

**EXEMPLARY TEACHING AWARD**

**FUTURE ACES BUILDS CHARACTER THROUGH THE H.A.P Program (Homework Assistance Program)**

**Submitted by:**

**St. Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School**

**Project Leader: Miss Josephine Virgilio**

**Proposal Committee: Mrs. Carmelina Gray  
Mr. Richard Campbell  
Mr. John Chow  
Mrs. Bellamy Goodyear  
Mr. Marco Pitto  
Mrs. Antonietta Maida**

**Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation:**

**Ms. Bernice Carnegie, *Executive Director*  
Ms. Vivian Shapiro, *Education Director*  
Mr. Pinball Clemons, *Future Aces Committee Member***

## **Exemplary Practice Teaching Award – Toronto Catholic District School Board**

- 1. Provide a detailed description of the project/program. Describe the project/program. Describe the project/program's goals, strategies, implementation, timeline, and outcomes. Please summarize current research which supports the project. Attach a bibliography if available.**

### **Description of Project:**

The Future Aces Committee at Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School has incorporated Future Aces Initiatives into its Code of Conduct and Character Education and Safe Schools Program beginning September 3, 2008.

This year, through the Future Aces Program, we created the H.A.P. program (Homework Assistance program).

### **Homework Assistance Program (HAP)**

HAP provides help with assignments and projects to students in grades 6-8 who cannot receive help at home either because their parents do not speak English, are working or both.

Provided in a group environment, students receive help with study skills and organization of assignments. The program seeks to foster a positive attitude toward homework and school and this in turn fosters an improvement in grades.

High school students help tutor our students with assignments in earning their community service hours. This program is run by Ms. Virgilio and the Future Aces HAP team.

### **Purpose**

To provide community outreach by educating the whole child through homework assistance, mentoring and enrichment activities that assist children in meeting the daily challenges of the Catholic curriculum.

### **Goals**

Provide a learning environment where children can seek assistance with homework and projects, expand their academic skills and develop them into lifelong learners.

Provide a nurturing environment where students can develop competency, resiliency and resourcefulness.

Provide a supportive environment to foster ability, integrity and compassion.

### **When**

Tuesday and Thursday                      September – December , 2009  
February 1<sup>st</sup>- March , 2009  
April - May, 2010

### **Time**

8:00 -8:45 a.m. OR 3:45 – 4:45 p.m.

In conjunction with the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation, we are working together in order to foster harmony and good citizenship deterring bullying, racism, violence and cultural intolerance at our school.

Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School has incorporated into the school community a Future Aces Code of Conduct based on the Future Aces Philosophy supporting the Ontario Ministry mandate on Character Education and Safe Schools Programs. Future Aces has been used an effective tool for promoting positive and safe school environments for more than thirty years and currently enriches the lives of more than 70,000 students annually in the GTA.

### **What is Future Aces?**

The Herbert Carnegie Future Aces Foundation is a non-for profit, registered, charitable organization established in 1987 by Herbert, Audrey and Bernice Carnegie.

### **Foundation's Mission:**

To inspire and assist youth and adults to become the best that they can be as responsible, respectful, peaceful, confident and caring citizens.

### **Foundation's Mandate:**

To partner with schools, community organizations and corporations to reinforce and enhance character development initiatives fostering proactive approaches that promote harmony and as a result deter bullying, violence, racism and cultural intolerance.

### **Outreach:**

The Future Aces Educational Team at Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School has provided motivational presentation for students and training for staff on Friday September 26, 2008 , Wednesday October 15, 2008 and September 2, 2009.

### **The Future Aces Philosophy:**

Herbert Carnegie wrote his 'timely but timeless' Future Aces Philosophy fifty two years ago. It has become a model for behavior based on teachable skills with a meaningful message that encourages responsible citizenship. It challenges the individual to a continuous process of learning about one's self and one's relations with others. In striving to become Future Aces, people learn attitudes and approaches that they can build upon throughout their lives. Living up to the Future Aces Philosophy means constantly seeking ways to improve by taking responsibility for who you are, what you do and how your behavior affects other people.



# Future Aces

## Future Aces Builds Character

**A**

I will develop a positive **Attitude** toward all people and toward my work.

I will develop my talents and **Ability** in order that I may be helpful to society.

I will take **Action** with *integrity*.

I will **Achieve** my goal with *honest* and sincere initiative.

**C**

I will **Cooperate** with and *respect* others by seeking understanding with all people, regardless of race, gender or beliefs.

I will demonstrate **Courage**, standing up for what is right and speaking out against what is wrong.

I will display **Confidence** in all my actions without being arrogant.

**E**

I will show **Empathy** and *consideration* by advancing the values that are important to me and others.

I will set a good **Example** to others, taking *responsibility* for my actions.

I will acquire the best **Education** within my capability.

**S**

I will be of **Service** to others.

I will practice good **Sportsmanship** in all my decisions, demonstrating fair play to all.

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Herbert H. Carnegie, M.C., O.Ont., O.M.C., LL.D. (Hon) and Bernice Y. Carnegie

[www.futureaces.org](http://www.futureaces.org)

*The Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation has authorized the replication of the Future Aces Philosophy and information about its initiatives in support of in this application.*

### **Who created Future Aces?**

Herbert Carnegie was born in Toronto, in 1919 following the emigration of his parents from Jamaica in 1912. Married to his wife Audrey for 63 years, he resided in North York where he is known as a local hero and community icon.

Mr. Carnegie became a talented athlete who enjoyed an outstanding career in the Ontario Hockey Association and Quebec Hockey Leagues. Denied an opportunity to pursue his dream in the NHL because of racism, he consciously developed ways to make a positive difference in society.

Mr. Carnegie's vision of justice, fair play and equity of opportunity produced a remarkable code of ethics, the Future Aces Creed, that is now used in schools throughout Ontario and beyond.

### **Strategies/Implementation**

With effective application, students begin to internalize this positive message moving them towards more ethical and respectful behavior, improved grades and a desire to become better citizens. The following steps help to ensure successful implementation.

1. **Staff workshops** are essential to understand the background and initial steps in implementing this positive approach for handling daily challenges.
2. A school-wide **kick-off presentation** introduces students to Future Aces and helps inspire the positive behaviour change schools are trying to effect.
3. A **parent presentation** reinforces the school's desire to assist their children and encourage their support through home use of Future Aces.
4. An **in-service** with a committee of enthusiastic staff and student leaders provides a format for developing a plan of action for a more positive school environment.
5. The **Summer Institute** held annually in August gives teachers an opportunity to share ideas and learn about new resources and initiatives to keep Future Aces thriving in their respective schools.

### **How has the Future Aces Philosophy Helped SJF?**

#### **As a Student:**

- Improves academics
- Teaches responsibility
- Builds self-esteem and self-confidence
- Develops self-respect as well as respect for others;
- Promotes respect for diversity;
- Develops polite manners;
- Helps students resolve conflicts peacefully;
- Encourages students to be good citizens;
- Develops positive attitudes in sports activities;
- Develops a sense of belonging;
- Learns to take control of their lives;
- Develops a sense of achievement through small successes.

**As an Administrator:**

- Creates a peaceful, welcoming learning environment for all;
- Sets high expectations for all students;
- Establishes clearly stated and agreed upon goals;
- Promotes equitable treatment of all individuals;
- Supports Ministry of Education Curriculum Expectations and Toronto Catholic District Safe schools initiatives.
- Encourages parent and community involvement and support;
- Becomes an integral part of the life of the school, and supports the implementation of existing programs and Code of Conduct.

**As a Teacher:**

- Creates a happier and more harmonious classroom.
- Develops students' self-control and thus leads to improved student behavior;
- Helps students achieve academic success.
- Enhances students' self-esteem;
- Encourages parental involvement in their children's education.

**As a Parent:**

- Builds a more effective partnership between parents and the school e.g., provides a focus for parent-school consultations;
- Makes it easier for parents to learn how they can help their children succeed in school;
- Improves the quality of home life;
- Promotes consistent values and behavior for all family members;
- Provides a common framework and language for parents to discuss their children's achievements and needs with school staff.

**Outcomes**

Within our Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School we have noticed a considerable decrease in incidences of bullying and school violence as compared to previous years (before the program was implemented). Both students and staff have noticed a remarkable difference in student attitude and behavior. For example, students are modeling the *Future Aces Creed* and exemplifying respectful student behavior on daily basis.

The project leader has received commendation letters from parents, students and staff about the success of the Future Aces program.

Street signs have been designed and created by the project leader. For example, *Courage Avenue, Ability Lane* etc. It was very important for the project leader to create an ambience that reflected the Future Aces Creed.

As a follow-up, in January, 2009 students will be participating in a *Future Aces* classroom poster contest. Classes will be asked to design a mural based on TCDSB monthly themes: January – Courage, February -Love.

Students continue to strive to become a *Future Ace*. Many incentives including providing students with a monthly *Future Aces* certificate, a school year end luncheon celebration with Future Aces students who exemplified extraordinary citizenship, Catholicity and leadership responsibility within our school community.

Mini alerts and police tickets are handed out by primary/junior and intermediate teachers in order to reward students who have exemplified excellent citizenship and behavior.

Every morning on the public address system, our *Future Aces* student ambassadors read the *Future Aces* Creed in order to remind systems of their role as *Future Aces*.

Student Ambassadors have also created a *Future Aces* Corner in our monthly newsletters based on the Toronto Catholic District School boards monthly themes e.g. December charity.

## **2. How does the project/program align with the Board's System Priorities?**

### **HAP Program (Homework Assistance Program)**

The TCDSB is dedicated to improving student achievement, closing the gap and improving the overall culture of education through Catholicity. The HAP program goals are systematically aligned with our school board vision.

#### **Vision of TCDSB**

**To provide students with the qualities they will require, our Vision of TCDSB is a school system that:**

- is Christ-centered;
- is student focused;
- demonstrates a clear sense of purpose;
- is visibly and demonstrably Catholic;
- reflects empowering leadership;
- applies collaborative decision making;
- is innovative; and
- provides role models among all stakeholders for all these qualities.

The Future Aces Creed compliments the TCDSB vision of developing Catholicity, justice, fair play and equity of opportunity.

#### **Curriculum Expectations**

In analyzing past EQAO (Equal Quality Accountability) and CAT II , TLCP (Teaching Learning Critical Pathway), there is a need to assist those learners where English is not their first language and/or special needs.

Since the implementation of HAP, students are seeing immediate results on their scores (report cards) in improving mathematics and literacy development.

#### **How does Future Aces Benefit the Saint Jane Frances School Community?**

- The Future Aces Creed is the model on which more than 170 schools across the GTA base their Character Development and Safe Schools programs.
- Future Aces is an effective proactive tool in assisting young people and their families to develop a healthier lifestyle.

- Our Education Initiatives develop good citizenship and positive daily life skills reducing incidences of inappropriate behavior such as bullying, racism, and cultural intolerance.
  - The application of this powerful philosophy influences the lives of more than 70,000 students annually and adapts easily as a guideline for early childhood education centres recreational and sports initiatives, community organizations and corporations.
- 3. Description of involvement of other agencies, support personnel, universities, colleges Local community organizations, private sector, etc, if appropriate.**

**Current Major Partners & Program Specific Partners to Future Aces:**

Toronto Catholic District School Board  
 Toronto District School Board  
 The Ontario Trillium Foundation  
 TD Bank Financial Group  
 Investors Group  
 York Regional Police  
 Canadian Forces  
 The Argos Foundation

**How can we work in partnership?**

- Provide proactive approaches to help youth make positive lifestyle choices.
- Promote consistent values and behavior for all citizens.
- Encourage self-discipline and taking responsibility for one's actions.
- Unify the community by fostering programs that build self-esteem, confidence and caring.
- Respond to violence with constructive guidance and action.
- Establish a mutually beneficial long-term relationship with Future Aces.

**4. Description of assessment and evaluation strategies focusing on student progress in the project /program.**

At the start of the program, through educational workshops, staff and students participated by completing written surveys. A summary of results were conclusive and indicated that over 90% of the staff and students firmly believe that the Future Aces Philosophy and its initiatives have been a positive influence on our Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary school.

Also, the project leader continually has held meetings with our Future Aces Committee and Safe schools to initiate further ideas and developments with respect to the Future Aces implementation within our school community.

The project leader also continues to receive positive letters from parents, staff and students about how Future Aces has influenced positive changes at home and within the school.

When students' behaviors improve, students begin to realize the importance of doing well in school. This is the second year that we were able to initiative a Academic Honors Roll board honoring and celebrating students achievement through Future Aces students' assemblies.

The HAP program (a dimension of Future Aces) has been highly successful. We started the program with 10 children which has grown to 50 students receiving homework assistance after-school.

ESL and special needs learners are receiving one on one tutoring by high school students who can speak Spanish and translate.

**Attached please kindly find pictures, study skills resource book developed from the HAP program and letters from high school students describing the success of the program.**

**An article was written in the *Metro Voice* and the *Ontario Catholic Principals Association* acknowledging the hard work of the Future Aces team in bringing about Future Aces to our school community (see attachments).**

#### **5. Describe assessment and evaluation of the project/program. Include successful and unsuccessful strategies and attempts.**

Students who have participated in the HAP program (Homework Assistance Program) have written reflection letters each term in terms of the pluses, minuses and interesting facts. As attachments, please kindly find letters from students who have participated in the HAP program, parents thank you letters and teachers who have acknowledged and affirm the benefits of the HAP program in improving student achievement, closing the gap, and improving the overall culture of Catholicity.

#### **6. Description of Strategies**

##### **Successful strategies Used to Communicate the Project**

- **Street signs-** Ability Lane, Courage Avenue etcetera are some samples of how the project leader, Ms. Josephine Virgilio along with the Future Aces Committee and student ambassadors have decorated and created a conducive environment for positive change in terms of implementing the Future Aces Creed and philosophy.
- **Staff and parents educational workshops** – Informal surveys and conversations with parents would indicate that the Future Aces Creed has been a positive influence on the Saint Jane Frances Catholic Elementary School.
- **Mini-alert tickets** provide students with positive reinforcement for good citizenship, Catholicity and modeling positive leadership qualities on a daily basis.
- **Student Ambassadors** at the start of the school day with daily announcements reinforcing the monthly themes of Catholicity (January- Courage, February –Love) along with being a responsible Future Ace.
- Every month, **Future Aces Student representatives** have written an article in our school newsletters based on the Toronto Catholic District School board themes (January- Courage etcetera).
- Students will be participating in a **Future Aces Poster** contests based on the theme of demonstrating Gratitude (to compliment the TCDSB ‘s monthly themes revolving around Catholicity).
  - **Future Aces Team building activities** – Six students were sent to the Future Aces Team building conference where they learned team-building skills and participated

with other schools in learning more about the Future Aces Team and Mr. Herbert Carnegie himself.

- **Speaker's Series** has been successful in the past four years. Speakers within the community speak to our students about their career experiences, the importance of developing good citizenship and responsible leadership within the Saint Jane Frances School community. We have raised over \$800.00 over the school years to help with school funding etcetera. Guest speakers have included: Mr. Dwight Drummond (2004) City TV, Mr. JoJo Chintoh (2005), Mr. Spider Jones (2006), Mr. Michael Kuss/Spider Jones 2007,
- Mr. Hugh Burrill and Spider Jones. This year, our guest will include Ms. Dina Pigulese (Breakfast Television).
- The **Future Aces Ticket Program** is based on the **Future Aces Creed** and provides incentives to young people "Caught in the act" of living up to the Creed.
  - Historically tickets are issued by police for inappropriate behaviour.
  - This innovative program encourages police officers and community leaders to acknowledge youth who demonstrate good character.
  - Has gone region-wide with York Regional Police.
- Students have visited in December, 2009 food banks and shelters and have assisted in their programs. They are applying their monthly themes of the Big Idea of Charity into everyday practice. Issues of diversity, social justice and charity are brought forth into the curriculum and discussed through the lens of Catholicity.

#### **School System/Police**

- Future Aces works with a variety of community partners of which the school system and regional police detachments are the most prominent.
- Initiatives such as the *Future Aces Positive Ticket Program*, character building initiatives and leadership conferences represent just a few of our joint initiatives.
- Our programs are targeted towards students across the GTA in anticipation of working with students nationally.
- York Regional Police Chief Armand LaBarge leads the way as a member of the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Board of Directors.
- Future Aces partners with a variety of school boards and their schools to deliver character building programs to its students.

#### **Future Aces Awards Gala (May 27, 2009)**

- 2009 Gala will be held at the Grand Baccus Ball Room in Toronto, Ontario.
- Prominent citizens recognized at ACES Awards Gala for Achievement, Courage, Education and Service.
- Reception networking with corporate and educational Future ACES
- Celebration of successes and achievements showing exemplary citizenship

#### **Future Aces Scholarship Reception: (April 17, 2009)**

**Scholarships:** Annually, the Foundation awards up to thirty students with a citizenship Award and a one thousand dollar scholarship. Criteria for selection is based on Exemplary citizenship qualities and a need for financial assistance to further their educational goals. To date the Foundation has granted \$420,000 in scholarships.

**7. Description of how the project/program could be replicated in other schools, sites and/or locations.**

Mrs. Bernice Carnegie ([www.futureaces.org](http://www.futureaces.org)) and the Future Aces Team would ensure the implementation process at the respective schools within the TCDSB.

**Future Aces in the Schools: Implementation Process**

**Summer Institute**

**Involvement in Special Elementary Project (ongoing, support, from Future Aces Education Team Member)**

**Step One: Future Aces starting points at school**

- a) school-wide student presentation
- b) staff training and implementation workshop.

**Future Aces Staff/Student/Parent Planning Committee**

**Step Two:**

Future Aces Exploration Activities  
One-day Elementary Symposium

**Step Three:**

Future Aces Student Ambassador Group

**Step Four:**

Future Aces: Atmosphere Enhancement

**Step Five:**

Celebration for all Project Schools

**Step Six**

**Review / Reflect / Evaluate / Celebrate School Successes**

**Selected References:**

Bilal Rajan (2008). *Making Change: Tips from an Underage Overachiever*. Orca Book Publishers.

Jay Mathews (2009). *Work Hard, Be Nice*. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin (2007). *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*.

Michael Fullan (2008). *The Six Secrets of Change: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive*.

Vatterott, Cathy (2009). *Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs*.

OPC, *The Principal as Professional Learning Community Leader*

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A – Future Aces Curriculum Documents – These were provided to all Teachers
- Appendix B- Future Aces Newsletters
- Appendix C- Summer Institute Letters
- Appendix D – Bullying Assemblies through the Future Aces Program
- Appendix E – HAP program brochure
- Appendix F- Student Reflections by participants themselves in HAP
- Appendix G – Letters from Parents/Teachers
- Appendix H- Pictures of Street Signs/ Future Aces Classroom Mural posters
- Appendix I - Speakers Series Mural Design
- Appendix J- Metro Voice and Ontario Principals Catholic Association – Future Aces Articles.