



Just-Us Youth Day 2019

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario hosted its annual Just-Us Youth Day on Tuesday, April 9, a symposium for nearly 250 Grade 10 students from across the Board's ten secondary schools. The day gives students an opportunity to learn about the good work being done by not-for-profit organizations and individuals committed to social justice initiatives. Each year the presentations are developed around a theme; this year's theme was "Making Change Joyfully," an extension of the CDSBEO spiritual theme, *Be Holy – Joy springs from a loving heart!*

Catholic Student Trustee, Michael Fenn, outlined the specifics of the day, which acts to inspire students to become informed and act on social justice causes. Students began the morning with a liturgy, followed by a keynote address by Jacob Moon.

"CDSBEO students were truly blessed to host Jacob Moon at this year's Just-Us Youth Day," began Trustee Fenn. "Not only is Jacob a wonderful musician, he also brought forward a truly inspirational message about his personal experiences with involvement in social justice initiatives."

Students attended additional workshops in the afternoon, where presenters discussed how they can make a difference in local and global communities. The workshops were designed to move students to act on social justice causes such as poverty, inclusion, human rights, Indigenous issues, and community outreach. Presentations were given by a wide variety of groups including: House of Lazarus (Community Outreach Mission), SchoolBox, Lanark County Support Services, Youth Ottawa, and Development and Peace – Caritas Canada.

The day was organized and facilitated at all levels by the Catholic Student Senate and the Department of Religious and Family Life Education. The Senate has representation from all CDSBEO Catholic secondary schools under the leadership of Trustee Fenn. The planning and organizing of the event gave the students an opportunity to demonstrate their leadership skills.

Trustee Fenn noted, "I'm so proud I was able to be part of such a great day. Being the emcee was a great experience, and witnessing our Student Senate work together to ensure that this day ran smoothly was certainly a highlight for me. The keynote speaker and the session leaders have inspired all of us to put our faith into action."

"Students in our school system are constantly encouraged to live as examples of our Catholic faith. Students and staff of the CDSBEO are truly social justice warriors."

"Congratulations to all of you on a successful event," noted Trustee Robin Reil. "I have been to every one of the Just-Us Youth events, and they have all been excellent. It is truly a worthwhile event for our students."



Eastern Ontario Skilled Trades Competition & CDSBEO Experiential Learning Career Fairs

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario, through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) and experiential learning, has played a key role in the planning and delivery of annual skills competitions for students in the CDSBEO. Over the last 12 years, the Board, in partnership with other school boards, has organized and planned the annual Eastern Ontario Skills Competition at St. Lawrence College in Cornwall. Additionally, this school year, two Experiential Learning Career Fairs were organized to encourage career/life planning, career exploration, specialized learning programs, and career opportunities.

CDSBEO OYAP Coordinator Dan Lortie, presented details on this year's Eastern Ontario Skills Competition to the Board of Trustees, which was hosted in partnership with the Upper Canada District School Board on Tuesday, February 26, 2019.

This year's event featured 16 competitions at four locations in Cornwall. The hub of activity took place at St. Lawrence College, and included categories such as auto service technician, team carpentry, house building, cabinet making, welding, TV video production, small engines, photography, and drama.

Other events including hairstyling and esthetics, took place at Elegance College, with culinary events at St. Matthew Catholic Secondary School and the Environmental competition at the St. Lawrence River Institute.

"CDSBEO students did very well in many areas, winning medals in 13 areas of the competition, and in some cases CDSBEO students and teams won multiple medals in the same category," noted Mr. Lortie.

The CDSBEO had 96 participants from all ten secondary schools. Overall, the Board did extremely well, with many gold, silver and bronze finalists.

St. Michael Catholic High School student Robert Leach spoke to the Board about how the competition helped to reinforce his interest in a career pathway in carpentry. Throughout high school, he has participated in the OYAP program, as well as the Dual-Credit program through Algonquin College.

"I was so thankful to be able to do the Dual-Credit program to achieve Level One Certified Carpentry during my grade 12 year," noted Leach. "Dual-Credit provides books, tuition, transportation costs, and other materials for students in the program. This year, I was able to compete in the skills competition at St. Lawrence College, and was so pleased to have won first place in individual carpentry."



Students Aleasha Cuillerier, Justin Gratton Stewart, Matthew Laframboise and Angus Lynch (an international student from Australia), all members of the St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary School Construction Team, spoke about their experience at the competition.

"The skills competition was an amazing opportunity for our group," began Laframboise. "It feels wonderful that we won the competition, because we won for our school."

This year, for the Culinary Arts Competition, the Board invited Indigenous Elder Manitok Thompson to speak to the students, and provide a bannock demonstration. For the competition, students were asked to create a traditional Mohawk meal which included salmon and wild rice.

CDSBEO Career Fairs

An abundance of career sectors were represented for CDSBEO intermediate and secondary students, who attended career fairs hosted at Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School (April 2) and St. Michael Catholic High School (April 3).

"The fairs were intended to showcase local employment opportunities and to bring in very hands-on exhibits," explained Lortie. "We had over 30 exhibitors, and well over 900 students in attendance at each location."

Students from all ten Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario secondary schools had the opportunity to visit one of the two events. The fairs aimed at helping students learn about available career options, and to discuss opportunities and pathways with represented sectors.

Women in Trades was also a focus at the fairs, with workshops for female students to learn more about career opportunities in trades sectors. Guest speaker Emily Chung, an auto service technician and business owner, presented at the workshop. Her message inspired girls to consider the myriad of available skilled-trades occupations, as well as Specialist High Skills Major programs.

Chair Todd Lalonde thanked the students, and Mr. Lortie, for their presentation.

"You should all be so proud of your accomplishments. We see the medals that you've brought with you this evening, and it is truly a testament to the education success we want our students to achieve. Congratulations to you all."