mess! And she is too hard on herself, especially when she makes a mistake. She does not always recognize all of her good qualities."

Salmeron says if she were to name her hero, it would be her mom. "She helps me to realize that the things I freak out about are not such a big deal. She's a strong leader herself, and very supportive." Her plans for the future include college and the Peace Corp. In the meantime, Salmeron does go on the occasional family vacation.

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