

GRADUATION 2005

The graduates of 2005, characteristic of their positive, forward-thinking, service-oriented mentality, helped to implement a series of graduation events fitting for their transition into higher learning.

The class participated in a leadership training session in January and defined their vision in terms of the legacy they wished to leave at NCCI for the remainder of the year. Included in that vision was a commitment to class unity and fellowship and a number of ideas for service that all graduates could participate in for the second half of the year.

To that end, they divided themselves up onto different committees and came together weekly to perform service according to their committee description. These committees included a Grad/Service Committee (helped to organize all matters related to graduation, performed service weekly by working with the elementary school students); the Capabilities Council (met weekly with various students to discuss behaviours and assist them in changing certain behaviours); and the Beautification Committee (worked on various projects designed to increase the physical beauty of the school). Each of these projects had a noticeable effect on the physical, emotional, and spiritual environment of the school. The graduates definitely left a legacy and a very positive one at that.

Towards the end of the year, the remarkable group of youth decided that rather than spend a lot of money on a grad trip to Quebec City as originally planned, they would prefer to spend a weekend at the Wildfire Outdoor Education Centre in Wyevale, Ontario. By revising their plans, they were able to ensure that all graduates could attend, that they would be in one location which would contribute to unity building, and it would provide them with uninterrupted time to work on their grad performance and reflect upon the year.

The Wildfire trip was very successful and the bonds of friendship were further cemented throughout the weekend. In addition, they were able to prepare and practice a very creative dance number for the grad performance. They showed remarkable maturity, insight, and wisdom in their reflection session as a group, and were extremely well-behaved throughout the entire weekend.

The grad ceremonies began with the grad performance Friday, June 3rd at the London Convention Centre. Though many graduates were featured throughout the performance as individual acts, it was their culminating skit and song that was the highlight of the evening.

The actual graduation took place the next morning, June 4th, with the presentation of the Honour Roll, Principal's Honour Roll, various awards, and all the diplomas being passed out. In addition, the graduates had requested Mrs. Pat Cameron, the former vice-principal of NCCI, to be a guest speaker. She delivered an inspiring, moving and captivating speech in which she outlined the various qualities these graduates had acquired in order to be servants to humanity.

The graduation dinner, Valedictorian speeches, World Citizenship Awards and a dance were all held that evening at the London Convention Centre. Valedictorians Nikita Shiel-Rolle and Thomas Anglin provided a great deal of entertainment with a speech written as a dialogue between them in preparing for their speech for the grad ceremony. They reminisced about their time at NCCI, shared insight into the things they learned and spoke about the future in store for them as world citizens.

In keeping with their legacy of caring, respect and thoughtfulness, the graduates decided to honour each of their grade 12 teachers with a special award that recognized individual qualities of teaching excellence. The teachers were very moved and very grateful.

The World Citizenship Awards, the highest honour bestowed upon graduates of NCCI, were handed out to 7 individuals. The recipients were: Denissa St. Laurent, Thomas Anglin, Nikita Sheil-Rolle, Livia Vanderdusen, Bronwyn Proctor, Nassim Collishaw, and Miquela Sheper. Many congratulations to them.



The entire evening was capped off with a dance, hosted and DJ'ed by former graduate Jamal Neufeld. The graduates were joyful and happy to graduate, but also very emotional as the evening drew to a close and they were faced with saying goodbye to one another and their teachers.

Overall, this was an extremely remarkable and inspiring group of young people who demonstrated their immense capacity throughout the entire year and have left NCCI a wonderful legacy for future grads to look up to. We wish you the best of luck, graduates, and have the highest hopes for you that you will fulfill your destinies as agents of change and world citizens.

By: Jennifer Flynn-Clark, Teacher

DATES TO REMEMBER

September:

28 – PD Day Classes for (Grades 7-12) end at 12:00pm
Elementary classes continue as usual

October:

10 – School Closed (Thanksgiving Day)
20 – School (Grades 7-12) closed (Baha'i Holy Day)
Elementary students have adult supervised activity day

November:

2 – PD Day Classes for (Grades 7-12) end at 12:00pm
Elementary classes continue as usual
19 – Open House from 2:00 - 4:00pm.
Fall Showcase 7:30pm

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NANCY CAMPBELL
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NCCI NEWS

NANCY CAMPBELL COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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Colombian Children Take Back Their Lives

Nancy Campbell Collegiate Institute hosted a presentation on helping ex-combatant children from Colombia reintegrate into civilian life. Jorge Visbal Martelo, the Colombian Ambassador to Canada, was present at the event as well staff of the International Organization for Migration, based in Colombia. This organization, with assistance from the international community, helps young victims of war in Colombia to reintegrate into civil society. NCCI students, who also attended the event, were given the opportunity to learn about the situation in Colombia and the suffering of the Colombian people over the last 40 years.

Victim of war, seventeen-year-old Diana Carolina, told the audience her experience of becoming an armed combatant in Colombia. She became involved with an illegal guerrilla group when she was 12 years old. "Lack of family support led me to join an armed group," she said through an interpreter. "I joined willingly and thought I was fighting for our country to obtain peace. I later realized I had given up my youth for a cause I no longer could support. I hope my story helps young people everywhere to value what they have. Many children in my country have no homes due to extreme poverty; they don't even know what a school looks like. Value your parents and don't make big mistakes that you will later regret."

According to UNICEF and Human Rights Watch, between 6,000 and 11,000 Colombian children are involved in illegal armed groups. The main reasons for children ending up in the ranks of these groups include family violence, lack of economic opportunities, failure in school, feelings of social exclusion, the need for recognition, adventure or

independence, and to provide financial support to their families. In some cases, the children are abducted and forced to join the illegal armed groups or handed over by the family in exchange for financial support.

Ambassador Visbal Martelo stated, "I am proud to have my fellow countrywomen tell you about the work they are doing to help de-mobilized youth return to normal lives. Although there has been some success there is still much work to be done and very few resources to accomplish all that needs to be done. Our country recognizes and is not denying its responsibility in this situation; however, we also see this as a shared responsibility with the international community."

The Ambassador brought the presentation to Nancy Campbell Collegiate Institute because of the relationship the school has developed with the Colombian Embassy in Ottawa. The school is working to build bridges between NCCI and other Latin American countries as well, including Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico and Venezuela. Gordon Naylor, the Executive Director of NCCI, stated, "We are pleased to have a good relationship with the Colombian Ambassador, and believe in the work he is doing to generate awareness and raise consciousness of some of the challenges the youth of Colombia are facing."

Diana's story clearly made an impact on the audience and showed the NCCI students that not all children have the opportunities they do. Following the presentation, some students were moved to express their interest in fundraising for the program as one of their future international service projects.

By: John Pammer, Director of Communications



Inspiring academic excellence within a clear moral framework

Learning Leadership Through Service

In April, the Grade 11 World Citizenship Curriculum (WCC) class participated in its annual service project by taking part in one of two service trips – an international trip to the Bahamas and a regional trip to Orillia, Ontario.

NCCI Service Trip to the Bahamas

The Grade 11 World Citizenship Class goes on a service trip every year as part of the curriculum. This year, sixteen students traveled with four chaperones to the Bahamas to continue with some of the service that had been offered there by last year's class. Our service trip was a life-altering experience that passed by so quickly that it seems to have only lasted a couple of days.

We left on the 16th of April and returned on the 30th. While we were there, we were warmly welcomed and helped by the Shiel-Rolle family and the entire Bahá'í community in the Bahamas. Our chaperones - Ms. Ghadirian, Ms. Rowlands, Mr. Weber, and Gr. 12 student, Nikita Shiel-Rolle - were wonderful leaders and helped us to the best of their ability in everything we did.

For the first couple of days after our arrival, our service took place in the HIV/Aids camp known as All Saints. Here we met Father Glenroy, who welcomed us with an inspirational talk and told us of the help they needed. We spent our days painting and bleaching houses, planting gardens, digging trenches, picking up garbage and rocks, clipping ducks' wings, and much more. We got to see what their lives were like, making us appreciate what we had living in Canada and with the families that supported us.

The whole experience at the All Saints Aids Camp was a cycle of hope. Our being there gave the inhabitants hope and a more positive environment, and they showed us that even though they were faced with hardship they were willing to face it with optimism and have a good time.

For the rest of the trip, we spent our time teaching at two schools: the Gambier Primary School and the Albury Sayle School. At the Gambier Primary School we taught Grades 1-6 about world citizenship. As one of the Grade 1 teachers, I gave the children several passports to different countries. They used these passports to learn that people from those countries were really the same as they were. This was our first experience teaching, and we learned what to do and what not to do as a teacher.



At the Albury Sayle School we taught the children about virtues, and in particular the virtues of kindness, unity and justice. The children were all very enthusiastic to learn from us. However, it is hard to say who learned more. We as teachers were learning just as much as the children were learning from us. It also taught us to appreciate our teachers, after seeing how insanely hard it was teaching a class of thirty hyper-active children.

I can say from my own experiences there that it is the most rewarding feeling to see your students practice what they learn, or hear them say that they loved you as a teacher even after you've disciplined them. The children grew to be so attached to us, that we literally had a difficult farewell, and there were some tears.



Overall, it was an experience that none of us will ever forget. During that trip we learned more about ourselves, each other and another culture than we had previously in our lives. It gave us the chance to open up and give of ourselves freely from our hearts without wanting repayment in return.

The wonderful time we had there made it so that those two weeks flew by and the next thing we knew we were back in the Toronto airport from which we left.

By: Ashley Lowndes, Gr. 11 student

Adventures in Canoeing and Camping

From May 1st to 3rd, ten students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award program and two chaperones went on a canoe trip to McRae Point Provincial Park on Lake Simcoe. The trip was a great mix of fun and excitement with some hard work thrown in.



May 1: After a rainy trip up to McRae Point, we finally saw some sun upon arrival.

We had a great experience canoeing and portaging the many heavy bags and backpacks. We ended up on a beautiful island, set up our tents, found a snake, filtered water, built a fire and had a delicious stir fry chicken dinner. It ended up raining at night; however, we were very comfortable in our warm sleeping bags by that time.

May 2: We had a good night's sleep (most of us) and woke up to eat a delicious breakfast. After that, we paddled away to another island, climbed up a cliff and enjoyed the gorgeous view. We were fortunate that there was no rain. We returned back to our island for a late lunch and had a chance to relax, take a nap, and attempt to get a tan since the sun was shining brightly. Before dinner, some of us went rock climbing while the others tried to make fishing rods. We had another lovely dinner with marshmallows and hot dogs to follow later in the night. It was another great day!

May 3: We woke up much earlier to repack and take down our tents. We paddled back and portaged again to return to the area where our vans were parked. By that time we had all grown muscles like Arnold Schwarzenegger. It was time to go home. It was a real bonding experience and we had a blast! We hope to see more of you next year!

By: Arman Mahmoodi, Teacher

Wildfire Dance Theatre Wraps Up the Year in Venezuela

Wildfire Dance Theatre (WDT) is a socio-economic development project under the auspices of Nancy Campbell Collegiate Institute that uses the Arts to raise humanity's awareness of social ills afflicting the world. Each year, the youth participants travel throughout Canada and internationally, performing dances which portray issues such as domestic abuse, racism, drug and alcohol abuse, and the equality of men and women to audiences of all ages, classes, backgrounds, races and religions.

Members of the 2004-2005 cast of WDT finished up the year with the opportunity to tour around Venezuela from April 10th to 29th. We visited four cities and gave 18 performances for over 6000 people. We started in Caracas, where we were received extremely well performing in their major universities. One day was spent entirely with one of the university's Drama classes. We played games, showed each other our work, but mostly talked and had an amazing time. Later, we did a show at that same university for over 500 people who gave us a very gracious standing ovation.

After our 3 days in Caracas, WDT took an overnight 12 hour bus ride to Puerto Ayacucho in the Amazons, where the Bahá'í community hosted us and arranged all of our shows. The people of this town were very poor but high spirited and very warm. Wildfire members ate mangos off trees and swam in the Snake River at 6:00 a.m. one morning.

Another 12 hour bus ride took us to San Cristobal in the Andes, where we were hosted by individual families. Here, WDT made personal connections with each family. We participated in multiple shows, some of them with the Ballet Latino Americano, some with groups from Colombia, Brazil and other states in Venezuela, and we also did a show for the military. WDT visited with students every day and our departure a week later was filled with tears and an exchange of gifts and contact information.

Yet another 12 hour bus ride would move us to Maracaibo, the warmest city in Venezuela. There we did only 2 shows but they were seen by many students and officials. We ended our tour back in Caracas where we stayed with host families again. We had one show in the afternoon and later on went out with our hosts to dinner, stayed one last night and said our final goodbyes.



Early the next morning, we were back on a bus for the last time in Venezuela and headed for the airport. Our experience in Venezuela is something that none of us will ever forget. The generosity and hospitality that we received was more than we could have ever asked for and we are very thankful and honored to have been given this experience. I hope in the future Wildfire will be able to return to Venezuela and once again experience the warmth and love that we felt in this wonderful country.

By: Genevieve Cyr, WDT member & Wilmer Pulido, Communications Manager for Latin America

Grade 11 Regional Service Trip Orillia, Ontario

In April 2005, 17 Grade 11 students traveled to Orillia for a week of service at the Lighthouse Christian Ministries and Circle Square Ranch. The students were accompanied by student teacher Navarana Igloliorte and her husband Mark and Ms. Switzer. The main focus of service was at the Lighthouse Christian Ministries, which operates a Men's shelter and soup kitchen. The students were involved in many different aspects of the daily operations of the soup kitchen. Students served food, washed dishes, wrapped silver wear, carried garbage, washed floors, cleaned bathrooms, washed laundry, sterilized shelter facilities, prepared care packages, sorted donated clothing, painted inside and outside, washed windows, and painted lighthouse murals and quotes in the shelter bedrooms, office area and dining room. Accommodations were at the Circle Square Ranch near by, and students alternated going to the shelter and staying to do service at the camp to help prepare it for their summer programs. Here the students painted fences and barrels around the farm, raked huge lawns, tidied sheds and other odd jobs. The beds were comfortable, the food delicious and the staff friendly. Evenings were spent reflecting and playing games, as well as a couple of visits to Ms. Switzer's parent's home close by for canoeing and campfires. The students worked hard, learned a lot about serving others, and deepened their relationships with each other. Everyone was proud of their accomplishments and left a terrific lasting impression with the staff and clients at the shelter. Well done students!

By: Leslie Switzer, Teacher

"The most altruistic structure ever built by man. It saves lives. It makes no profit. It serves everyone equally and cannot discriminate. The light flashes from across the water, aiding ships we cannot even see, like a helping hand across the ocean....The Lighthouse symbolizes all that is good in mankind."

By: George Bernard Shaw

