



The O'Gorman Garden
An Early Childhood Program in Harlem

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O'Gorman Garden Stories

Meet Toby

Currently studying at Rudolf Steiner School, a Waldorf School

Toby started with The O'Gorman Garden at age 3. His mother, Lalita, now The O'Gorman Garden's revered yoga teacher, learned about the school while talking to a lovely family in the neighborhood. They raved about their experience, so she was immediately interested in the possibility of Toby attending.

Toby fit in from the beginning. When he attended, Ned O'Gorman was still the Head. Toby was quite shy in his early years, and Ned never pushed him to be anything other than who he was – introspective and observant, yet helpful and cooperative. Toby developed into an empathetic child. He was very supportive of his friends if they were upset or missing their parents. He learned he was adaptable – unflappable in transitions.

The family is most appreciative of The O'Gorman Garden's ability to develop Toby into a well-rounded human being. During his time with the school, he was exposed to the rich diversity of people, styles, and cultures of New York City. Families involved at the school identified as African, French, British, Italian, Indian, Spanish, and Latino. The school itself was like a country garden full of different colored flowers and plants.

Toby's favorite programming elements were story time with Ned; watching classic children's films such as 'La Belle Et La Bette' in French; playing in the outside garden with blocks while birds were singing – and meal time – because meals are always home cooked and provided by school families, every meal was an adventure.

Toby is now a senior in high school. He plays in the school orchestra, gets good grades, plays varsity soccer and basketball, and has won school awards for balancing his athletic and academic achievements. Best of all, he loves school – a feeling he developed very early on, beginning with The O'Gorman Garden. Toby plans to attend Skidmore College in the fall. We are thrilled for him!

