

IN THE



HOUSE

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE SELWYN HOUSE COMMUNITY

SHS expands financial assistance

By Richard Wills, publications editor

When Bryce Durafourth graduated from Selwyn House School in 2004, his yearbook message ended with Robert Frost's famous line about taking the road less travelled.

Indeed, Bryce could have followed the beaten path through his high-school years. But, rather than allow financial constraints to limit his possibilities, he took advantage of the Selwyn House Bursary Program, which made it possible for him to attend a school that challenged and inspired him. Upon graduation, he won the school's highest awards, was a class prefect, and excelled in robotics, drama and athletics. In 2005 he made his mark in politics by running a credible campaign for mayor of Montreal before he was even old enough to vote.

"My family knew about Selwyn House but had never really considered it for me, as the tuition was quite steep," Bryce recalls. "When I was in Grade 8, we heard through a friend about the Bursary Program, and so I applied. I visited the school, and was impressed with the learning environment that I saw. I was thrilled to be accepted and then to later learn I had been awarded the Conrad Harrington Scholarship."

Bryce went on to make the Dean's List at Marianopolis, earned a B.Sc. in Honours Microbiology and Immunology at McGill University, and is now completing his M.Sc. in Neuroscience at the Montreal Neurological Institute.

His is only one success story that has come out of the Selwyn House Bursary Program. Some of the brightest students at the school come from families who might have thought they could not afford to send their sons to such an exceptional school.

Julien Dumont graduated from Selwyn House in 2006 having won awards in every



sport he signed up for. He went on to Phillips Exeter Academy prep school and is now in his second year at Bryant University in Rhode Island on a football scholarship. He credits the Selwyn House Conrad Harrington Memorial Scholarship for opening doors for him. "I definitely wouldn't have been able to take advantage of the opportunities at SHS without it," he says.

“There's no way I would have applied to a prep school without Selwyn House, and I certainly would not be where I am today.”

His family saw an ad for the scholarship and decided to apply. They took a school tour and Julien was sold by the small class sizes and "serious and competitive" athletic program. The boost to his academic career was a life-changer for him. "There's no way I would have applied to a prep school without Selwyn House," he says, "and I certainly would not be

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A helping hand for Haiti

By Courtney Prieur, Director of Community Service and Student Leadership

A group of students from Elementary, Middle and Senior Schools met on February 10 to decide where to send money collected in the school for Haiti.

A total of \$2,500 was collected in water jugs placed in each school, as well as from a pie-in-the-teacher's-face auction during Winter Carnival, and from the parent evening with Dr. Ron Clavier.

The students decided to give \$2,000 to an organization called ShelterBox. A Shelter Box is a kit containing: a dry shelter, a warm bed, light and heat, clean water, cooking aids, and tools for 10 people. You can see the box in detail at www.shelterbox.ca. Each box costs \$1000, and our donation will be matched by the Canadian government. ShelterBox will also send Selwyn House a school plaque that we can put on our wall, and we will be recognized on their website. The leftover \$500 will be kept for Phase II of our support for Haiti, including helping Haiti refugees locally.



The Haiti Relief Committee, from left: Jake Azoulay (Grade 3), Pierce Cullen (Gr. 6), Thomas Savvas (Gr. 10), George Pamel (Gr. 6), Michael Forian (Gr. 10) and Matthew Jablonski (Gr. 11).

Financial assistance

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where I am today.”

Raja Talla walked away from Selwyn House graduation last year with awards in science, math, French, “original and creative thought” and the highest grade average in his class. This quiet, unassuming young man was described by the Senior School Head as “a model student, consistent, hard-working, smart and respectful...who will go to extreme lengths to obtain bonus marks, even when he already has 100 per cent on the test in question.” A prefect and member of the Cum Laude Society, Raja also made his mark in robotics, drama and sports.

Had it not been for the Conrad Harrington Scholarship, Raja would never have become associated with Selwyn House, and it would have been a loss for both.

Today, Selwyn House is expanding its program of needs-based bursaries to ensure that boys at the high-school level have greater access to one of Montreal's premier independent schools. “We are committed to benefitting from as diverse a student body as possible, and

to making our school accessible to deserving young men regardless of their family's financial means,” says Headmaster Hal Hannaford.

“At Selwyn House, we believe that a world-class education should be available to more than a select few,” Mr. Hannaford says. “We want to open our doors wider to the greater Montreal community, and ensure that the highest-quality education does not have to be prohibitively expensive. While we are maintaining our high scholastic standards, these bursaries are being awarded on the basis of financial need, rather than academic merit.”

Because of changes in the school's financial structure and increased endowment levels, Selwyn House can now offer up to 15 substantial bursaries for students at the high-school level, each of which can cover up to 50 per cent of tuition costs. The bursaries are available for students entering grades seven through eleven for the 2010-2011 academic year.

Students and parents interested in applying to Selwyn House and taking advantage of the bursary program should contact Admission Director Nathalie Gervais at 514-931-2775 admission@selwyn.ca.

Experience = education

By Richard Wills, publications editor

Courtney Prieur, Director of Community Service and Student Leadership at Selwyn House, began her January 21 presentation to the Selwyn House Parents' Association with a Chinese proverb: "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand."

This is the essence of experiential education, a concept that is catching fire in schools, colleges and universities.

It's not entirely new. The back-to-school outdoor trips Selwyn House students take each fall are examples of experiential education. But it is also increasingly seen as a way to make course content more relevant to students' lives.

Experiential education seeks to increase student motivation through active hands-on engagement that is relevant to the student, personally challenging and self-guided, includes a vision of responsibility for one's self and others, and provides opportunities for reflection on what is learned, says Courtney.

This could mean theme-based outdoor education in which each student becomes an expert on a chosen topic of natural science. Or it could be community service projects designed to connect students to their social group, their community and their world.

For Senior students, this could include building projects in the developing world, or visits to local seniors' homes. For Elementary students it could consist of field trips to learn more about their city.

But Courtney stresses that the goal should be service learning, rather than simply community service. Not only to teach civic responsibility and promote a sense of community, but to enrich a student's learning experience.

"Service needs to be an exchange, a reciprocal relationship," Courtney points out. "It's all about helping students learn about themselves and develop real-life skills from experience."

Furthermore, these activities have to be undertaken for their own reward, and not



Stu Saunders talks to SHS teachers

merely to fill an academic requirement. "Students start by building their CVs, and somewhere along the line they catch on and find their passion," says Courtney.

Leadership activities are also a type of experiential learning. At Selwyn House, Senior School students are increasingly asked to take responsibilities for planning events like their Winter Carnival. If things don't go as planned, that, too, is a lesson learned. "It doesn't have to be perfect," says Courtney. "That's all part of the experience."

"Schools that have an aggressive leadership program have a much safer environment," Stu Saunders told Selwyn House teachers. A leadership motivator who has spoken to millions of students throughout North America, Stu gave a talk to SHS students on February 1 that was a hit with Grades 7-11.

Encouraging uninvolved students to become fully engaged in school life can tap an enormous source of school spirit, he says, describing Selwyn House as "a school that is dying to do stuff."

Courtney wrapped up her talk to parents with a challenge to help students "connect to a public purpose" through their school activities: "What are our kids doing now to make the world a better place, and what are they learning about themselves while doing it?"

It takes a COMMUNITY to educate a boy

SELWYN HOUSE
100 YEARS 1908 - 2008

