



NEWS RELEASE

July 12, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES 2009-2010		
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TCDSB TOP SCHOLARS 2009/2010

Brianna Smrke from Michael Power/St. Joseph High School in **Etobicoke** has achieved 100 percent, the highest average of all graduating students within the Toronto Catholic District School Board for the 2009-2010 academic year. Brianna earned 100 percent in all six of her courses: Chemistry, English (2), Biology History and Vectors.

Brianna was enrolled in the internationally acclaimed International Baccalaureate program. Students follow a challenging two-year curriculum, leading to a qualification that is widely recognized by the world's leading universities. They are also required to volunteer fifty hours each to Action, Creativity and Service-related activities. Brianna had no problem exceeding this requirement. She contributed to her school and community by distributing food to the homeless of downtown Toronto, writing letters to world leaders through the school's "Write for Rights Club" and representing Canada at the Model United Nations Conferences.

A talented artist, Brianna has designed motivational posters and plaques for the school's Empowered Student Partnership anti-bullying committee. She shared her love of science by creating and presenting an interactive workshop on optical illusions to elementary school children and volunteered her time as a math tutor. Her talents extend to music and athletics. She is an accomplished alto saxophone player and was captain of the school's junior basketball team, where she led her team mates with determination and enthusiasm. Her leadership skills provided counselling to grade nine students and support as a Best Buddy to a special needs grade nine student. She initiated fundraising for Sleeping Children Around the World to provide bed kits for children in India, Africa and Bangladesh. Brianna believes that her experience in a Catholic high school has set her on a path of personal development that she will continue long after graduation.

Brianna will be attending McMaster University in September and, at the moment, is interested in a career as a neurologist or as a neuroscientist.

"We recognize all of our students for their commitment to succeed and the support that they receive from our dedicated staff" says TCDSB Director of Education, Ann Perron. "We are proud of our top scholars who have exceeded our graduate expectations and wish them continued success as they pursue their post-secondary studies".

"The Toronto Catholic District School Board celebrates the achievements of these students and acknowledges their efforts as well as the guidance and encouragement from family, parish and school. They exemplify the success of publicly-funded Catholic education" says Board Chair, Angela Kennedy.

Following closely behind Brianna are two students who tied for second overall: Gayathiri Balasubramaniam and Erin Comepeau, both graduates of Bishop Allen Academy in **Etobicoke**, who earned an overall average of 99.67 percent.

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TCDSB TOP SCHOLARS 2009/2010

Gayathiri has the highest average of the students who were accepted for Arts and Science at the University of Toronto this September. She has earned a Governor General Award, an entrance scholarship and a Prince of Wales Scholarship. She recently wrote seven AP examinations and received a 5 on all of them, making her an AP National Scholar. Gaya has studied piano since she was six years of age and recently passed her Grade 10 piano at the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is interested in neuroscience with aspirations to become a surgeon. She has been volunteering at Trillium and St. Joseph's Hospitals.

Erin Compeau will be attending York's Schulich School of Business with an eye on a future as a Chartered Accountant or she may study Medicine. Erin was the school champion for the Fermat and Euclid Math contests and was a member of the school's tennis and swim teams, earning MVP on both teams. She is currently taking her Grade 8 piano and is a published poet. Erin has earned a \$21,600 President's Scholarship from York University. She will be spending her summer doing research for the University of Toronto and the CNIB.

The TCDSB's third place scholar is Maria Doubova, also of Bishop Allen Academy, with an overall average of 99.33 percent. Maria juggled competitive figure skating with her studies, which required approximately 10 hours a week in practice plus competitions. She will be attending the University of Western Ontario in September and is considering medical school in the future.

Top Students from Other Municipalities in Toronto

Christopher Dydula from Brebeuf College School placed first in **North York** with an average of 98.83 percent. Christopher was in the 96th percentile for the University of Waterloo's Chem 13 Youth Exam. He is currently studying Japanese and has plans to work in the aerospace industry. He has been accepted into Engineering Science at the University of Toronto.

Katherine Baird from Senator O'Connor College placed first in **Scarborough** with an average of 97.50 percent. Katherine enjoyed basketball and softball in high school and was a subject leader in the school's Homework Club, tutoring her peers and younger students in Mathematics and Science. She has spent several summers volunteering at summer camps. Katherine will be attending the University of Toronto in September to study Life Sciences.

Ricky Rodrigues, who recently graduated from Bishop Marrocco/Thomas Merton Catholic Secondary School in the former City of **Toronto**, earned top marks for the area with an average of 97.17 percent. Throughout his high school years, Ricky has been involved in the school and local community as a member of Student Council and Me to We. Ricky will be attending the University of Toronto in September and is interested in the Humanities and Social Science.

The area of **York** can celebrate the success of Manuel Xuereb from Archbishop Romero Catholic Secondary School who earned the top average of 94.00 percent. Manuel will be studying Political Science at the University of Toronto. A member of the school's Leadership Committee and Soccer Team, Manuel can be especially proud of the fact that he was a newcomer to Toronto, arriving here two years ago from Malta.

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The Toronto Catholic District School Board educates more than 93,000 students from diverse cultures and language backgrounds in its 201 Catholic elementary and secondary schools and serves approximately 475,000 Catholic school supporters across the City of Toronto.