

# HUDSON HHS grad wins Emmy

**By Francesca Olsen**  
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Jill Cozza-Turner, a 1995 graduate of Hudson High School, has won a daytime Emmy award for her writing on the PBS children's series "Wordworld." The show also won the Emmy for Best Children's Animated Program.

Cozza-Turner, who graduated from Syracuse University in 1999 with a Bachelor's Degree in Television, Radio and Film, with a minor in English, said she always saw herself as a writer.

"When I graduated from college, I really did think I would write for children," she said. "Whether it was



Contributed photo

**Jill Cozza-Turner, a 1995 graduate of Hudson High School, won a daytime Emmy for writing on the PBS children's series "Wordworld." Cozza-Turner is a resident of Fishkill, NY and a graduate of Syracuse University.**

television, film, or books, I wanted to write for children. It's like a dream come true."

Cozza-Turner's career

began at a children's animation studio in downtown

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# Emmy

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Manhattan in 2000, answering phones. "I just started telling everyone in the office I wanted to write," she said.

She eventually became a production assistant and then wrote a script for a show called "Family."

"The head writer gave me a break," she said. "Soon I was the script coordinator."

Cozza-Turner made contacts in New York City and through experience and hard work, she ended up on the writing team for "Wordworld." The writing team workshops their script ideas with the show's producers and creators, and a head writer gives assignments.

The Emmy was for writing on the show's first season, which aired in 2008. "Wordworld" is a preschool series with a literacy based curriculum. "All of the characters are legible," Cozza-Turner said. They are mostly barnyard animals, a sheep, a bear, a pig, a duck, and so on; their animated shapes are made out of letters, so a sheep character is made of the letters S-H-E-E-P.

"They're connecting the actual word sheep with the animal sheep. That's the aesthetic of the whole show," Cozza-Turner said.

"(The show) was very

important because it was backed by the Department of Education," she said. PBS got a grant for it. "We had a lot of educational advisers and there were definite parameters we had to work with. There had to be a literacy lesson in every episode.

"I find that a lot of preschool television, for any network, a lot of them have some sort of curriculum involved. The important thing you have to balance is making sure it's still entertaining."

Cozza-Turner lived her whole young life in Hudson. In high school, she was interested in writing, and her teachers were extremely encouraging. She remembers Mr. Perry, who taught computer classes at HHS, as "one of the first people who ever noticed my writing and said I should be a writer."

There was also Nancy Randall, her senior year English teacher. Cozza-Turner made a last-minute decision at the end of high school to follow her writing aspirations, and "when I did decide I was going to switch to writing, she would let me come into her room during my study halls and she would help teach me proper grammar, and different writ-

ing skills. I owe her a big thank you!"

Cozza-Turner's husband is an editor on "Wordworld", so he was the first person she hugged after the Emmy was announced. The writing team traveled to Los Angeles for the daytime Emmys.

"It was great," she said. "I remember hugging (my husband), and being almost in shock. Luckily, I didn't have to give a speech. Our head writer did that. I could just stand there, and smile, and enjoy the moment."

"It's a wonderful honor, and it's a great thing to have on my resume. It was an honor being nominated, and it was an honor to have won an Emmy...I was very surprised when we got nominated. I really didn't think too much about winning an actual Emmy until the moment before they announced the nominees."

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