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Spotlight on  
**Our Students  
and  
their Work**

by William Groot

Last spring we dedicated an issue of @td to the **PASSION** our staff has for their work, the **WONDER** they evoke in our students, and the **AWE** we all share for our Father's incredible world.

In this issue, we turn the spotlight onto our students and their work.

At Toronto District Christian High School, students are continually engaged in projects that challenge and stretch them. These projects take many forms: creative responses, reflective journals, service trips, oral presentations, real-world solutions, models, physical objects, and intricate constructions.

We asked our teachers to submit stories about students who had completed a recent project that really stood out. The result shows an amazingly diverse range of talents, thoughts, and ideas that all point back to the mighty God we serve! We hope you will feel inspired by the work of these students, and sense the accompanying **PASSION, WONDER, and AWE.**

# Passion, Wonder and Awe



Tori DeRooy winning image



Rebecca Idzerda



## Four TDChristian Student Winners

This year, four TDChristian students were selected as winners in the Vaughan Public Libraries' Early Harvest arts competition. Tori DeRooy won first prize in the Digitally Manipulated Photograph category, Josh Van Rys won third prize in Still Photography, Rebecca Idzerda won second prize for Graphic Short Story, and Kara Schuringa won first place for her short story "You". Last year, TDChristian students won a record eight out of a possible 24 Early Harvest awards.

Be inspired

Josh VanRys



# Passion

## TAKING THE EXTRA STEP:

### Jea-Yeon Park

by Richard Vanderkloet

In our Grade 11 History class we recently spent over a month doing a major group project. Each group chose an ancient civilization to study. They had to produce an artifact representative of their civilization, a bulletin board, a timeline, and a travel brochure. They also had to deliver a half-hour presentation to the class.

Jea’s group studied Japanese civilization from 800 to 1200 AD. In many ways, Jea was the glue that kept the group on task. “Jea never got stressed, angry, or frustrated,” said a groupmate. “She was always calm and worked steadily to get the job done. It was a pleasure to work with her.” Jea is a quiet, under-the-radar kind of student who does not seek the spotlight. She is an incredibly hard worker and strives for excellence, but doesn’t flaunt it or make her classmates feel inferior; instead, she is supportive and encouraging.

Artistic and imaginative, Jea is also a perfectionist. For their artifact, her group chose to make a kimono, the complex and beautiful traditional garment worn by Japanese women. Jea made the gown shown here, and was only dissuaded from hand-stitching the entire thing by her aunt, who helped produce the finished project. Although Jea made the kimono at home, she was fully involved in the rest of the project at school. “During work periods she would help other group members accomplish what we had to do. So she was a part of almost everything in the presentation, wanting it all to be good,” wrote another peer. “She was always on top of things, always giving suggestions, and always tried to improve what the group did.”

## HANDS OF A CARPENTER:

### Daniel Bergsma

by Harry Huyer

I first met Daniel in Exploring Technologies, a Grade 9 half-course more commonly known as Wood Shop. He was attentive and focused, and applied himself to learning as much as he could; the result was one of the best marionettes made in the class. This year in Custom Woodworking, I’ve been able to get to know him better. I see someone quick to grasp what is being taught and willing to help others understand. He is kind, and laughs at himself easily if he makes a mistake.

The first project was a box designed by the instructor. I set up the machines, and the students ran the wood through them, following this with sanding, gluing, assembly, and finishing. Naturally, Daniel made a very good box. The second project was a box with the same design but different dimensions, to fit an object brought from home. Daniel completed the required drawing and cutting list in two periods, and then politely asked if he could change the design—something I generally do not allow. He explained that he wanted to add two compartments with an interior sliding lid. Struck by his understanding of what was required to accomplish this, I approved it. He proceeded to construct the box, finishing it with a high level of workmanship in the time allotted for a much simpler one.

To my mind Daniel exemplifies the qualities of a skilled woodworker: a desire to create accurate and beautiful objects, and the determination to execute that desire.

## INVESTIGATING THE OPTIONS:

### Caleb Schaafsma

by Marjorie Helder

On Friday, September 13, students in my Grade 9 Geography class pretended they were environmental consultants advising the provincial government as to where developers should or should not build new homes and businesses. Students chose a natural area within Ontario and assessed its suitability for development. They created a visual representation of their location, such as a 3D map, diorama, or scrapbook, and wrote a two-page letter stating their own opinion and considering the perspectives of different stakeholders (business owners, commuters, residents, etc.).







ANDREW BARTON



ALYSSA CHONG



MEGAN VANZEUMEREN



ALLYSON JANSE

Caleb Schaafsma chose the Cheltenham Badlands in Caledon. He learned that this area had been a productive farm at one time, but had become barren in the 1930s due to poor land management. Today, this desolate area is very unique with its red, rolling hills of shale and very little vegetation. Caleb’s scrapbook clearly and effectively displayed and explained its characteristics.

In his letter, Caleb considered four different perspectives on possible development. Homeowners would appreciate the Badlands, he suggested, because it would be a private and exclusive area in the country yet still relatively close to town; for this reason he also thought developers would like to build here, although the cost of building in rock would certainly influence their decision. On the other hand, he emphasized, tourists and environmentalists would not support development in this area, since its exposed red shale is a rare and attractive feature of the landscape; in fact, it is protected by the Bruce Trail Conservancy for future generations. Caleb concluded that the Badlands should be left as a natural area.

### TO REACH AND ENFOLD: Caitlin Chang

by Fran Joosse

Caitlin Chang is a Grade 12 student whose compassion motivates her to reach out to those struggling with mental health issues. Her research project this year for the Challenge and Change in Society course enabled her to delve into the topic even more.

One way Caitlin has reached out is by selling bracelets at TDChristian to promote the Storytellers high school campaign, an awareness program administered by an organization called To Write Love on Her Arms. This charity offers hope to people affected by addiction, depression, self-injury, and other mental health issues. To those who have lost family members or friends to suicide, it lends support by helping them respectfully remember the lives of their loved ones.

Caitlin’s desire to learn more about mental health has spurred her to be involved with several other projects as well. She also makes bracelets herself and sells them, giving half the profits to PETA, an organization that rallies against animal abuse, and the other half to a letter-writing program she is establishing to offer support to people struggling with mental health issues. Caitlin believes in community and reaches out to those who need a listening ear. Next year, she looks forward to studying psychology in university.

### THE WONDER OF CREATION: Brady Weening

by David Kim

For most students in Grade 10 Science, the frog dissection lab is the highlight of the Biology unit, and Brady Weening was no exception. He could hardly contain his excitement as the day of dissection drew near, and would say with a big smile, “I’m looking forward to the dissection, Mr. Kim!”

It was Brady’s first time dissecting an animal and seeing what the internal organs actually look like beneath the skin. “I was surprised to see how small and delicate each part was, and how it is different from our own organs,” he explained after the dissection. When asked why he enjoyed the dissection lab so much, he said it enabled him “to see and explore the beauty and complexity of God’s creation first-hand.”

Did he find any part of it off-putting? “No, I wasn’t grossed out or scared to do the dissection. It was cool, fun, and a good learning experience for me.”

### BRINGING STORIES TO LIFE: Andrew Barton

by Tim Buwalda

Grade 12 student Andrew Barton LOVES films. But he’s never been satisfied with just watching them: “I’m fascinated by the process of how movies are made. I’ve always wanted to make my own movies—for about ten years now.”

Andrew’s passion for filmmaking shines through in his projects for Video Block last year and for Grade 12 Communications Technology this year. What sets them apart is his work in post-production, where he adds special effects and visual enhancements using After Effects, the same software used to create many of the effects seen on TV or at the movies. But although Andrew loves solving and overcoming the technical challenges to create those effects, the most exciting part for him is the actual filming stage. “I like shooting movies the most,” he says. “When I have a plan done and have put a script together, then I can finally do the shoot and execute the idea just as I see it in my mind.”

Andrew’s future plans include going to film school and hopefully one day becoming a Director of Photography on a movie or TV show. He’s already learned a lot by making videos—learning that goes far beyond the technical part of moviemaking. “A lot of video work is actually about how you work with people, how you relate with them, and how you meet deadlines,” he says. “Filmmaking just makes those things more intense.”

### A GIFT FOR MUSIC: Alyssa Chong

by Kevin Hayward

To say that Alyssa Chong is musical is like saying that Mr. Groot has an interest in education—both statements fall far short of describing the level of passion involved. Alyssa plays the French horn, the trumpet, the piano, and the violin; at school this year she’s involved in the jazz band (trumpet), the concert band (French horn), and the praise band (piano).

For the Grade 10 Music class project, students were asked to create a presentation on the instrument they are learning in class. The first part of the presentation included the country and date of the instrument’s origin, developments in design and construction (including materials), a technical description of how the instrument is played, and techniques or effects unique to the instrument. The second part included career sketches on two or three highly regarded exponents of the instrument, and relevant details concerning major recorded compositions for it.

Throughout the presentation it was obvious that Alyssa had enjoyed learning more about the French horn. It was also apparent that she had taken the time to listen to several selections from the literature before choosing the masterpieces to include. Her presentation showed depth and thoroughness, and was presented with passion, humility, and humour.

### FINDING HOPE IN THE D.R.: Allyson Janse

by Rachael Weening

As a final major assignment, students in the International Block class choose something from their time in the Dominican Republic that inspired them and create a project around it addressing three questions: What? So what? Now what? What did I experience, what did it mean, and what am I going to do with what I learned?

Allyson Janse was a student on the 2013 trip. As part of her project she investigated the education system of the Dominican Republic and made comparisons to the Canadian system. She noticed that the schools she had visited in the Dominican Republic differed from Canadian schools in some consistent ways. For example, they had no technology and very little art: in the drive to compete with American students in basic academic skills, there are not enough resources to spend on “extras” like art.

In her project, Allyson reflected that especially in a country like the Dominican Republic, education helps people get ahead. Education brings hope, and even one classroom game led by some crazy Canadian teenagers can make a difference and help kids see the world differently. “You have to start somewhere,” she wrote.

In addition to the other project requirements, Allyson created an art piece, because her time in the Dominican had shown her that art is a luxury. “In this piece the boy is grey and without colour, because without education he is hopeless,” she wrote. “Ideas and things are emerging from his brain—they are in colour because they represent hope. Education is opening up a world of possibilities for him.”

### EXPLORING THE ELEMENTS: Megan VanZeumeren

by Vivian Templeton

The Periodic Table of the Elements, displayed in the Science Wing, was originally made by students in 2011 to celebrate the International Year of Chemistry. A different student created the tile for each element, artistically portraying its applications, uses, and history.

This year, new tiles have been made and displayed for some of the elements. Megan VanZeumeren created one such tile, representing properties of the element chlorine. “The background is a swimming pool,” she explains, “since chlorine is often used to disinfect water. The Cl and 17 are perfectly white because chlorine is used to make bleach. The gas mask is shown because chlorine is a poisonous gas that was used in chemical warfare. The mask and the word ‘poison’ are greenish-yellow, because this is the colour of chlorine.”

Many students and visitors stop to look at TDChristian’s Table of Elements. Each element tile on our periodic table is an original piece of artwork that joins with the others to make a unique, attention-grabbing display.



Student Spotlight

# Wonder

**A SOUND SOLUTION:**  
**Aaron Hudson and Nathan Blom**  
by David Robinson

In Engineering Block’s inaugural year, students in the class created sound panels to tame the extremely noisy Video Block studio. In our second year we took on an even tougher challenge: a high school hallway. Aaron Hudson and Nathan Blom were two members of the team that created wooden panels to diffuse and cancel hallway sound, cutting the reverb time in half and reducing reflected loudness by 20 decibels. Their woodworking skills resulted in artistry that is both beautiful and functional. It’s why I like to call Aaron and Nathan the Soundbusters! But don’t take my word for it. Visit the hallway outside of Room 28 to see and hear the dramatic results!

“It was a great introductory project, and I don’t think any of us believed we would be able to turn out the functional artwork we did,” says Nathan. “Every step of the way involved acquainting ourselves with each tool and mastering it. The class had a WIDE range of previous woodworking skill, but we’re all proud of the collective product we achieved!”

For Engineering Block, the projects are never finished. We’ll next turn our attention to taming the sound in our new black-box Drama classroom; it’s a beautiful space, but an acoustical nightmare. It sounds like this will keep Engineering students busy for the next two years.

**DRIVEN TO CREATE:**  
**Maddison Mercer**  
by June Tenyenhuis

It took a lot of nerve for Maddison Mercer to join us for Grade 12 only a few days before school started. A quick arrangement was made for the two of us to meet. As we pored over her sketchbooks, Maddi spoke about her love of art and her hopes for a future as a designer for drama productions. “I love art,” she explained, “because when you don’t feel like talking it still gives you a way to communicate. Art is a way to see inside a person’s heart and mind.” She speaks of her family’s values and creativity with pride, and sees that her passion for making things was nurtured in an artistic home environment.

Intuitive and immediate in her methods of self-expression, Maddi gets to work with whatever you give her. Fluid acrylic painting with squeegees and windshield wipers was her first Art class experience at TDChristian, and she took to it eagerly. The objective of the lesson was to loosen up Grade 12 Art students to see design possibilities in abstract painting. Students researched fluid acrylic paint techniques and then experimented with layering fat over lean paint. They explored with spraying agents, glazes and stencils, turkey basters, large scraping tools, and windshield wipers, and discovered that simplicity and architecture of form were the key to success. Maddi created a dramatic ground and designed a stencil of an anatomical heart in her work. Her art often includes aspects of the human figure or anatomy.

Maddi confesses that she is in the process of learning about her creative gifts. I believe she is a gift to our school, and look forward to further artistic explorations with her.

**A WILLINGNESS TO SERVE:**  
**Lauren Bouwers and Malcolm Bennett**  
by Evelyn Dengerink

“Who would like to organize an intramural event to start in the next few weeks?” Without hesitation, Lauren Bouwers and Malcolm Bennett raised their hands. “We’ll run a floor hockey tournament.” And so the process of organizing and implementing a TD Intramural event began.

Event facilitation is an important component of the Recreation and Fitness Leadership course at TDChristian. Students develop their skills through running various events like the Homeroom competition, TD Invitational Volleyball tournaments, and Intramurals.

Lauren and Malcolm took charge; they discussed the rules to be used, tournament format, advertising, and fees. They decided



AARON HUDSON AND NATHAN BLOM TESTING OUT THEIR SOUNDBUSTING PANEL THEORIES BESIDE THEIR INSTALLED CREATION.

that 80% of the fee would be donated to Compassion Kids to help support the two children sponsored by TDChristian. After advertising the event, they manned a table in the foyer where teams could sign up during lunch. The response was positive: 14 teams made up of students from all grades registered for the tournament.

The tournament has run quite smoothly during the last few weeks. Malcolm and Lauren have been in the gym at lunch, setting up, supervising the games, and cleaning up afterwards. Daily announcements have kept players and spectators informed of the tournament’s progress. There have been a few challenges, but Lauren and Malcolm have solved the disputes with fairness and diplomacy. The tournament has brought energy and excitement to the gym during lunch.

Malcolm summarizes his perspective on running the tournament this way: “It has been really fun to see kids come out and have fun, and it is even better to know that we put this whole thing together.”

**THINKING, INSIGHT, AND DEPTH:**  
**Kat Meimaris**  
by John Terpstra

Two years ago, routinely covering a Grade 9 class, I met Kat and was immediately impressed by her presence. Vocal and energetic, she was a spark plug for lively discussion. Now she’s in my class. Bright and insightful, keenly aware of her world and the devastating effects of sin, Kat also knows the power of Christ to save, heal, and transform. In New Testament class we often talk about Christ’s call to live out our faith boldly in this world without becoming part of it. I challenge my students to allow God to use them to transform his world without falling into the traps of isolationism or relativism.

Reading her recent essay on what it means to live as a Christian in a pluralistic world, I was moved by Kat’s mature understanding; she sees that we need to be faithful to the truth while never abandoning our responsibility for the people around us. Kat writes:

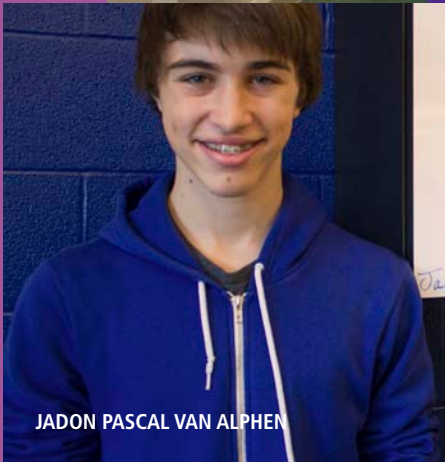
“We need to be out in the world changing it for the better—slowly but surely with God’s love. This doesn’t mean we let people walk all over us, but it does mean we need to be merciful. Judging people all the time won’t do any good.

“In the story of the two people on the road to Emmaus, Jesus comes up and starts preaching to them, but they have no idea it is Jesus. They realize it during the breaking of the bread. You only truly know someone once you sit down with them and share a meal. Jesus was among those people. That’s how we need to be; we need to be a light to the world. We need to be ‘little Christs’, to say and be what people need. Then they will have the gospel revealed to them once the time is right.

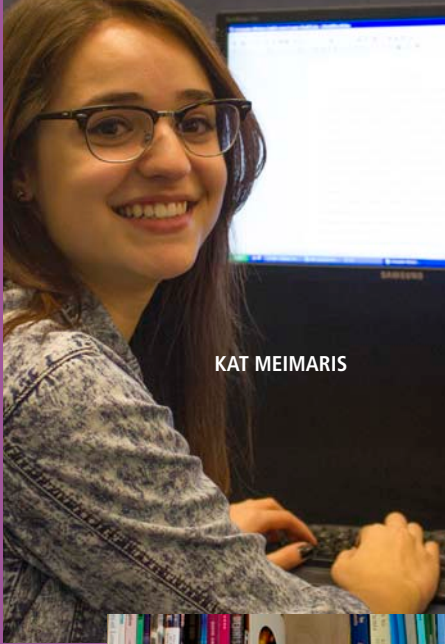
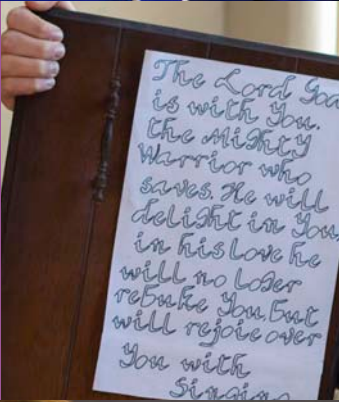
“TDChristian is transforming education for Jesus Christ by creating a safe environment for people to be themselves, and by educating us with classes such as Old Testament, New Testament, and World Religions—but also by incorporating Christian perspective in all classes. We also do service trips that put us in a new environment and train us to be among others, showing the love of Jesus.”



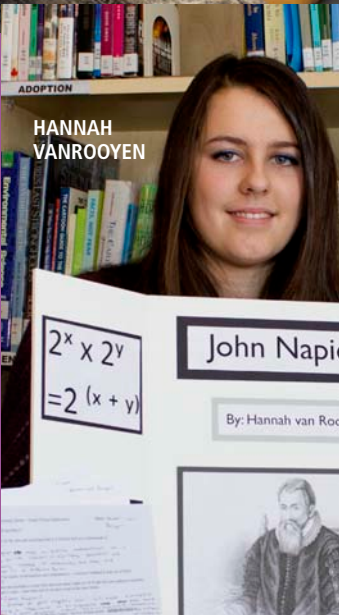
MADDISON MERCER



JADON PASCAL VAN ALPHEN



KAT MEIMARIS



HANNAH VANROOYEN

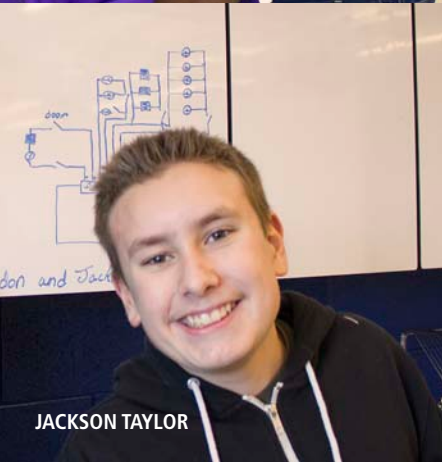




JAYDEN MEADESMITH



MALCOLM BENNETT  
AND LAUREN BOUWERS



JACKSON TAYLOR



ISAIAH RYZEBOL



GEOFFREY  
BRUINOOG



## HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF: Jayden Meadesmith

by Joni Knibbe

When Jayden Meadesmith was asked what he did best, his answer was very definite: art and music. “I am a very visual person and I come from a background of artistic people. My grandmother is a really good painter and both of my parents are music teachers.”

Jayden, a Grade 9 student at TDChristian, was inspired to use his artistic talents to complete an assignment earlier this year. As part of a Self-Awareness Project, each student was required to design a personal coat-of-arms representing their personality. Jayden illustrated his with images depicting art, music, drawing, painting, and sculpting, as well as one showing the theatre he had participated in at a musical theatre camp last summer, where he had successfully performed a role in “The Music Man”.

Already at the age of 3, Jayden was drawing lots of cars and vehicles. “Now,” he says, “whenever I go to my cottage I like to draw nature—sometimes animals, mostly plants.” He enjoys researching different artists to try to learn from them by copying their style.

Jayden hopes to cultivate his talent by painting, drawing, and sculpting even more. In the future he hopes to use his artistic gifts to benefit causes he is passionate about, such as protecting the environment and helping to save endangered animals.

## AN ELECTRIFYING PROJECT: Jadon Pascal van Alphen

as told to Kevin Godber

I am a Grade 9 student in Mr. Godber’s Science class. We are currently in the Physics unit, learning about circuits and electricity. The project for this unit requires us to build a house or other building out of cardboard, decorate it, and then wire it up with lights and other electronics. This is an in-class assignment and takes multiple classes to complete.

We were paired up with a partner and got equipment from Mr. Godber, such as light bulbs, switches, and other electronic devices. In addition to the basics we were also required to have something “cool” in our building, like a working elevator or disco ball. The whole purpose is to learn about electricity and electronics.

My partner Jackson Taylor and I began by brainstorming what our building would be and what would be in it. We decided on an electronics store and began by planning out the store and assembling its different components. Shortly after that we began wiring our circuit together, constantly drawing circuit diagrams to plan the next steps in our project.

The project became interesting when we started thinking of “cool” things to add in. We started out with very impractical ideas, and ever so slowly arrived at things that were possible. Some of the things we’ve added are a ventilation system, a fuse box, an alarm causing the entire store to vibrate, an inverted switch for the door, and moving objects on one of the shelves (such as motors and fans). This project has been really enjoyable, and a good learning experience for me.

## THE LORD GOD IS WITH YOU: Isaiah Ryzebol

by Joel Sjaarda

For Project Day, I asked students in Grade 10 Old Testament to display their favourite Bible verse creatively on an item they could mount on a wall, write a rationale for why they chose the verse, and prepare a presentation to share with the class.

Since the first day of this semester I’ve been hoping and praying for a classroom atmosphere characterized by trust, openness, honesty, and a genuine concern for others. Although students seemed relatively comfortable, it wasn’t until Isaiah Ryzebol shared his work that I felt we had truly “arrived”.

Isaiah is a thoughtful and polite student. Although he’s often quiet in Bible class, his written work is insightful. I knew this about Isaiah, but was still completely unprepared for what he would say in his presentation. He boldly told our class how the Lord had comforted and sustained him through trials in his grade-school years, how God’s Word has been a source of security and joy for him, and how important God’s presence is in his life. I was blown away by his willingness to be vulnerable, sharing how the words of Zephaniah have impacted his life and revealed God’s character to him. Isaiah encouraged us all with his genuine testimony and showed us what it means to love God’s Word and fearlessly declare it.

It is a pleasure for me to teach Isaiah. Because of him, these words now ring in my head when I question my strength or ability: “The Lord God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but rejoice over you with singing.” Zephaniah 3:17

## EXPLORING LOGARITHMS: Hannah VanRooyen

by William Groot

High school students usually view mathematics as a subject of right and wrong, easy and hard. To help students in Grade 9 Math appreciate that it is much more than this stereotypical view, they were challenged to find a topic and/or person in the field of mathematics to research and study. Then, over a few days, they were to present their findings and teach some aspect of the mathematics to their peers.

Last May, Hannah chose to study John Napier, who invented logarithms. In her small-group presentations, Hannah told her classmates about Napier’s life and some of his studies. Next, she proceeded to teach them the idea of a logarithm and how it works. The concept connected very neatly to the exponent rules Grade 9 students learn. Hannah then worked with the students, using questions she created herself, to ensure they understood how logarithms worked.

It’s always exciting when, by choice and through exploration, students connect current learning to future topics in meaningful ways. What is even better is that Grade 9 students were exposed to several rich and interesting topics by their peers in just a few days. Students come face to face with the diversity and immensity of mathematics in a very real and concrete way. Learning mathematics in this manner was enriching and enjoyable.

## HOW IS MY NEIGHBOUR (QUEBEC) DOING?

Geoffrey Bruinooge

chosen by Alice Vanderkooy

“This year for French,” writes Geoffrey Bruinooge, “the Grade 11 and 12 classes were combined, forming a community that helps each other and learns French together. The Quebec trip gave us a chance to travel, eat, discuss, and visit with each other and form new friendships. We also interacted with people in Quebec City by running a church children’s camp, attending a church service, and visiting a high school for a day. Pictures and a description of our experiences are on the TD Blog.

“Following the trip, in an effort to answer the question, ‘How is my neighbour doing?’, we were asked to find a topic connected to our experience in Quebec and share it with the class... in French! Topics included the evolution of religion in Quebec, how Quebec culture is changing, and the youth of Quebec as compared to the youth in the rest of Canada. I chose to talk about Quebec immigration. Why is immigration declining in Quebec? What do the Quebecois think of immigrants? How are immigrants changing Quebec for the better?

“It takes Presentations of Learning to a whole new level when you can talk about your experiences. It becomes much more real and helps us discuss everyday issues that our neighbour, Quebec, is living. After a number of presentations there were lively discussions about the referendums (1980 and 1995) and the current Charter of Values introduced by the Parti Québécois.

“We are growing in our knowledge of French, not only by orally presenting, but also by joining in group discussions. We attempt to learn the language at a higher level as we discuss authentic issues. Grade 11 and 12 French is becoming less about grammar, more about conversational skills, and more enjoyable and real for all of us.”

To learn more about  
our TD students,  
visit [www.tdchristian.ca](http://www.tdchristian.ca).



# Student Spotlight

# Awe

## EXPLORING THE GOMPERTZ FUNCTION:

### Erin Steckley

by John Templeton

Erin Steckley has a passion for biology. This year she is pursuing that passion in Grade 12 Advanced Functions by considering a biological application of the Gompertz function. She says:

“In Grade 12 Advanced Functions, our Presentation of Learning this year was to present a topic previously discussed in the classroom, or a topic in a new area of mathematics we wished to explore. After searching ‘math topics’ on Google and feeling slightly overwhelmed by the multitude of different concepts, I came across the Gompertz function. One of the most common questions in Math class is, ‘How will I ever use this in life?’ This driving question, coupled with my love of biology, led me to examine the Gompertz function.

“A function is a mathematical model describing a relationship between two variables. Often, for real-world applications, one variable is time; in the case of the Gompertz function, the other is growth. It is a sigmoid function, which means that its graph resembles an S-shape—especially suited for modelling the growth of things, such as the weight of a cow or the size of a population. The Gompertz function describes a period of rapid growth followed by a plateau. Its equation has three parameters, each representing a different aspect of the function’s growth: how much growth can occur, when it begins, and the rate at which it proceeds.

“The real-world application I focused on was using the Gompertz function to model tumour growth in humans. Obviously, each patient and type of cancer is different, but the Gompertz function can provide a good general approximation of tumour growth. I researched how treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation can be integrated into the function. Studying the complexity of biomathematics has pointed me to one thing: the complexity of our Creator!”

## A GENETICS TIMELINE:

### Wale Adegorite & Josiah Schaafsma:

by Judy VanSchenpen

Historically, there have been many contributors to the great finds of genetics: during the 1950s a number of laboratories were in a race to find the structure of DNA, and today many laboratories are collaborating to advance the human genome project. The Grade 12 University Biology students were assigned the task of researching 13 contributors to the study of genetics and the sequencing of the genome, and presenting them visually in a timeline.

The History of Genetics timeline in the picture was produced by Wale Adegorite and Josiah Schaafsma. They created a traditional display in an unconventional way: they used the classroom whiteboards. The pictures are clear and their writing is easy to read. It commands attention. Many students from other classes have taken time to investigate the timeline in the back of the classroom.

When asked about the assignment, Josiah said, “Biology is such an interesting subject to me because it is a dynamic one: new discoveries are constantly being made that broaden our understanding of the natural world. This assignment on the history of genetics showed the gradual progression of how we have come to understand our hereditary material.” Wale’s response was, “Genetics is awesome! Biology has opened the door to understanding more and more about God’s creation, all its complexities and wonders!”

## BEHIND THE SCENES:

### Upper Level Drama Class:

by Richard Peters

This year, the Upper Level Drama class created a “collective” theatre piece. The entire class was responsible for bringing in (or “collecting”) the content of the play, and then staging and performing it.

The students went through a number of writing exercises and scene-directing challenges to create material. At the end of each



ERIN STECKLEY



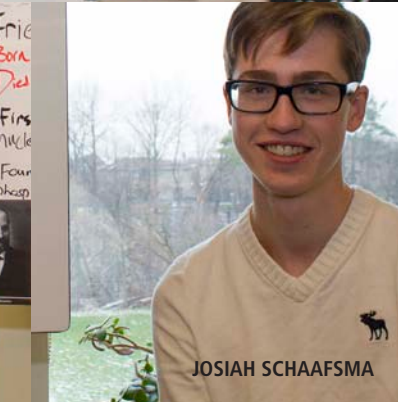
WALE ADEGORITE



STUDENTS DEVELOPING “BEHIND THE SCENES” IN THE SCHOOL’S NEW BLACK BOX THEATRE



SEUNG JUNG



JOSIAH SCHAAFSMA



MONIKA LEE

one, they presented what they had been working on and we considered what should be included or further developed for our little production. We used ourselves (our hopes, hurts, dreams, and stories) as “source material”.

I am writing this mere days before we present “Behind the Scenes” on Thursday, January 16 and Friday, January 17 in our new black-box theatre. Will our stories resonate with the audience? Will all of our hard work and preparation pay off?

There are many inspiring scenes, poems, and songs that we put into the final product, but I have been more impacted by the process: the authenticity, energy, vulnerability, and trust that have characterized the class throughout. The students are inspirations to each other...and to their teacher!

## REFLECTIONS ON FORGIVENESS:

### Seung Jung

by Sean VanEerden

In Grade 11 English, Seung Jung read Marilynne Robinson’s novel “Gilead”. The novel is about remembering, retelling, rethinking, and reshaping the experiences that have made the main character who he is. John Ames, an old pastor, struggles to understand the meaning of his existence, the call of God on his life, the reality of dying, the meaning of suffering, and the very real difficulty in loving his neighbour, which must always involve forgiveness. Seung was compelled by the theme of forgiveness and created this piece called “The Postures of Forgiveness”.

In the writing that accompanied the piece, Seung suggested several interesting things. For example: at first glance this figure seems simple, but the reality is that for its successful completion, Seung had to conceive the bigger picture to ensure that each piece would fit seamlessly with the others; he also had to do the tedious work of bending, twisting, and coiling wire together. “Such is the work of forgiveness,” wrote Seung: it requires that one take a step back to see the larger picture, and is not possible without working at it, sometimes over and over again.”

The figure is made from copper wire, allowing its position to be altered: it can be put into a posture of prayer, of contemplation, or of action. Ultimately, however, forgiveness requires a posture of humility. “In order to forgive,” wrote Seung, “one must first realize and understand one’s own need for forgiveness.”



SCOTT BIERLING







NESON RATNAM

PATRICK HEMING



MILEY LI



NICOLE EYGENRAAM

## THE SWEET SOUNDS OF INSPIRATION: Scott Bierling

by Mark Fluit

For Project Day in Grade 11 Guitar, students were given the option of writing an album review. The life of an album reviewer is no picnic—imagine sitting back, drinking coffee, listening to an album of your choice, and then filling your daily quota by writing a few sweet or cold-hearted phrases about it!

Could anybody do this better than Scott Bierling? Given his relaxed approach, Jack Johnson’s “In Between Dreams” was just the kind of album Scott Bierling would listen to. Johnson epitomizes Scott’s lifestyle, which is “laid-back and easy-going”. As part of his project, Scott spent time researching Jack Johnson, the man and his style, and looking at the song lyrics in more detail.

After writing and reworking his album review to his satisfaction, Scott decided he deserved to sit back and enjoy some more music—only this time, he produced it himself. Scott played his guitar in the style of Dallas Green and some of his other favourite artists. As a connoisseur of music, Scott has learned not only to listen to music knowledgeably and appreciatively, but also to imitate it with skill. “I hope someday someone writes a concert review on me,” says Scott.

## TURNING AN IDEA INTO ACTION: Patrick Heming

by Matt Heinbuch

In the spring of 2012, when Patrick Heming was in Grade 10, I gave my Phys Ed students the opportunity to teach their classmates anything they wanted to, as long as it was related to Phys Ed. Lily took us through the physiotherapy routine she was doing to recover from a leg injury, while Luke and Adam wowed us with their mastery of lacrosse; Amanda organized a trip to a rock-climbing gym. Patrick, however, opted for taking the class outside to teach us proper technique for swinging a golf club—an iron, to be exact.

A few weeks later, Patrick organized an impromptu visit to the local driving range, where he showed us how to use a driver. It was obvious that Patrick not only had a passion for golf, but had skill and knowledge far beyond the vast majority of the population, especially the 15-year-old population. He walked up and down the range helping his classmates and teacher with their swing and offering tips to correct our technique. Everyone enjoyed it.

Later that spring, Patrick spearheaded a campaign to start a golf team at TDChristian for fall. With the help of parents and Mr. Groot, Patrick worked out all the logistics (practice times and locations, team format and members, coach, etc.) to make the golf team a reality.

The golf team has just completed its second season, and its future looks good. Patrick graduates this spring, but there are some young, up-and-coming golfers in our junior grades ready to carry the torch. Patrick is an example of passion and hard work making something possible.

## UNLEASHING CREATIVITY: Nicole Eygenraam

by Cathy Vanderheide

Nicole Eygenraam was surprised but happy to win a “Best of Show” prize at the Woodbridge Fall Fair last month. Her work of art, a large drawing in colourful blocks of oil pastel, was a self-portrait originally done in last year’s Grade 10 Art class.

“The process began with having my picture taken—first looking normal, then looking wacky!” Nicole explained. She scanned the photo into a computer program, which altered it and allowed her to fill in bold patches of colour. Her portrait was then transferred to a large piece of paper using a graph, and finally traced onto a sheet of vellum.

“I wanted to use bright, solid areas of colour and bold lines to show energy,” she said, describing the portrait, “and I tried to add to that feeling of energy by creating rubbings that looked like fireworks in the orange background.” She had worn her hair in a braid the day her picture was taken, and all the stray hairs that had escaped the braid were captured on the photo, so she had to colour in every hair and all the background between them. The entire process took about two weeks. Her artwork is now on display in the office of her family’s home, though she’s a bit embarrassed by it because “I look a little like a mad scientist!”

Nicole has always been creative, and keeps her sketchbook nearby. “I’ve always loved to draw, and when I had to take Art in Grade 9, I found that I liked it a lot because I love using my imagination.” Although she will miss Grade 11 Art this year because she will be in the Dominican Republic with the International Block class, she hopes to use her talent there to inspire others.

## THE DREAM BEGINS: Neson Ratnam

by David Hagen

When tasked with the project of starting up his own small business, Grade 11 Entrepreneurial Studies student Neson Ratnam put the mental gears in motion and quickly decided on an auto mechanic’s shop. When asked about his choice, Neson’s answer was simple: “I hope to open one in the future.”

This project allows students to work through the steps involved in starting up a small business. After deciding what kind of business to operate, Neson had to write up a marketing plan that included an advertising strategy, promotions, and positioning. With so many mechanic shops available, why should we bring our cars to Power, Performance, Precision?

Neson had an answer to that. “What helps make my company different is the fact that we care about the car and the customer,” he said. Repairs are prompt and thorough: “First at the finish line with safety” is the shop’s slogan. In addition, his proposed auto mechanic shop offers a towing service, with a discount on the towing rate if he then services your vehicle. And once his future business is established, Neson hopes to expand it by selling used cars.

Not too far from now, if your car breaks down in the Woodbridge/Vaughan area, you might well give Power, Performance, Precision a call.

## LEARNING BY GETTING ONE’S HANDS DIRTY: Monika Lee

chosen by Jerry Klompmaker

I asked Monika Lee to explain a recent group project. The group members were Monika, Matt Cook, Noah Murray, Billy Bartens, Brandon Sabatini, and Joey Iuglio.

“In Green Industries our group built a stone wall around the gardens in the back of the school. We continued the work of two previous Green Industries classes. First and foremost we needed to learn how to make mortar, without any measurements. We had to mix mortar with water, and were told that when it was ready we would know. Next we had to lay the mortar and rocks; this involved a lot of trial and error, but after many rocks had been knocked out we slowly made progress.

“Between breaking mortar, cutting rocks, and a whole lot of cleaning, the stone wall team always had something to do. We had good days and bad days, and days when it was too cold to do anything. When the wall was done, we had to work on the garden: after moving close to a ton of dirt, we mulched the gardens so they can now be used for future Environmental Block projects.

“It was constant physical effort, and far from traditional learning, but we learned more than we could ever have learned sitting in a classroom. We learned life skills and made memories we will carry for the rest of our lives. Alone we could never have achieved what we did, but together we produced something that will be a part of the school for a long time.”

## THE COURAGE TO DISCOVER: Miley Li

by Liz Sjaarda

It takes a lot of courage for a young person to leave her family, friends, and everything familiar to study in a foreign country. Most international students are seeking to fulfil dreams not only for themselves, but for their families as well. Miley Li, who has come to TDChristian from China, says she likes studying in Canada because she can choose what to study.

For an assignment in ESL, Miley chose a place she wanted to visit. Ironically, the place she chose was “close to home”: Toronto. Miley was curious about the city because she had been living in the GTA for six months but had not yet spent any time downtown. Also, Miley’s mom and grandmother were coming to visit and were planning a holiday together in the area.

Miley chose five places of interest to visit in the city, researched each one, and chose a hotel in which to stay. About the CN Tower she remarked, “Imagine this! We will have dinner and have a bird’s eye view of the whole Toronto city at the same time!”

When it came time for presentations, the class had the pleasure of hearing Miley describe our interesting city. While the project was particularly relevant for Miley, all the students benefitted from her research and report.

Miley and the other international students desire to earn a high school diploma so they can study at an English university. We at TDChristian want to help them achieve their goal and encourage them to develop critical thinking and life skills in a nurturing, Christian environment.



# What's New at TD:

## TDCHRISTIAN GRAD REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

After many years as a basketball player, alumnus Sean Cate (2012) has found a new sport challenge. He recently won the high jump event in the Zoltan Tenke Classic indoor track-and-field meet, clearing 2.07 metres, a personal best; considering he started training only last January at 1.8 metres, this is quite the accomplishment. Sean will next compete in the CIS championship meet this March in Edmonton. "The cutoff for the Olympic standard is 2.25 to 2.30 metres, and I expect to be jumping 2.20 to 2.25 by the end of this year," said Sean.



### FALCONS SOAR AT OFSAA

It's been a great year for volleyball. In March, our Senior Girls team became the OFSAA "A" Volleyball Bronze Medallists. In late November, our Senior Boys team became the OFSAA "A" Volleyball Medallists as well.



### TAKING THE PULSE OF THE ROYAL

TDChristian's very own television show, *The Pulse*, usually covers news and events inside the school. This November, however, three of our Grade 9 Pulse students (two reporters and a videographer) received official media accreditation and filed two stories from the Royal Winter Fair. You can watch these segments and more from the video page on our website.

### OUR GARDEN IS GROWING AGAIN

Last year our Grade 10 Environmental Block class partnered with Seeds for Change to build and plant a community garden beside the school. Recently, Student Shane Versteeg applied for and won a new Green Apple Metro grant of \$1,000 that will allow us to nearly double the size of the garden. The produce from the garden is distributed to a local food bank and hospice, and is also used in our very own cafeteria.

### HAVE YOU 'NOTICED'?

*Notice* is TDChristian's annual published volume of exceptional student work—writing, art pieces, photography, projects, and other tidbits of thought and creativity. We have a limited number of copies of last year's *Notice* on hand. If you would like a copy, stop by our office or contact [marg@tdchristian.ca](mailto:marg@tdchristian.ca).

## Alumni News

### Attention Alumni!

Please keep us posted regarding reunions, marriages, births, career moves, and any other important milestones.

Simply email [alumni@tdchristian.ca](mailto:alumni@tdchristian.ca). Don't worry if you're late in reporting – we're still interested!

### • Marriages

- Caleb Vandenberg (07) and Chelsey Hiemstra (07), January 19, 2013, in Halton Hills.
- Rebecca Vos (07) and Kristofer Van Soelen (07), August 4, 2012, in Holland Marsh.

### • Births

- Johan and Felicia (Kooy, 04) Colenbrander and big sister Kaylen welcomed Austin Jeffrey on June 21, 2012.
- Brandon (00) and Robyn (Konyndyk, 00) Weening welcomed their third daughter, Elsa Mae, on October 30, 2012. She is much loved by big sisters Clara Maryke and Delia Jessie. The Weenings live in Georgetown.

## SAVE THE DATE!

# GALA DINNER

TDChristian High School presents

**"Artfully Yours: Making Dreams Come True."**

*It's a wonderful night out and fundraising opportunity on*

**SATURDAY, MAY 31,**  
*featuring a dinner, auction, and entertainment.*

Artistic participation welcomed by all. If you have any "Art" items or other auction items that you would like to donate, contact

Lydia DeHaan at [wldahaan@sympatico.ca](mailto:wldahaan@sympatico.ca) or (416) 749-2375.

## A CIVICS LESSON REACHES THE TOP

By Ben Freeman

The following story by Monica de Regt ran last spring on the website of "The Banner" (official magazine of the Christian Reformed Church).



Teacher  
Ben Freeman

Sewa Adegorite, Mark Hanna, and Angelo Duraisingham were invited to advise [federal Finance Minister Jim] Flaherty on budget issues following their participation in a nationwide program that gathered input from over 5,000 students. The students demonstrated leadership abilities in teaching their fellow classmates about budgetary issues and democratic process.

The school, which focuses on student-driven, project-based learning, worked in partnership with CIVIX, a charitable organization that works to strengthen student interest in issues of citizenship, public policy, and voting.

Teacher Ben Freeman said it was exciting to see the students' hard work over a semester result in a chance to present to Minister Flaherty.

"Trying to teach budget issues through a Christian worldview is difficult," Freeman added. "Students are more engaged when one of their friends has a personal connection."

The students, together with two others from another school, were flown to the capital city, given a VIP tour of the Parliament buildings, and then offered a 30-minute one-on-one opportunity to consult with the Minister.

Sewa Adegorite, a Grade 10 student, said that even though she wasn't familiar with Jim Flaherty prior to this whole experience, the journey has opened her eyes to the importance of what they were involved in.

"I certainly care about the future of Canada because my generation . . . will be impacted the most by the generation that is in power today," she stated. "It has impacted my future because I know now that when I vote, it will be an informed vote based on my beliefs and values."

Principal William Groot said that as the students reflected on these events at a recent school assembly, they emphasized that student leadership, initiative, and determination lead to great opportunities.

"God uses his children and events to lead them and to serve his purposes," he said. "We are called to be faithful."

*TDChristian students (from left) Mark Hanna, Sewa Adegorite, and Angelo Duraisingham with federal Finance Minister Flaherty.*



## Upcoming Events 2014

**Semester 2:**  
**First day of class**  
January 30

**Grade 11 Service Trip**  
(for Semester 2  
English students)  
April 8-11

**Band Festival**  
April 25

**Grandparents' Day**  
May 1

**Exhibitions of Learning and Open House**  
May 8 (6:00-8:00pm)

**Spring Music Concert**  
May 22

**Gala Dinner:**  
**"Artfully Yours"**  
May 31

**@tdchristian**

Editor: Tim Buwalda

Email:

[Buwalda@tdchristian.ca](mailto:Buwalda@tdchristian.ca)

**For further information on TDChristian, please contact the school.**

**TDChristian**

377 Woodbridge Avenue  
Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 2V7

**Tel: 1 855.663.6632**  
905 851.1772

Fax: 905 851.1992

**[www.tdchristian.ca](http://www.tdchristian.ca)**

Email:

**[info@tdchristian.ca](mailto:info@tdchristian.ca)**

To reach the TDChristian Board  
**[board\\_secretary@tdchristian.ca](mailto:board_secretary@tdchristian.ca)**

