



EAST CAMPUS: Middle Division, 7-8 | Upper Division, 9-12  
100 South Barrington Place | Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 476-9633 | Fax (310) 476-4087

WEST CAMPUS: Lower Division, K-6  
12001 Sunser Boulevard | Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 471-1041 | Fax (310) 440-1989

[www.bwscampus.com](http://www.bwscampus.com)

Lisa Taylor  
Executive Producer  
*In the Footsteps of Marco Polo*

15 April, 2013

Dear Lisa:

Thanks so much for connecting me and my ninth grade history colleagues here at Brentwood with Denis Belliveau this semester. Although *In the Footsteps of Marco Polo* is certainly a very good classroom resource, in both book and video format, it was the visit from Denis to our campus that really helped the students to engage with the material and with their own Silk Road Journal projects this year. I don't know if I ever mentioned this to you when we spoke, but I actually used the book and the video with my students for several days before letting them know that Denis was scheduled to be in residence on our campus one day during the week that followed. Obviously, his adventure is filled with pretty gripping stories and he was able to liven up a week in February – no easy task in what is usually one of the tougher months of my annual teaching schedule. Denis was a rock star to even my most jaded teenagers!

Although Denis certainly doesn't shy away from action packed stories and cliffhangers, he also does a good job of showing my students that research and action complement each other. Our students heard not just about tense meetings with Afghan warlords, but also about long days in the New York Public Library preparing for the trip, and careful consultation with embassies and professors long before leaving home.

In short, Denis and the *Footsteps of Marco Polo* program made the connected nature of civilization in thirteenth century Eurasia very real to my students. I could see this in the increased depth which I later perceived in their own work as they constructed research based journals of an imaginary journey through this very same place and time. Denis himself clearly likes to inspire young people to take up their backpacks and hit the road, and they in turn respect him as they see him still working today as a photographer in remote regions of the world. I certainly hope to be able to work with you and Denis in the future as well.

Best wishes,

Marc Schuhl

Brentwood Upper School History