

CRESTWORD



YOU CAN BE THE CHANGE!

BY: LOREN LETTIERI, '16
Over the first week of March break, myself and several other Crestwood students had the opportunity to travel to Managua, Nicaragua, which is located in South America. This trip was organized by an innovative social enterprise that offers life-changing experiences: Me to We. At first I was quite hesitant to traveling on this journey to Nicaragua because it is a developing country and I had no idea of what I was getting into.

I was excited but nervous at the same time when I arrived bright and early at Pearson Airport. Being away from home was worrisome, but once I stepped on the plane, I knew what I was doing was for a good cause and it was a chance to meet new people. It was a self-empowering feeling.

On our connecting flight from Houston to Managua I had the pleasure of meeting a monk by the name of Joseph, who educated me all about his lifestyle, and told me what it's like to be a monk.

When we landed it was clear that the airport was nothing in comparison to Pearson. As well, walking out of that airplane and feeling that warm, humid air was a blessing; however, it quickly became very difficult to manage without water. Soon after we met our two facilitators, Morgan and Sabrina. The first thing they mentioned to us was to drink water to remain hydrated.

When falling asleep you could hear the bugs and the wildlife, and it was easy to see how after a few nights you could fall in love with the place. On the first day we visited Volcano Masaya. We learned that the last time it erupted was in 1979 and saw the sulfur in the air. Afterwards, we had our first Nicaraguan meal, consisting of rice, plantains, and beans. It was definitely not the same taste as home, but it was delicious.

Finally, on day two, we travelled to the build site: Escuela el Trapeche. The road we travelled on to get there was quite bumpy, not to mention it was very narrow and steep. Our travel time to get to the site was

about an hour and a half; it was in a remote village, which was why the organization was building a school in that area. Meeting a few of the teachers working with Me to We gave further insight into the programming that would be taking place at the school.

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me to we
Better choices for a better world

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YOU CAN BE THE CHANGE!, CONTINUED

At the site, we were assigned either to stir cement, paint the buildings, paint the fencing, shovel and transport gravel, or build the sidewalk. Making the cement required us to walk up and down hills to get the water that was provided from the rain, moving three different types of gravel, and most importantly, using the cement formula. So much physical labour was required – but I'm glad I did it! It was definitely a struggle at first (particularly in the extreme heat) but the reason behind why we were doing it helped me continue. Building a school is so great because it opens doors to education. It's the most powerful thing, in my opinion, that will move the world in a positive way. I go to school every day and I see how much it impacts my life, and I am very thankful for that.



I have always thought education is so important, but my Me to We Trip definitely motivated me more to help these students. There are many times where I'm frustrated in school and it's stressful, or I don't want to be there, but I just remember the kids I met, and think about how much school means to them.

On the last day at the build site we were able to meet some of the students who will be taught at the school. We sang Canadian songs to them such as "There Was a Great Big Moose" and "O Canada".

Later on we had the privilege of visiting a coffee plantation and a famous hammock café in Grenada. When visiting the plantation, the tour guide noted that a large boa constrictor had been living – and continued to live – in one of their large pieces of machinery used to make the coffee. What was interesting was that he mentioned that they chose not to remove the boa. "The animals have the right to live and be untouched, because we are the ones living in their space," he said. Their respect for nature is admirable, and they feel as though they co-exist with nature, rather than rule it. Understanding the culture made appreciate this trip even more.

Each night we had group conversations with our facilitators on how we would continue the change when we arrived home. It was important for us to know that it wouldn't just end in Nicaragua.

Going on a Me to We trip is definitely a trip that everyone should experience sometime in their life-

time. It taught me how to be more humble, and to be thankful for the things I have. It gave me a new view of what people around the world live like, and how they make it work with just the little things they have.

Furthermore, this trip to Nicaragua is definitely unforgettable, and allowed each and everyone of us to realize how privileged we are to live in a country like Canada, to attend a school like Crestwood, to be able to access advanced technology and transportation, and most importantly to have fresh water, food, and a roof over our head that we can call home.

If we all work together, we can "be the change to free the children".



CAN YOU USE MATH FOR THAT?

BY: SYDNEY SWARTZ, '16

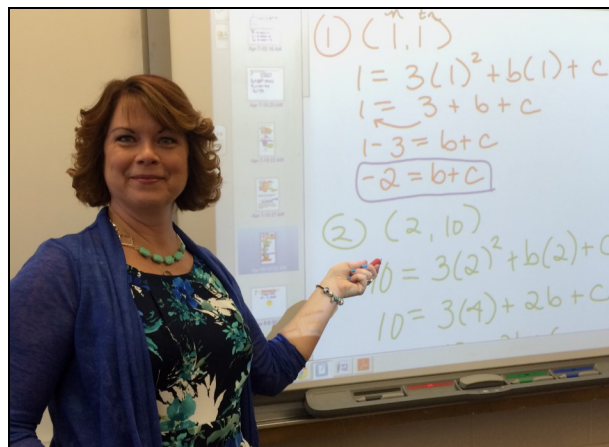
Math. Whether it is the bane of your existence, or the highlight of your day, there is no denying the almost simplistic beauty in the fact that $1+1=2$ or that $y=b^x$ can always be rearranged to form $x=\log_b y$. While it may, at times, seem tedious or even unnecessary, math (and the practical skills learned from it), are integral to everyone's future, even if you do not aspire to be a mathematician or an engineer.

Yes it is true that not everyone uses the quadratic equation on a daily basis. Knowing how to estimate the growth pattern of bacteria will not be asked on a job interview, but that is not to say that math isn't important. Everyone uses basic math (multiplication/division, addition/subtraction, fractions, percentages etc.) in everything from trying out recipes to making purchases. It is impossible to go one day without doing some form of math.

However, there is still the argument about whether or not the subjects taught in higher math classes have any relevance or practical applications for the majority of students. For certain students — and especially those pursuing further education in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) field — different math courses are required as a prerequisite for many programs. These students are often required to take further math courses within their preliminary post-secondary years, and for some, all the way through university.

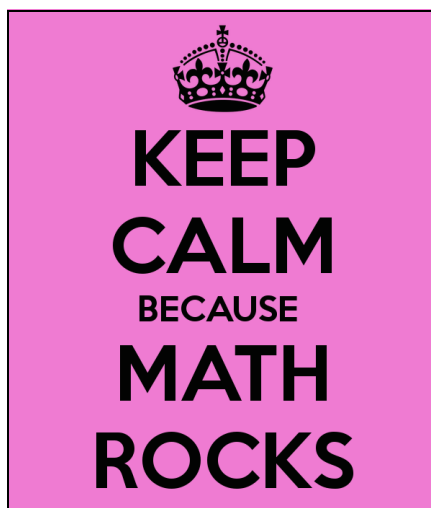
The skills learned within math class are also interdisciplinary in other high school level courses as well. For example, the quadratic equation makes an appearance within physics while logarithms can be applied to chemistry in finding the pH level. As well, even certain programs not within the realm of STEM (for example, business or commerce) require the knowledge found within these math courses. There is no denying the relevance that math has in the instances of these students, as it is simply something needed to complete their education within these fields.

The question remains about the importance of math for those who do not require math for their post-



secondary lives and education. Some fields simply do not need anything beyond the simple mathematical skills mentioned earlier.

So why take math? The processes and skills learned within math class go far beyond memorizing the unit circle or re-learning how to long divide, this time with polynomial equations. Math helps to develop one's analytical skills and allows one to further their abilities in following instructions as well as basic logic. The step by step following of a procedure, as well as checking over one's work and searching for errors, are skills that can be applied to anywhere within life. While finding the equation for a sine graph may not have the most practical applications for everyone, the processes and abilities learned within math class can be transferred to a multitude of other circumstances.



As someone taking "trisci" and anticipating taking the three math courses offered at Crestwood in Grade 12 through my Grades 11 and 12 years, I may be somewhat biased with how I view the usefulness of the math courses. This is due to the fact that everyday I am able to witness how the skills and information learned in one course can be transferred to others. Still, I strongly believe that despite the fact that math itself may not be for everyone, the life skills learned from the courses are integral to all facets of life.

THE ACORN

SHOWCASING THE TALENTS OF OUR GRADE 7 AND 8 WRITERS

THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

BY: GEORGIA GARDNER, '19

The purpose of volunteering reaches depths far beyond the required 40 hours of community service needed for graduation. Volunteering is all about gaining a powerful perspective of the world through kindness, dedication, and strength. Volunteering is a great way of appreciating what we have, and to give back.

If you are not sure where you'd like to volunteer, Volunteer Toronto – “a membership-based charitable organization committed to supporting, enabling, and celebrating volunteering in the City of Toronto – is the place to go! Its mission “is to help create the best possible volunteer experience.”

Using the Volunteer Toronto website, you can fill out some keywords, where you live, your name, etc. to find out which volunteer opportunities are available, and which best

suit your personality. What sets Volunteer Toronto apart from finding a volunteer job yourself, is that the organization understands what kind of experience you are searching for, as well as shares core values that will surely be important to you.

As the organization states, volunteering “contributes to the vitality and capacity building of the community. Volunteers and the professionals that support them are an integral component of the voluntary sector. Honesty, integrity and fiscal responsibility are demonstrated in all areas of our work. Diversity of community stake holders are respected through the model of Cultural Competence and is reflected in policies and service delivery. We believe sharing of experience and knowledge is the cornerstone of community and leadership development.”



If you are interested in getting involved sooner rather than later, volunteer during Change the World, an annual campaign for students aged 14 to 18. The program gets students to volunteer a minimum of three hours in a 6-week period. For 2015, the campaign kicks-off on National Volunteer Week (April 12 to 18) through May 24.

With this in mind, students should start getting involved and begin working towards achieving their minimum 40 hours of community service. Students are reminded, however, that Grade 8s can only start accumulating their hours in the summer before Grade 9. As well, these volunteer positions must help the community in some way, and cannot replace paid work. If you are unsure as to whether or not a position should count for community service, you should visit the Guidance Department.

There are many great opportunities for you to consider, and either Mr. Mitz or Ms. Bryant are always willing to help. Whether it is helping out in your neighbourhood, volunteering at an animal shelter, or even tutoring a younger student in a subject that you are good at, giving back to the community can actually be quite easy.

Just by reviewing the websites for both Volunteer Toronto and Change the World, you can easily tell that each organization is fully focused on creating a better tomorrow for Canadians everywhere. They believe in creating a better society for Torontonians by giving back and feeling good in return. Organizations like this are the reason that we see so many hard-working adults around us today.

So, get involved today!

THE ACORN

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: MRS. BUCHLI-WILLIAMS

BY: JESSICA LEVITT, '19

Who is our new teacher? What is she really like? What are some of her hobbies outside of school? After some investigating, I was able to discover some interesting information about Mrs. Buchli-Williams – the newest member of the Crestwood teaching faculty.

Mrs. Buchli-Williams has taught at several schools prior to teaching at Crestwood, previously teaching for three years in China, two years in Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur and two different Ontario private schools as well. She has traveled a lot and feels that there are so many beautiful places in the world but she has really enjoyed New Zealand as well as Bali, Indonesia and Bangkok in Thailand. She has traveled to five of the seven continents!



Outside of school, she loves to shop and she is very interested in fashion. In addition, she loves food and loves trying out new restaurants in Toronto. She likes all colours, especially the bright ones, as well as patterns and prints. The snow leopard is her favourite animal, and her favourite types of food are Italian, Chinese and Thai. While her favourite subject to teach is English, she also really enjoys teaching philosophy, as well as world history.

Badminton has always been her number one sport; the reason for this is because she likes most sports that involve using a racquet. She enjoys a number of British and BBC programs such as Luther and Downton Abbey, but she is also a fan of reality TV.

From learning about her travels, and about her interests and hobbies I can see that she is quite interesting and we are very lucky to have her!

A FAIRYTALE LAND, AND A SAFE SPACE

BY: ALEX MARTIN, '19

You may ask yourself, what are the performing arts? In a nutshell, the performing arts is something that a lot of people are proud to call their safe place – a fairytale land where you can be whomever you desire for a few hours a day. If this sounds like something you would enjoy, you will love to see how young people like me turn a passion into a reality.

In rehearsals, we start with a cast circle where we talk about what is going on and we stretch and warm up our voices. Then we take it scene by scene, sometimes working on songs, other times working on lines. The person I used to be does not have to exist for a little while and I can be the most confident person in the world for a short amount of time. Afterwards, I can go back to being my socially awkward self – that is, until my next rehearsal.

The best part about the performing arts – such as Aladdin, this year's major production set to go up on April 24 – is the feeling of getting on stage and pouring your

heart into everything that you worked so hard for. At the end, you are rewarded with compliments, flowers, and applause for something that you are passionate about. You get rewarded for doing what you love, and even if you forget a line, you are gifted for having the courage to get up on stage in this very vulnerable position, just so you can improve and excel in the thing you are most looking forward to doing again. So, with this being said, the performing arts are everything you could ever imagine, and so much more.



ALEX AS DOROTHY IN "THE WIZARD OF OZ"

STUDENT WORK

A TREATISE ON THE CULTURAL AND PERSONAL RELATIVITY OF COMEDY

BY: SPENCER ARSHINOFF, '18

I was, for the first time in the history of my schooling, excited about writing an essay. And though I may have been interested, amused, or even glad about projects for English before, I would never have imagined that it would happen now, in Grade 9, where school is seen as the part of the day you have to get through before you can play video games. And why was I excited about this essay? Because the goal was to be funny.

Being funny is something that I can do. I mean that in the same way that someone can play the didgeridoo or speak Yiddish, except that being funny is something you'd want to do. Humour has been a part of my life for a while. While I know that everyone has some sense of humour, I think that I can actually be funny, as opposed to just being able to laugh at people who take the time and effort to be funny. In the same way that someone whose parents speak German to them at home (presumably as a punishment for something) would end up speaking German, I think I can be funny, just because my parents are always joking around. My relationship with my father, in particular, is very humour-based. He was in an improv troupe in Montreal. And his father, who by some strange coincidence is also my grandfather, is always joking around, which I assume is how my father got his humour. He got it from his father, who got it from his father. I can only assume that, in the 16th century, one of my paternal ancestors somewhere in the Russian Empire made a joke about Tsar Ivan "The Terrible" and narrowly avoided beheading, which I am thankful for.

Also, I have taken many youth improv courses at Second City, the elite comedy facility that has given me a great amount of knowledge about humour and an even greater amount of t-shirts. This summer, I finally was able to progress to the "advanced" level, which I did by discreetly signing up for the advanced courses. We drew diagrams about humour, but every once in a while we played some games so we didn't forget that it was a camp and not school. We then wrote our very own sketches with the knowledge they had given us (still awaiting a reply from SNL). They told us when to be funny in a scene, and what to be funny about. But they never told us how to be funny. And until you can upload skills onto yourself, like they once did in *The Matrix*, that isn't something you can really teach someone else. Being funny is something some people develop, and others may not. But you can't make everyone laugh (well, *I* certainly can't). People, even if they are very much like each other, will laugh at different

things. And if you're trying to be funny – and even if you're succeeding – you will never be able to please everyone in your audience.

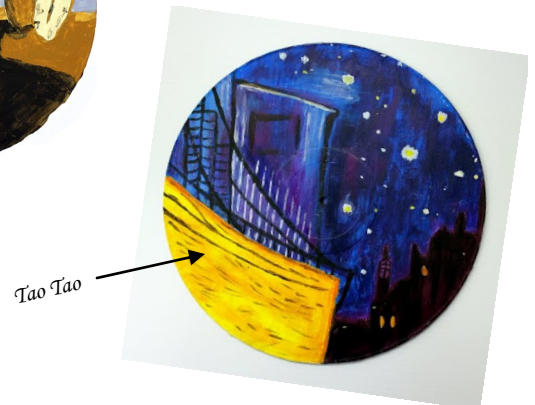
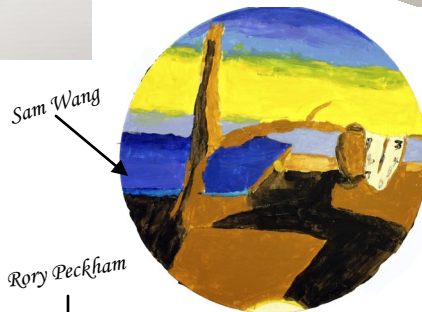
All people are raised with some sense of humour. Even the really cranky old people you see on the bus probably were. But a lot of who we are is controlled by our parents, and our culture. This includes comedy, which does not always easily translate from one location to the next. A good example of this is Japan. For those of you who don't know, for most of recorded history, the Japanese Empire was secluded from the rest of the civilized world by the East Sea. In that time, it developed customs and culture significantly different from anywhere else in the world. In other words, it became weird. Now Japan is a developed, first world country with some of the most advanced intellectual achievements in the world, but it is still really weird. And the comedy shows it. Once, I watched a clip of a Japanese comedy show where to celebrate the Chinese Year of the Sheep, a man was stripped down to his underwear, had face paint put on him and ran with a pack of stampeding sheep. When he arrived back at the studio, they shaved his badly dyed hair off. (Look it up.) And Japanese people find this hilarious, in the wholehearted way that a North American would not-ironically find, say, this essay. They laugh at it, and not because it was weird. And yet, they don't get our funniest stand-up comedians, or our best sitcoms (not that there's anything great about them, to be honest). But from this we can learn that whoever and wherever you are, someone probably finds you funny. You may get laughs from middle-aged men. Or teenagers. Or you can get a cult following overseas. You just have to find a type of humour that suits you.

And though not everyone can get up on a stage and tell jokes, we should consider ourselves lucky that we are born finding something funny, whatever that may be. All of us, even those who may not seem to be able to, can laugh at something, and that is truly the best way to make us feel better, if you don't count those mini-donuts they serve at the CNE. And yes, you may be jealous of a person who supposedly has a better sense of humour than yours, but rest assured you still have one, and if you find them funny, you are doing a good job already. Just don't expect to ever get paid for it. Laugh as much as you want to, at what you want to. Humour is the greatest thing ever, and I am very, very grateful that I don't live in one of the humourless alternate universes scientists are on the cusp of maybe discovering.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SPENCER FOR WINNING 1ST PLACE AT THE GRADE 9/10 LEVEL AT INCITE!

GRADE 9 ARTWORK—IMITATION GAME

Looking to famous examples throughout the history of art, students learned a variety of different painting techniques from painterly applications to smooth gradations. Their objective was to abstract famous works by imitating the original painting style as they challenged their knowledge of colour theory. The resulting pieces were up-cycled records brought back to life with a modern twist.



LESSONS LEARNED TOO LATE

BY: MEGHAN KATES, '16

Despite all precautions, tragedy still strikes. This statement could not be truer when it comes to Flight 9525 that crashed on Wednesday, March 25, 2015. The world watched in horror at the breaking news of a plane that crashed en route from Barcelona to Dusseldorf into a remote region of the Alps. Of the 150 people onboard, it was presumed that none had survived. Among the apparent deceased were 16 German school children that were returning from a school trip as well as two infants.

Following the disaster, the one question on everyone's mind was, "What caused this plane to crash?" Was it a tragic malfunction? Was there terrorist involvement? Were there other unforeseen circumstances?

These questions were to be answered in a most shocking way. Andreas Lubitz, the 27-year-old German co-pilot, appeared to have deliberately crashed the plane into the mountain range. In a search of the co-pilot's apartment, another astonishing discovery was made: Lubitz was concealing from his employer the fact that he was being treated for depression. His psychiatrist had actually excused him from work for a range of time, including the day of the crash. Lubitz quite obviously and unfortunately, disregarded this advice.

On the day of the crash, Andreas Lubitz took advantage of the pilot's momentary absence from the cockpit in order to reprogram the airplane's altitude to approximately 100 feet. He seemed to have locked the captain out of the cockpit. On the black box recorder, the pilot could be heard demanding to be let back in, as well as identifying himself. He eventually attempted to break open the reinforced door; however, he did not succeed. Screaming could also be heard from the passengers of this doomed flight as they realized what was happening. From the same recordings, Lubitz's breathing could be heard, showing he was conscious and calm until the last second. Examination of the wreckage revealed that

in fact, all 150 passengers, and the flight crew on board, were killed in the crash.

The largest plane disaster in memory is that of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. This tragedy prompted revolutionary change to airports and aircrafts around the world in order to prevent something like that from ever happening again. One of the largest changes implemented on the actual aircrafts was the reinforcement of cockpit doors. These doors were to remain locked unless one of the pilots was entering or leaving. There is a code that a member of the flight crew can enter in order to return to the cockpit, if whoever is inside is incapable or unwilling to let them back in. However, on the interior of the cockpit, there is a switch that locks it from being accessed from the outside. All of these reforms seemed to work against the pilot and the passengers of Flight 9525 on that fatal day. The co-pilot had taken advantage of the locking mechanism on the inside of the cockpit door, as well as the fact that the door is reinforced, all as a means to crash the plane.

Just as these procedures and changes were created in reaction to 9/11, this most recent plane crash has prompted its own reforms. Now, many countries have created the policy that there must be two members of the flight crew in the cockpit at any given time. Although this policy is no guarantee of complete safety, airlines are doing all they can to ensure the security of their passengers. However, no one can foresee what tragedy will strike next.

It seems that these days, one tragedy follows another. Just as one story fades from the news, and therefore from the forefront of our minds, another rises to take its place. Each one is equally as compelling as the last and many of them lead to demands for change. However, these lessons always seem to be learned too late, after tragedy has already struck.

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Talk to your Editors
and send your articles
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