



BOSS.COM

Principal: George Voumvakis

Superintendent of Schools: Daniel Wu

Board Trustee: Allan Tam

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Message from our Trustee

As we near the end of the school year, I want to thank you for all that you do to strengthen our schools and communities. This is a good time to celebrate your child's achievements over the past year.

One of our goals in the [Trustees' Multi-Year Plan](#) is to "continuously increase student achievement and well-being through a culture and caring and learning." That includes a culture that emphasizes engagement and positive relationships among all the members of the school community – students, staff members, families and community members.

You, as parents/guardians, are our most important partners when it comes to education. The support you have provided to your child throughout this past school year will help to strengthen our schools and make a difference to your child's learning.

I encourage you to continue engaging your child in learning throughout the summer, and to help them to see the connections between what they are learning in school and the world around them. There are so many opportunities to do this over the summer, whether that's planning a budget with your child, enjoying the natural beauty in York Region, reading a book or visiting local sites. Whatever your plans are this summer, I wish you all a successful end to the school year, and a safe and enjoyable summer.

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Principal Message

W

elcome to this year's final edition of the Bur Oak Secondary School newsletter.

I am sad to say this will be my last newsletter as principal of Bur Oak Secondary School. I will be transferring to Aurora High School in September. It has been a wonderful five years at Bur Oak Secondary School and I have seen our school grow into active, caring and highly productive community partner.

Some of this years highlights include:

Our ensembles competed at the Kiwanis Music Festival of Greater Toronto, where we received 7 First Place Awards (with 3 Platinum Ratings and 4 Gold Awards), as well as 1 invitation to compete at the Provincial Finals. We also found success at York Region Music Alive Festival, where our groups received 5 Platinum Ratings, 2 Gold Rating and 7 invitations to the National Finals.

Events this fall also included: Our Bossilicious "Welcome Back to School" barbeque, the School Dance and the Winter Assembly. Grade 10 students had a wonderful opportunity to learn about possible future careers through our annual Careers Day. This year we had 23 professionals from the community come and talk to our students about their respective career journeys.

This winter BOSS held its fourth annual Mental Health Day called "Unstuffed 3.0". Students had the opportunity to attend both workshop and wellness sessions. Students chose workshops from a variety of topics including relationships, personal identity and family issues. Wellness sessions included: yoga, running, reading, music and art appreciation, mindfulness and broomball.

Staff and students at BOSS continue to give generously of their time to support our local community with events like the Terry Fox Run, the Halloween Spookfest for younger children in our community, the Canadian Cancer Society Pink Ribbon day, Daffodil Drive, and the Winter Food Drive.

Graduation 2017

On June 28th, we hosted our annual Graduation ceremony to celebrate our 2017 graduating class. The 409 graduates included 270 Ontario Scholars and a number of scholarship recipients. It was truly an enjoyable evening and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduating students. A special thank you goes to the Guidance Department and the front office staff for all their hard work that made graduation such a success.

Community partnerships.....

Thank you to Michele deVries for her work with our community partner, the York Region Police and their joint photography club featuring BOSS student work. This year's show, was once again held at the Community Safety Village a wonderful backdrop for the students' work.

We say goodbye to, Ms. Sivabasgaran, Ms. Hatanaka, Ms. Donaldson, Mr. Guse, Ms. Sharma, Mr. Kumar, Ms. Saini, Ms. Upton, Ms. Pugh, Mr. Wong, Ms. Argiropoulos, Mr. Bridge, Mr. Hurlington, MS. Dolatshahi, Mr. Vitore, Ms. Griffith and Ms. Chadha and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

I would like to wish a happy retirement to three very special people at Bur Oak. Ms. Kostandoff has been the Head of our Library at Bur Oak since the opening of the school and we will all be very sorry to see her leave. She has contributed much to the school life at Bur Oak in her ten years.

Our second retiree is Mr. Gowans, who has taught many students throughout his career in York Region. He has also coached countless teams for almost 30 years.

Our third retiree is Ms. Fisher who taught hospitality. She has been instrumental in hosting the school Bistro with the support of students, serving wonderful staff breakfasts and preparing the food for the award banquet. They have all contributed much to the school life at Bur Oak.

Principal Message Cont'd

Mr. Angus will be transferring back to Bill Crothers Secondary School this September. Mr. Angus came to Bur Oak in September 2016. He has been available to any staff or student needing assistance with any concern or problem. We wish him well at Bill Crothers Secondary School.

To students and staff, I extend my appreciation and thanks for your tremendous efforts which allowed us to be so successful this school year. I wish everyone a safe and happy summer.

We would also like to thank the following long term occasional teachers for their support of our students: Mr. Berman, Mr. Cassidy, Ms. Dronova, Ms. Munro, Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Wicks.

The administration welcomes the following staff to Bur Oak next year:

Rose Li	Principal	
Athina Tsatsos	Moderns Headship	
Kerry Odum	Science Headship	By, G. Voumvakis Principal

Business

Another day at the office ... except, where is the office? Business continues to maintain its clear movement towards the real world that our students will be exposed to upon graduation. The department was able to repurpose an under-utilized space into an **Innovation Lab** where our Marketing Courses were held. Here, we turned mirrors into white boards, installed a new Smart Board, and continued to create prototypes with a **3D printer**. Students who were surveyed told us that the space was one of the best parts of their learning as it allowed them to get away from the traditional rows of desks and learn in a more relaxed environment.

The space became the new home for the **Entrepreneurship Club** where students from all subject areas were able to join together after school to create, innovate, and ideate their passions to see if they could generate a new business idea with the help of students with different but needed skills. Many of these students participated in the entrepreneurial movement that is sweeping the country by joining a two day boot camp on innovation. Two of the 12 finalist teams were from Bur Oak.

In a similar vein, two teams from our Grade 9 Introduction to Business Course were finalists in the **Dragons Nest**. Dragon's Nest is a program where students become entrepreneurs right in the classroom! The program is supported by business mentors, teachers, and companies. Students are guided to create, develop, and launch, a real venture in class. Our teams' videos were selected for over 50 competitors and faced the panel at the Dragon's Nest Finale. The students were given prizes of free attendance to Basecamp, the innovation summer camp held at Ryerson.

Our faculty held a Financial Literacy Workshop for Grade 12s in conjunction with TD Bank. TD Bank paired up with ABC Canada to facilitate a workshop to educate grade 12's at BOSS on how to manage money, earn credit and save for the future. The business department will continue to run this workshop next year for younger grades as well since it was beneficial and popular with students in their ever-present needs for greater financial literacy.

As part of our Modern Learning initiative, the Business Department joined with English to create a shared experience related to investment, finance and writing skills. The two groups of students and teachers created an exercise around mitigation of corporate scandal. The combination of Business and English in a "who dunnit" type of exercise captured the imagination of students and teachers alike.

Finally, the Business Department continues to look for opportunities to bring new and relevant learning to its students through **Design Thinking** and other forms of creative and critical thinking. We feel that these approaches will give our students the best opportunities for success in this ever-changing landscape of the real world. And the office? Just down the hall ... first **app on the left!**

By, C. Hainstock
Head of the Business Department

In Special Education...

Our staff and students have had a busy and enriching year in Special Education with a variety of activities that have been valuable experiences for all.

This year in our community classes, students learned many life skills within the classroom and outside. Various trips and activities included the Magna Hoedown, SNAP basketball which was hosted at BOSS, eight weeks of swimming, the YSSN Mindfulness session and lots more! In the DD class, modern learning was a focus. Our students used virtual reality and took part in cross curricular integration with Ms. Wun and Ms. McKay's class where they were able to demonstrate their learning from the DD program and teach these skills to others. Work experience is an important part of the program where eight students are in the community participating in local businesses. Our Autism students also participated in work experience within the school and outside at Dollarama and Chapter 21. They learned life skills in the community as they went on weekly shopping trips and started hosting their monthly lunches for staff at BOSS.

In our Learning Strategies courses there was a continued focus on students developing a better understanding of their strengths, needs and their own Learning Disability in order to help them advocate for their learning. Our department was able to host the Grade 8 incoming Special Education students for a transition morning filled with orientation activities and information that will help make the transition to high school go smoothly.

Another invaluable experience was when the senior students had the opportunity to learn about accommodations available for Special Education students at post secondary education. Through a trip to Durham College and University of Ontario, the students engaged in workshops and tours of the facilities and learned the importance of self advocacy in these new contexts.

This year has had many positive experiences for our students and we look forward to bringing enriching opportunities to ensure their success. Our department also continues to work with community agencies and services to support students and their families.

By, L.. Hogan Head of the Special Education Department

Science Success

It's been busy in the Science department this semester!

Science Club: Our science club executive was busy planning engaging and exciting activities for our club members. Students participated in a variety of science experiments including growing their own crystals, dissections and a Science Amazing Race. Our club also was busy fundraising for the **Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada**. Through the annual carnation campaign, our students raised **\$780**. These efforts lead to our most successful campaign yet at BOSS. This commitment to our local community is outstanding!

Science Competitions: This semester was busy with a variety of science competitions. The grade 10 Michael Smith Challenge was written by 22 of our junior students with **Mahyer Tajeri** finishing in the top 3% in Canada! The University of Toronto Biology Contest was a great success as well with three of our students finishing in the top 8% of all global participants. **Vishva Shah** achieved the highest ranking at BOSS and scored in the 94.7th percentile, followed by **Maggi Zhao** (94.3rd percentile) and **Saif Rjaibi** (93.3rd percentile). The Chem13 News & Avogadro, University of Waterloo Competitions also saw an impressive turn out of participants this year. Congratulations to **Li Jiang, Maggie Zhao, Justin Zhong and Saif Rjaibi**. These grade 12s scored within the 80th percentile. Grade 11 chemistry contest writers also had outstanding results. **David Yin** scored 8th in Markham! **Phillip Pham, William Li, Niveetha Wijendran, Ainely Pena, Felicia Kwanci and Alice Shin** all scored within the 80th percentile. **Li Jiang** scored 34th in the world in the University of Waterloo, Sir Isaac Newton Physics Exam. Congratulations to all of our participants and for those who achieved outstanding results. You have made your teachers very proud!

Science Olympics: This year two junior and two senior teams competed at the annual YRDSB Science Olympics. This highly competitive event draws the best science students from around the region to compete in a variety of biology, chemistry and physics tasks. Our passionate and dedicated students spent several months preparing for this competition and certainly came out on top! They won the **gold medal** for the highly coveted spirit award due to their sportsmanship and enthusiasm. Collectively, our senior teams won a **silver medal** in their combined efforts in the chemistry challenge. Our senior B team (**Saif Rjaibi, Dhruv Patel, Thomas Kean, Jacob Yu and Jason Cao**) won the top prize of the day - the Overall **Gold Medal** in biology, chemistry and physics. This is an incredible accomplishment. Congratulations to all team members!

By, G. Andersen
Interim Head of the Science Department

Drama.



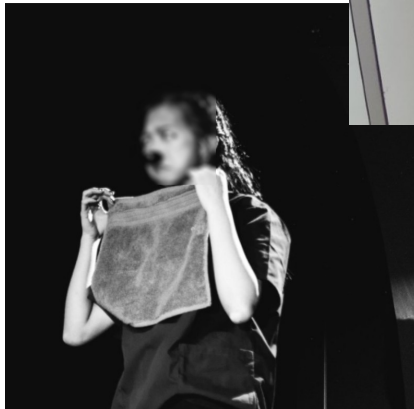
The Bur Oak Drama Department had an incredible school year. Our senior production “Red is the New Orange” took the Sears Ontario Drama Festival by storm, making it all the way to the Provincial Showcase, the last stop of the festival. This took us to Chatham, Ontario for four days where we were invited to perform last, closing the festival. We were engaged in workshops with professionals in the performance field, we went to nightly events where we were able to meet like-minded theatre students and we were able to watch the 11 other shows from across the province perform their shows. We were honored with a directing award, an award of excellence for the ensemble and Sanly Kuang was given the coveted Mira award for her incredible performance as “Pipes”. Anjalee Srinivasan was awarded a 3000\$ Sears Fest scholarship! We are so proud of all of our drammmies. Watch your big screen because our very own Sanly Kuang was just signed by one of the top acting agents in the country, we can’t wait to see what she does in the future!

Our grade 10’s worked on writing and directing a children’s theatre piece titled “Pirate Girl” and the drama department put together a successful haunted house in the fall. It has become one of our biggest and most successful events.

We will be losing some special drammmies to graduation this year. I would like to say that it has been a genuine honor teaching you all these past 4 years. You have left a significant impact and in fact shaped much of this department. You have also left a big impact on my heart and I have loved being able to say that you are my drama kids.



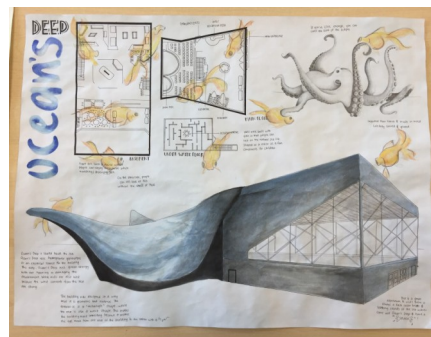
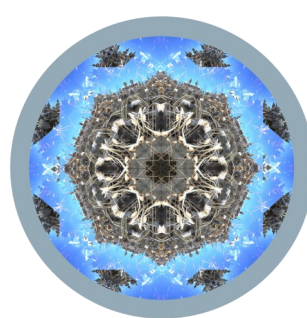
By, C. Ferguson
Head of the Drama Department



Visual Art Department

Coffee House

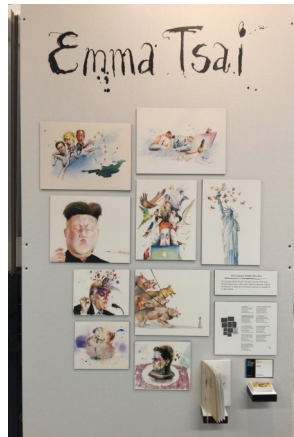
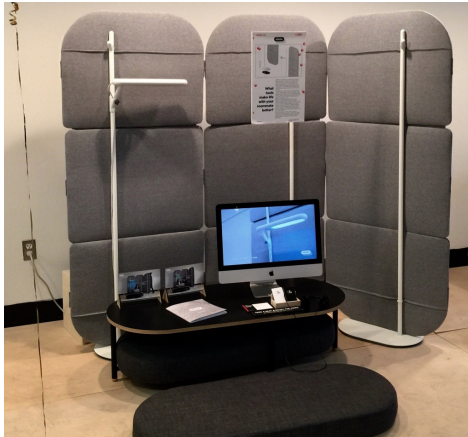
In May, the Art Department held our 10th annual Coffee House Art Show where work from both the Media Arts and Visual Arts programs was showcased. There was henna, origami and button making stations as well as several resident artists. The collection of work demonstrated the truly impressive skills of our amazing art students here at Bur Oak!



Visual Art Department Cont'd

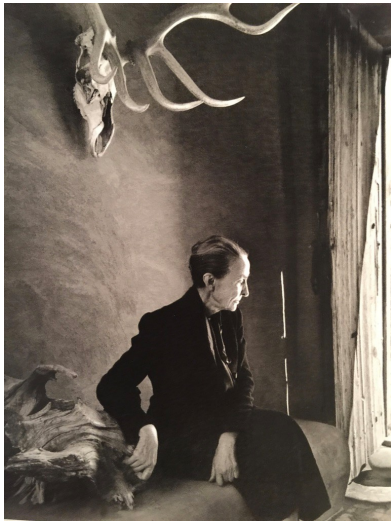
OCAD Grad Show 2017 Field Trip

A bus load of senior students toured the Ontario College of Art and Design University while viewing the 102nd Graduation Exhibition featuring three of our very own Bur Oak grads. Special congratulation to Martin Luu whose work won first place in the Industrial Design Department!



AGO Georgia O'Keeffe Exhibit

In May, our Grade 11 Visual and Media Arts students travelled downtown to the Art Gallery of Ontario to see the incredible Georgia O'Keeffe, a trailblazing figure in American modernism. Making its only stop in North America, the show featured more than 80 works of art capturing the essence of her deeply personal connection to the landscape, architecture and nature that inspired her iconic style. A major retrospective of the art and legacy of this profoundly influential artist, the exhibition examined O'Keeffe's relationships with renowned photographers of the time including Ansel Adams, Paul Strand and Alfred Stieglitz.



By, M. deVries
Head of the Visual Arts Department

English Department

The English Department was busy. Students prepared culminating activities, wrote papers and delivered presentations. We've seen some impressive accomplishments this school year across all grades.

Elective English Courses

This year we ran a successful Grade 12 course in writing (EWC - The Writer's Craft) as well as our Presentations and Speaking Skills course (EPS 3O). We are excited to run two sections of Media Studies (EMS 3O) next year with an intriguing focus on conspiracy theories.

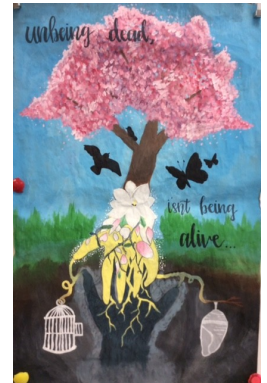
Slam Poetry Team

Earlier in the year, our Slam Poetry team took to the stage in the semi-finals hosted here at Bur Oak. Aahuti Dave, Chatu Kodikara, Navya Manoj, Shyana Srikanthalingam and Beverly Yu proudly represented Bur Oak with poems that resonated with an active audience. Themes spanned from impaired driving to censorship. Next year our goal will be to return to the Finals. We will be forming a team early in Semester One.

Grade 11 Mural Project

Student feedback reveals that the students in the Grade 11U course thoroughly enjoy the Mural Project. Adapted from a previous T-shirt project, the mural presentation comprises a part of the poetry unit.

This assignment allows students to draw from their personal, family and cultural experiences to construct a poster with a central theme. They select a poem and symbols to represent this theme. Significant connections and insights emerge as students bravely present their posters, deconstruct their chosen poems and convey their personal stories. This year, students produced some exceptionally captivating mural posters.



By, E. McGann-Golding
Head of the English Department

Moderns



This past semester, our students participated in two successful experiential learning opportunities as well as innovative cross-curricular learning opportunities. In April, Madame Sharma's grade 10 French students participated in a scavenger hunt at Marché St. Laurent. Afterwards, our students used their French speaking skills to order delicious multicultural cuisine at the Marché Restaurant downtown. Madame Ayanoglou, Madame Brady and Madame Siva's grade 9 French students participated in our traditional FRANCO-FETE; complete with a performance by French singer Mike Ford and a French feast catered by our own B.O.S.S. Hospitality Department! In May, Madame Brady's grade 12 students participated in a cross-curricular coding project with the senior Computer Science class to create an application that would assist the grade 9's with their acquisition of vocabulary. The project was a great success and firmly established important connections between language learning and programming skills so our students could expand their 21st century competencies and become "future-ready!"

At the end of June we will say "au revoir" to two of our department members. Madame Siva, who joined us in January, will be moving on to Bill Hogarth Secondary School. Merci Madame for all your hard work this semester!

In addition, it is with a heavy heart that we announce that our Department Head since the opening of our school in 2007, Madame Sharma, will be moving on to lead the new Modern Languages department at Bill Hogarth Secondary School in September. Merci Madame for your leadership, enthusiasm and vision these past ten years at B.O.S.S. Bonne Chance!

We look forward to welcoming our new Department Head and returning teacher, Madame Tsatsos, in the fall. Merci to our parent community for your continued support of our endeavors to enrich your child's language learning. Have a wonderful summer!

By, R. Sharma-Mohan
Head of the Moderns Department

Building Leadership While Learning A Language

While teaching English, the ESL Department at Bur Oak Secondary School has been focusing on empowering our students, by teaching them leadership skills and giving them leadership opportunities.

One of the ways we are promoting leadership is by developing relationships with other departments in the school. We worked with the Co-operative Education department, so that students have opportunities to support their fellow classmates in the ESL classroom. Another way to develop students' leadership skills is in the ESL classroom. Students have many different opportunities to work in a team environment. The use of technology in the department also helps students, as they are able to conference and edit their work online.

Students have also participated in the activities that the International Students' Association and Newcomers Network ran this year, which help to integrate our English Language Learners into school life at Bur Oak Secondary School. The International Student Association had some terrific events this year like: Meet and Greet Night, Social Night, Gym Night and Diversity Week. During Diversity Week, the Newcomers Network showcased different countries around the world for their Cultural Mosaic. We encourage our students to be involved in leadership activities in the school and to participate in school life through extra-curricular activities such as sports and clubs.

Thank you to all of the people who have helped support our students this year - Mr. O'Boyle, Mrs. Shah, the ISA and Newcomers Network.

Congratulations to our English language learners, who graduated from the program this year. We had 53 students complete the ESL program! You did a great job this year!

This summer, keep practicing your English. You can go to the Immigrant Youth Centre and join lots of great activities that they have available this summer. You can also go to any of the Markham libraries and choose from their large selection of books.

Another way to learn English is to get out there and practice with your friends!

Have a safe and wonderful summer! See you in September!

By, K. Brown
Head of ESL Department

English Language Learners

The English Language Learner (ELL) Leadership Team has so much to celebrate! Visa and Grade 8 Student and Teacher Orientations, work with students academically and socially. International Student Association (ISA): meet and mingles, game nights, cultural diversity week, red and white day. Newcomer's Network: Cultural Mosaic and individual and group teacher professional development (6 Accommm) were also appreciated.

We celebrate Ms. Donaldson as she embarks on a new chapter in her personal and professional life and Ms. Hina Shah as she is recognized for her service to YRDSB communities at a District level. Congratulations to both of you!

Over 35 students enjoyed the Cultural Mosaic slide show, cakes, and treats in the Career Centre. Thanks to Ms. McAlpine, Ms. Dodham, Ms. Brown, Ms. Wan, Ms. Krabi, Ms. Donaldson and especially Ms. Shah and her settlement worker associate,



Ms. Asavari Datar, and Ms. Rummana Virji, the YRDSB settlement coordinator. Go Bulldogs!

Second Annual Bur Oak's Closet

Thanks to Ms. E. Sloan, Ms. L. Dodham and the student teams for their work concerning the Second Annual Bur Oak's Closet. Our students benefited from hosting an event with light refreshments and activities while referred students choose formal attire and accessories for graduation or prom night. Over 30 dresses were distributed.

We would like to thank the community and our corporate sponsors. Facebook groups were very supportive including the "Cornell Mothers".

Thanks also to our corporate sponsors:

Shopper's Drug Mart

Guidance at Bur Oak

The Bur Oak guidance department continues to be a very busy place as we attempt to provide ongoing support to students, parents/guardians and staff. This year has been no exception as we attempted to:

- ◆ Assist students to become independent decision makers
- ◆ Provide resources and information regarding mental health, pathway planning and goal setting
- ◆ Track students community hours and their academic progress to enable them to graduate with a sense of personal accomplishment
- ◆ Celebrate success through special events and incentives
- ◆ Make connections with parents/guardians and students to support personal and academic needs
- ◆ Help students to engage in individual pathway planning
- ◆ Connect students with additional supports when needed

We encourage families to connect with us online, to read our regular updates in the weekly parent newsletter, to visit the Guidance portion of the school website and to contact us in person. We further suggest that families look forward to evening sessions for parents and guardians. We will provide more information through the weekly parent bulletin that comes with the weekly attendance.

Connect with your community by volunteering in the summer months

Students are encouraged to be involved in the community at all times of the year. Since there are many weeks for vacation time, we challenge students to do something to support their community. It is important that if these volunteering opportunities are to be counted towards Community Hours required for graduation that students think about the eligibility of the activity. A good rule is to check to see if the organization is “not for profit”. Activities should not include things for which there should be payment. If in doubt, check the board website.

Current grade 9s can work towards their “40-9ers” certificate. The deadline for submitting hours to be counted towards this certificate is the second week of September. Did you know that over 150 grade 9 students received this certificate this year? Grade 10 and 11 students should also look for opportunities to increase their employability skills as well as finishing their hours.

Upcoming events for the fall months

Each semester, we have an Awards Ceremony for students who have been awarded with subject awards for this past semester. It is a wonderful experience to share success with families, staff and students.

Grade 12 students begin their final journey to transitioning out of high school into the world of work, apprenticeships or post secondary schooling. We begin to support students from the beginning of the semester with upcoming important dates, resources, personalized meetings, special presentations and visits to Bur Oak from many of the schools which could be considered for the future. We are particularly interested in encouraging students to be “Trailblazers” or to “Put themselves in the driver’s seat” as they are making decisions. We will continue to encourage students to look at the full range of options.

outside of high school including transition plans, collaborative programs and specialized degrees offered through the colleges. Next year we have already booked our times for the College and University Fair and an evening session for parents on “Degrees through the Colleges”. We hope you will join us for this informative evening. We will again invite Skills Canada to visit the school to provide information on the skilled trades.

Grade 9 students will be once again participating in Take Our Kids to Work in early November. What a great opportunity for young teenagers to visit the world of work and experience a glimpse of what adults do on a daily basis.

We are hopeful that our Annual Grade 10 Careers Day will also be a highlight for next year’s students as it was for our present students. Community members have been particularly supportive in assisting us to provide a rich variety of discussions for the students.

Stay Connected

We are particularly happy with the expansion of our Guidance portion of the website. Check out the sections that relate to your own student but also the portions created especially for parents and guardians. We always post our presentations so that families will know what students hearing— community hours, OSAP, how to do comprehensive research. Another new section was added to our website this year to highlight supports that families can access if they need help.

We will also continue to provide a few evening sessions for parents to learn how to navigate the research tools for personal pathway planning, course selection and future post secondary goals.

Please encourage your students to connect with us through *Coach Guidance*. This is a messaging system where we can send out information that is specifically for each grade level.

Special Thanks

We would like to thank all of the community support organizations who have given time to our students this year including the social worker and inclusivity and cultural liaisons. Special thanks to our community settlement worker, Hina Shah, who comes in each week to support our newcomers and their families. With our ELL leadership team, the newcomers network continued to flourish this past year to assist students to connect with their new school. Each year we have dozens of students who join Bur Oak from another country or province.

Equity @ BOSS

The 2017-2018 Equity Council was a dedicated group of approximately twenty students who worked together to promote equity at Bur Oak Secondary School. Led by Casey Yu, Mayuri Punithan and Justin Zhong, Equity Council organized and hosted a variety of events to help raise awareness about issues related to diversity and inclusivity.



In October, the “We’re a Culture, Not a Costume” campaign helped start conversations about what is & what is not a costume and cultural appropriation.



In December, Equity Council’s raised awareness about domestic-based violence through our “White Ribbon” campaign. Students created a captivating memorial in our library for the victims of the December 6th tragedy at Ecole Polytechnique. The students also held a bake sale that raised more than \$300 for Yellow Brick House.



During our “Dress Loud” events, Equity Council raised awareness to support people with hearing loss. BOSS dressed loud by wearing their wackiest and loudest clothing on May 11th.

Ms. McCombes and Ms. Wong (teacher advisors) would like to thank all Equity Council members for their dedication and hard work this year. As we say good-bye to our Grade 12 members and wish them well, we look forward to working with Nausherwan Butt and Mahak Kaur, our Equity Council co-directors for the 2017-2018 school year.



In March, twice-Juno nominated singer-songwriter and community organizer Alysha Brilla visited BOSS. This Indian-Tanzanian Canadian artist shared her messages about social justice, equity and identity with Grade 9 students and members of Equity Council, Global Action, GSA, and ISA.

Global Action #10yearsofglobalaction

What a tremendous 10th year it was! We started by celebrating all the work that BOSS students have done over the years to raise awareness locally and globally and the money we have raised to take action on initiatives chosen by council members over the years. Suffice to say, the BOSS community should be proud of our successes.

This year was no different as we selected a focus - the war in Syria and the local and global impact of the conflict - and got to work. Regardless of our particular focus for the year, we always maintain our support of Free The Children (FTC), so we donated \$400 to FTC earlier in the year. After our successful Holiday Raffle, we donated \$1,100 to Lifeline Syria to support its work with refugees living in Toronto. Later in the year, we were fortunate to have a visit with a refugee from Syria who shared details of his experience working with children in the camps in Lebanon for displaced Syrians as well as the personal journey he undertook to come to Canada. The insight he offered was really valuable as was his recommendation of a grassroots organization working on education projects with Syrian children in these camps. As a result, we were able to donate \$900 to Basmeh and Zeitooneh, a non-profit working directly with children. We were also able to make a \$300 donation to Free The Children to maintain our commitment to the projects championed by this tremendous Canadian charitable organization.

Special thanks this year to **Aiman Khan** and **Tharmithaa Tharumaraaj** our co-directors, and best wishes to Tharmithaa and the other grade 12s as they leave BOSS for post secondary next year.

White Pine Readers



Ten years of White Pine Readers @ BOSS and we celebrated in style! In case you missed the announcement on May 17th: *Fifteen Lanes* by J.S. Laidlaw won this year's White Pine Award. This was the culmination of a year's worth of reading and talking about the 10 nominees for this year's reader's choice award.

Here are some details from this year's activities:

- 46 students participated by reading 3 or more of the nominated books
- 12 students read all 10 books
- Grade 12 student **Manpreet Jagdev** a member of the club since grade 9, earned the honour of reading all 10 books for the 4th year
- 14 staff members read and shared their responses to the novels this year and we really appreciated the enthusiasm they brought to the book battles
- Special thanks to **Ms. deVries** who has been a staff reader par excellence for the past 10 years
- Congratulations to **Tanya Arbabian** who entered the design contest for this year's award and won! A framed copy of her design was presented to author J.S. Laidlaw at the ceremony in May
- **Fazila Shaikh, Aun Hussain** and **Yu Mao** participated in the provincial celebration at Harbourfront by carrying signs in the awards ceremony
- Thanks also to **Ms. Marinelli** who has dedicated many (many) hours of reading as a member of the White Pine selection committee

As you can see, it was an epic celebration of BOSS's 10 year participation in this provincial reading program. Stay tuned for next year's reading list to be revealed in October.

By, K. Kostandoff
Head of the Library Department

Library Learning Commons

Everyday is a new experience in our Library. From classes learning about online data bases, to students catching up on homework, who knows what will happen in the space of a day! Here a few things to keep in mind over the summer months:

- Reading can take you away from the four walls of your bedroom, from the humidity of a sticky day, from irritating siblings. Go for it!
- Our website is open to you 24/7 with access to online databases, the Toronto Star online daily and emagazines check us out @ bit.ly/BOSSlibrary
- Visit your local library and see what's going on! They are likely to have volunteer opportunities, great spaces to meet friends and stay cool, and maker spaces where you can learn a new skill or borrow cool stuff.

Enjoy the summer months and see you in September BOSS.

By, K. Kostandoff

Student Voice: A Place to Learn, Succeed and Grow

Please consider the voices of our students who are benefitting from supports available through BOSS's Student Success Team and the Personalized Alternative Program:

- "As a new student coming to BOSS in Grade 12, Room 2005 has given me the positive attitude and more motivation to come to school and do work."--Grade 12 student
- "To me, Room 2005 means inspiration. Really it all about acceptance and growth. Teachers help inspire me to do better and grow, while still being myself. I feel safe and accepted to be myself."--Grade 11 student
- "This place means a lot to me. I know I can always come here and have friends, people to talk to and give me advice. I can get work done. I love this room!"--Grade 11 student
- "I have earned more credits this year than in the past because I have received more help in this room than I have before from other programs. I showed more interest in catching up on credits than I usually do in ways such as going to Dual Credit and working at my first paid job."--Grade 11 student
- "Room 2005 is about being able to be yourself, motivation, positive attitude, safety, the importance of school and personal growth and development."--Grade 11 student
- "Last year, I stopped attending school. Coming to BOSS, I have experienced success because BOSS is a better school and gets to help students more. I get much more help from my teacher than last year. I think Room 2005 has the best service for students who need help, because teachers work hard and makes sure students pass or graduate."--Grade 12 student

For more information, please speak to Ms. Kedey (katherine.kedey@yrdsb.ca), Head of Personalized Alternative Education or Ms. Goodridge (carmella.goodridge@yrdsb.ca), Student Success Teacher.

By, K. Kedey

Computer Studies Department

The Computer Studies department enjoyed a wonderful year of learning. One of our continued areas of growth occurred with Mr. Fernandes' Grade 12 Computer Science classes working on cross-curricular modern learning projects with both the Geography and French classes. The Computer-Geography project focused on creating a travel itinerary planner and the Computer-French project developed a learning tool to assist our Grade 9 students with their challenging components of their curriculum. Both projects presented an opportunity for the students to engage in an authentic, technology-driven learning experience. Along the way, a mixed group of students learned about the importance of 21st century Learning Skills. We are now hoping to utilize these software tools in future French and geography classes here at BOSS.

Pictured below are a student group working on their Modern Learning Computer-French project.



In our junior classes, Mr. Cuyugan's Grade 10 students once again participated in the University of Waterloo's Beaver Computing Challenge. This year's contest proved quite difficult, but our student, Arthur Lu, was able to place on the Honour Roll. To further enhance our introductory course, next year's Grade 10 classes will be using the Python programming language as their primary development tool. Besides being a more modern tool, this language also will allow our younger students to participate in more external contests.

In extracurricular activities, the Computer Studies department started a new afterschool initiative called BreezeCode. This event was geared at introducing junior female students to the exciting world of Computer Science. A series of student-led seminars, run by senior female students, Jenny Ho, Willa Kong, Julia Ren and Aalea Ally, taught younger female students how to create JavaScript programs and Mobile games. On the final week, the group was joined by parent volunteer, Ms. Sud, a professional programmer who shared her wealth of experiences and provide guidance and motivation for these future coders.

Pictured below is parent volunteer, Ms. Sud, a professional programmer, sharing her experiences with the students attending our BreezeCode seminars.



Finally, the BOSS Computer Programming Club, led by Mr. Fernandes, continued to grow with an enthusiastic group of students coming out every Tuesday after school. The club participated in an number of learning adventures, including programming contests, teaching each other advanced concepts, conducting side projects such as hologram creation and learning from guest speakers.

Health and Physical Education Department

The Physical and Health Education department had a great second semester. The Healthy Active Living students developed their skills in a variety of team and individual sports such as basketball, volleyball, soccer, football and badminton. Fitness students learned and refined their lifting technique and created and implemented their own personal fitness program.

All Phys. Ed. students worked hard to improve their physical fitness levels from the beginning of the semester to the end. Students at the end of the semester evaluated and reflected on their cardiorespiratory, flexibility, muscular endurance, muscular power and agility components. Great improvements were made by all!

Be sure to stay active throughout the summer. There are countless things you can do, especially with nice weather. Go for a walk, ride a bike, play recreational sports, try geo-caching or hit the beach. One opportunity available for teens is a free daytime membership at Goodlife Fitness clubs. Teens can enjoy the facilities and workout for free during the work day.

Athletics

The BOSS Bulldogs have had a great athletic year. We have had 22 teams competing in individual and team competition within the York Region Athletic Association (YRAA). Here are some highlights from our year in athletics.

Track and Field

Another successful Track and Field season for Bur Oak Athletes. 40 Bur Oak student athletes represented BOSS at 6 Track and Field meets. Special recognition goes to Ahad Naim, Saif Rajaibi, Matthew Morgan, Adonis Lau, and Sehan Randil. These 5 Athletes represented York Region at OFSAA Central's Track and Field meet. Special mention goes to Sehan who qualified for the all Ontario finals in Belleville for the triple jump event.

Badminton

This year's badminton season was a success, with many of both Junior and Senior events making it through to round 1 and round 2 competitions. Though competition was not as tough as previous years, our players competed with no less vigor and enthusiasm. Connor and Kaitlin Mak made it to OFSAA and debuted with a 5th place finish. Returning veteran, Vania Wu, partnered up with junior, Maggie Wong, to cap off OFSAA with a bronze medal in a flight competition.

Girls Flag Football

The Varsity Girls Flag Football team started its inaugural season with many girls excited and ready to play. The league games helped them learn the game, the positions and the skills necessary for them to come out with a win at our end of the year tournament against Tommy Douglas SS with a score of 20-0!!

The team also was the recipient for the Bill Butcher Team Character Award. This award is given to the team that exemplifies outstanding sportsmanship and is voted on by the other schools in the league. Congratulations girls!

Mountain Biking

This is the 3rd year we have had a mountain bike team here at BOSS. We had one returning team member from last season and 3 new participants trying the sport for the first time. We got to try a new course this year at Coulson Hill and cycle through a trail littered with trilliums at Ravenshoe Forest. Hopefully we will have new participants join next year and this group of new mountain bike enthusiasts continue the sport next season as well.

Junior Boys Basketball

This past year saw tremendous growth for the Junior Boys Basketball team. With a number of returning players we decided to enter our team in Tier 1 and through hard work and dedication managed a 3rd place finish with a 7-1 record. A highlight for our team was a come from behind win at Bill Crothers that saw the team erase a 15 point fourth quarter deficit. Eventually our team ended the season with a quarter-final loss in the playoffs. Our team's most valuable player was Jacob Tran and our most improved player was Dylan Sharma. Thanks goes to the tireless efforts of the coaches Mr. Fernandes and Mr. Carnevale. We look forward to continuing our progress next year at the senior level.

Junior Girls Volleyball

The junior girls volleyball had an extremely successful season in tier 2 competition. The team finished 9-1 and first in their division during regular season play. We were one of the favorites going into the championship tournament and made it to the championship match against Renaissance ESC. The team played a hard fought match, but ended up losing in 2 very tightly contested sets 25-22 and 26-24. Congratulations to all the players for making it to the finals!

Health and Physical Education Department Cont'd

Junior Boys Soccer

Another great season by a Bulldog team whose strengths were team defending and perseverance. Tough loss to Langstaff SS in the playoffs ended a very competitive season. Future looks promising for Bur Oak Soccer.

Boys Varsity Cricket

This year saw a lot of new faces on the team with a lot of our senior players moving on seeing a transition like never before. Although the team was filled with a lot of raw talent, the team was not able to get back to the championships rounds. With a young and talented team, Bur Oak cricket is hoping to get back to the level in which we are accustomed to. We wish all grade 12's moving on good luck in their next chapters, and look forward to the younger players developing to grow and bring back the Championship level Bur Oak is used to.

Junior Boys Volleyball

The junior boys volleyball team had a very competitive season in tier 1 competition. We hit our stride late in the season, finishing 5-5 and just sneaking into the playoffs. The team played well in the playoff tournament losing in the semi-final round to the eventual tier 1 champions from Richmond Hill. We have a strong group of players returning next season and expect to be in contention again.

Special mention goes to our Athletes of the year as voted by the coaches of Bur Oak Athletics.

Athletes of the Year

Most Promising Grade 9 - Female: Christina Wan



Most Promising Grade 9 - Male: Connor Mak



Junior Athlete of the Year -
Maggie Wong
Junior Athlete of the Year - Male: Daniel



Female:
Junior Athlete
Chow

Senior Female Athlete of the Year - Naqia Najafi



Senior Male Athlete of the Year - Saifedine Rjaibi



Outstanding Contribution to Ath-



letics - Savanna Tu-Tse

By, A. Ebisuzaki
Head of the Physical Education Department





Bur Oak Music Department Award Winners 2016 - 2017

Best Musician	Tobias Hobbins
Best Brass	Jeffrey Li
Best Woodwind	Alice Shin
Best Percussion	Luxman Sumanen
Best Vocalist	Cheryl Wee
Most Improved	Mika Yara
Accompanist	Amanda Mac
Concert Band	Apharnaa Suthananthan
Concert Choir	Michelle Chow
Junior Jazz Band	Aditya Nathan
Senior Jazz Band	Kevin Chu
Focus	Ivan Li
Symphonic Band	Kristal Lee
Senior Choir	Michelle Li
Senior Wind Ensemble	Raphael Ho
Rookie of the Year	Sophia Li
Music Council Award	Samuel Lee, Michelle Li
Spirit	Kyle Su, Abhinav Asija, Suruthi Nithiyanandan, Justin Hoac, Victor Hoac, Timothy Veera
Character Award	Ben Feng, Benny Luo, Ainley Pena

This was another outstanding year in the Bur Oak Music Department. We organized several events from bake sales and social nights through to concerts and our annual awards banquet. Our two main concerts (Winterlude and Spring Rhapsody) were, once again, sold out events, and all of the ensembles demonstrated exceptional musicianship in their performances. Sincere thanks and congratulations goes to our entire music council, led by Michelle Li and Sam Lee, for their hard work and dedication. Next year, the music council will be led by Luxman Sumanen, Ainley Pena, Sanjana Illeperuma, and Cheryl Wee.

Our outstanding performing ensembles were featured in two main concerts this year -- Winterlude and Spring Rhapsody. In both cases, the groups played to sold-out and very appreciative audiences. In addition, the results our ensembles received in competitions and festivals this year continue to be superior. Below is a listing of awards and accomplishments this year.

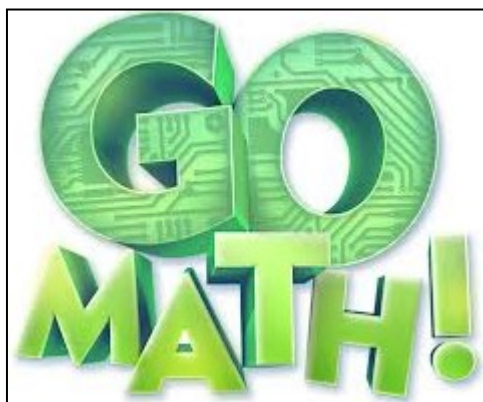
All in all, it has been a wonderful year of growth and success in the music department and we wish all of our musicians a happy and restful summer.



2016 - 2017 Festival Results

Kiwanis Music Festival	3 Platinum Awards, 4 Gold Awards, 1 Invitation to Provincial Finals
OBA Regional Festival	Gold Award and Invitation to National Finals
York Region Music Alive	2 Gold Awards, 5 Platinum Awards, 7 Invitations to National Finals
MusicFest National Finals	Silver Award

Math is alive and doing very well



Students have taken advantage of our enrichment programs provided through the Math Club, as well as the opportunities to participate in the writing of various contests sponsored by the University of Waterloo. We had a tremendous turnout this year with over 300 students writing these various contests!

We are especially proud to share that our students continue to receive medals and certificates of distinction at all grade levels for their outstanding results in the University of Waterloo Math contests! A special congratulations to our grade 12 Euclid team who scored 7th in our zone and 30th in Canada from over 1600 schools!!!

In addition, we are pleased to be running the Advanced Placement Calculus course for the 2017-2018 school year.

By, B. Merchant
Head of the Math Department

Social Sciences and Humanities – Family Studies

The Social Sciences and Humanities Department has been busy this semester. Grade 9 students dabbled in personal exploration and development by reflecting on the realities of life. They had fun experimenting with foods, fashion, interior design and parenting. The Nutrition and Health program showcased culinary art through cupcake wars and iron chef competitions. Students learned the importance of healthy living and were given the tools to make better choices. In an effort to maintain community connections, Nutrition and Health students donated all proceeds from their production line to a charitable organization. Fashion students were busy, creating clothing lines and tie dying t-shirts. Students started off making hooded sweaters and some ended with wedding dresses. They completed the semester with Vogue magazine covers, modeling their own designs. Social Science students investigated societal issues such as education, addiction, youth violence and familial abuse. They analysed human behaviour and mental disorders by studying childcare, serial killers and gangs. Students in this program are exposed to the realities of our world and were encouraged to formulate predications and opinions on how these entities would impact individuals, families and societies.

By, F. Parker
Head of Family Studies Department

It's hard to believe another school year is almost completed and everyone is preparing for exams and with great expectations for the summer. We continue to see rapid technological advances and Bur Oak Tech Department has been part of this change. According to Policy Horizons Canada, "the success of a knowledge economy depends in large part on the ability to adapt, transmit and share information".

We continue to see rapid advances in information communications technologies and these are resulting in greater globalization of work and production. With this in mind, courses of studies in Communications Technology and Technological design have focused on the Ministry of Education fundamental purpose to "provide students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enhance their ability to achieve success in secondary school, the workplace, postsecondary education or training, and daily life". Listed below are some of the accomplishments this year:

- ◆ Students used Project management software to manage projects
- ◆ Designed logos for a company.
- ◆ Developed info-graphics to address global issues
- ◆ Explored documentary film making addressing issues like Culture Clash and Social Media's impact on their own lives
- ◆ Designed and made prototypes of consumer products using CAD design software.
- ◆ Students worked in Virtual teams using Google to provide potent response to the challenges associated with today's Global economy. They also used Google Analytics to provide immediate feedback to projects they worked on.

Have a safe and great summer.












By, G. Niles
Head of the Tech Department



Co-Operative Education: The Real Facts



Organizational Development <p>"The workplace changes and you have to learn to adapt and interact with professionals. I get to use skills from skills and apply to important situations and learn lessons I'll use the rest of my life."</p>  <p>R.H.</p>	Dental Assistant <p>"At school we gain knowledge. At co-op we learn to apply it. For most of us, this is our first job experience and a chance to interact with others workers."</p>  <p>R.T.</p>	Veterinary Assistant <p>"Through co-op, I've gained a better understanding of what the working environment would be like, and just how important it is to be able to properly communicate to a wide variety of people."</p>  <p>K.C.</p>
Media & Event Planner <p>"Co-op has made me realize that some skills can't be taught in school. Sometimes you need to just go out and learn them by yourself, and co-op has helped me do just that."</p>  <p>A.H.</p>	Teacher Assistant <p>"As a first year co-op student I learned to always be motivated and focused. Co-op program, and it will pay off in the long run."</p>  <p>R.M.</p> <p><small>Photo by Mosborne01 - Own work CC BY-SA 3.0</small></p>	Pharmacist Assistant <p>"A lot of kids have an idea of what they want to be, but don't have the professional experience. I got a taste of the real sense of what this job is like."</p>  <p>S.J.</p> <p><small>Photo / CC BY</small></p>
Automotive Body Repair <p>"Co-Op really helped me pick my career path. I wasn't sure before, but this gave me a taste of what this work actually will be."</p>  <p>P.K.</p> <p><small>Photo by Billy Ho / CC BY</small></p>	Teacher's Aide <p>"I've gained the experience that has helped confirm my decision to become a teacher, and a connection with a group of students that I didn't expect."</p>  <p>S.P.</p> <p><small>Photo By Don O'Brien is licensed under CC BY-Sa-4.0</small></p>	Composite Technician: Laminator <p>"I learned how companies have to work together and utilize technology to plan for what will become the new realities in the future."</p>  <p>W.C.</p>

Students find their path by doing – *Because Experience Matters.*

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

Wall of Remembrance

In November, the History department once again mounted our annual “Wall of Honor” in the main foyer. This display was an opportunity for the Bur Oak community to pay tribute to staff’s family members who served Canada’s Armed Forces. Our school has connections to veterans who served in both World Wars, the Korean War and various peacekeeping missions. Some of us are also related to active members of the Armed Forces who continue to serve today. We would like to thank our students, for volunteering their time to mount the display. We would also like to thank all staff members who shared their families’ stories with us.



Bur Oak was also very honoured to host MS Joan Emode as our guest speaker during our Remembrance Day assemblies.



On December 13, 2016, BOSS hosted its first ever TEDxYouth@BOSS event. Initiated by a Gr. 11 student, Sarayu Chityala, TEDxYouth@BOSS gave our students an amazing opportunity to engage with the theme of “What Now?”. This event involved multiple departments and many student volunteers and the support of many teachers. It was an inspiring evening where students, staff, and community partners came together to listen and engage in conversations about the 11 thoughtful TED talks from our students. We are hoping that TEDxYouth@BOSS will inspire more TEDx events in other schools.



HISTORY HAPPENINGS CONT'D

Heritage Fair

This semester, students in Grade 10 Academic History classes had the opportunity to participate in a Heritage Fair. The Heritage Fair was a York Region District School Board event that provided students with the opportunity to engage in historical inquiry to explore stories of our diverse population. Judges from both the school and the Board came to evaluate presenters and 22 students were invited to represent our school at the YRDSB fair. Of the 22 school participants 9 participated in the Regional Fair, with 3 students being awarded special recognition awards. We are extremely proud of our students and the efforts they displayed in their presentations. It is incredible to see students engaged with a part of Canadian History long past and doing their best to engage their peers in Historical Inquiry.



Vimy Ridge

In April, eight students from B.O.S.S took part in the commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy by travelling to France and England along with hundreds of students from York Region for 9 days of in depth historical study. The weather was incredible allowing students to visit various historical sites in France like the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial, the Juno Beach Centre and the Vimy 100 celebrations. Students gained a richer understanding of the sacrifices of our veterans and the role Canada has played in global conflicts over the last century.

By, A. MacInnes
Head of the History Department



Geography: Where It's At!

Geography, by its nature, is an exploration of motion and change. This year the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Bur Oak Secondary School has continued to provide students with innovative and refreshing options for exploring our world.

This year, we were excited to offer two courses to our senior students: Spatial Technologies in Action (Geomatics: CGO 4M) and Forces of Nature (Physical processes and Disasters: CGF 3M). These courses are typically offered on alternating years and it has been a while since they have had enough student interest to run. We will also be offered Travel and Tourism (CGG 3O) and our premier course World Issues (CGW 4U/C).

Additionally, in keeping with the York Region District School Board's three foci of mathematics, modern learning and mental health and wellness, our department was able to make use of virtual reality equipment for viewing the world from a different perspective. The VR equipment has been an exciting addition which students have been eager to try out. Several classes have worked on collaborative projects with the computer science department, modern languages, social studies and history.

In terms of Mental Health, Geography continues to make use of field studies to both deepen the understanding of geographical concepts and enrich our wellness. The senior courses were able to take advantage of a flight over York Region in Cessna airplanes (CGO 4M), hiking at the edge of the Niagara Escarpment (CGF 3M), visiting WholeFoods Food Market and a local farm/maple sugar bush, and visiting the Toronto Zoo (CGG 3O). Students in World Issues (CGW 4U) were treated to a guest lecture from world renowned conflict studies professor Dr. Gwynne Dyer and were offered an opportunity to participate in a national global solutions symposium wherein they proposed meaningful solutions to some of the world's worst challenges.

Finally, the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies is in a time of change as it welcomes Mr. Carnevale as the interim subject head as Mr. Hurlington takes a leave of absence to work on his doctoral degree. We say sad goodbye to Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Dronova as they end their time at BOSS and extend a warm welcome Michelle Rospo (from Keswick High School) and Michael Ariganello (from Stephen Lewis Secondary School) who will be teaching in the department next year.



World Issues at the Global Solutions Symposium



Samuel Lee with Geomatics in Flight over Southern Ontario

Geography: Where It's At!



Geography of Food with the classes contribution to the Annual Food Drive



Forces of Nature and Geomatics at the edge of the Niagara Escarpment

By, K. Hurlington
Head of the Geography Department