



THE SPARTAN

WESTLANE SECONDARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Principal's Message

Karen Simpson, Principal

Greetings from the Spartan community! As you can see from this newsletter, Westlane is a “happening” place! From academics to athletics, from the arts to our SHSM’s, Westlane is truly a place to learn and have fun at the same time.

It’s hard to believe but we are already nearing the last term of this school year, and it’s been a year full of activities. Just take a look at some of the highlights of this past Fall and Winter, and upcoming events for the Spring:

- Senior football advancing to the league finals
- Junior girls’ basketball team winning Zone and advancing to SOSSA
- Successful participation in the Grade 9 Take Our Kids to Work Day
- Successful Open House for our future Spartans in November
- Boys’ curling team competing in the Provincial Championships for the 71st Annual Gore Mutual Schoolboy Competition in Pembroke
- Westlane’s ‘Spartacular’ float in the Niagara Falls Christmas Parade
- Monthly assemblies celebrating our students’ achievements
- Tech Skills Competition – winners to be announced on April 17th at Club Italia
- DECA Team advancing to the International Finals at Universal Studies in Orlando, Florida
- Choir participating in the Blushing Brides performance at the Seneca Theatre on April 6th
- Multicultural Night on April 24th and Coffee House on April 25th
- Aids Walk on May 10th with our Family of Schools (Forestview, Kate S. Durdan, James Morden, Greendale and Orchard Park)
- Math Olympics with the Grade 7 students from our Family of Schools
- Annual Plant Sale and Craft Fair taking place in May



As the new Principal at Westlane this past September, I have enjoyed watching the student body participate in the abundance of activities and opportunities presented to them each day. Clearly, our Westlane school community understands that their high school experience is enhanced by their participation in the culture of their school while also understanding the importance of giving back to our community as responsible community citizens. At Westlane, we are proud of our every day accomplishments and we believe in celebrating our successes. CONGRATULATIONS to everyone!



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Optimist Award

Lauren Taylor, Dhruv Shah, Chantelle Tran and Ben Krowchuk were recognized by the Optimist Club of Niagara Falls during their annual Youth Appreciation Awards Night on April 9, for their involvement in the school and community. The Optimist Club honours the youth of the city for their talents in the arts, academics, and athletics, and for their contribution to the community through volunteering. Both Lauren and Dhruv have demonstrated a commitment to the community in combination with excellent academic performance and participation in school sports and clubs. The award was presented by Mr. John Kennedy.



Lauren Taylor



Ben Krowchuk and Chantelle Tran



Dhruv Shah



Rotary Club Student Spirit Award

Congratulations to Riya Patel and KJ Grout who were recently honored for winning the Rotary Club Student Spirit Award. This award is presented to students who have gone the extra mile for school, community or family service and reflect the Rotary's motto of "Service Above Self." This year's winners both truly exemplify all these criteria. Congratulations, Riya and KJ you continue to make Westlane proud.



Service Above Self Award



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Niagara Falls Prayer Luncheon

This fall Westlane Music students came together to be a part of an incredible 300-voice choir who performed at the Niagara Falls Prayer Luncheon. Students had the opportunity to meet and speak with the moonwalking Astronaut Charlie Duke Jr. from the Apollo 11 space mission.

As a chance to give back by helping local children and youth during February's 'Youth Leadership Month' a group of Gr. 12 students took part in the 5th Annual Youth Ultimate Dodgeball Challenge. This event was a local initiative to raise funds for the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre of Niagara. Our Students took on the challenge in true Spartan form showing their determination, sportsmanship and commitment to help others.

Mrs. Miller.





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ICE DOGS TOUR

On Monday, March 4th, the HCSA from Westlane Secondary School went on a tour of the Niagara IceDogs OHL facility. The Niagara IceDogs strive to be a positive and active member of the community, not only in St. Catharines, but throughout the Niagara Region. The IceDogs players have visited numerous schools across Niagara talking to students about the importance of education, teamwork, and a healthy lifestyle. This year they have also started a “Just Stop It” Anti-bullying Campaign, which discusses the effects of bullying and why it is important that we all stand up to bullying!

The IceDogs were kind enough to allow the HCSA to come on a free tour of their facility during a busy playoff bound time of the year. The IceDogs home arena, the Meridian Center, is the newest arena in the OHL with state of the art audio/visual equipment, a NHL style locker room, fitness training center, video meeting room and a medical area. Students in the program were able to see what kind of hockey equipment players were using, players warm up routines, press boxes, as well as a very cool hyperbaric chamber.

The teams Assistant General Manager answered a variety of questions from our students. These ranged from the day to day life of an OHL player, travel schedules and bus trips, how team meals work and where players go to school and stay if they are from out of town. The Director of Community Marketing was also able to talk to students about the business side of what goes into an OHL team. Students found out about game day operations, what it takes to work behind the scenes in the hockey world and what kind of Post-Secondary courses current employees took to get into their profession.



Overall the students got to see behind the scenes of both the player and business side of an incredible hockey organization. The Niagara Ice Dogs are currently gearing up for a playoff run this year and hoping to have a successful season. The students in the HCSA all had a great time and learned a lot. Thanks again to the @OHLIceDogs for their great hospitality!

-Mr. Bhan



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Niagara Falls Youth Promote Mental Wellness Among Teens

Mayor's youth advisory committee members say many young people lack coping skills for stress



Paul Forsyth , Niagara This Week

Celeste Turner sits in a chair and runs her forefinger from one hand up and down the digits on her other hand. "Inhale, up," she says. "Exhale, down." The group before her mimics her relaxation techniques. "Feel the weight of your body sink down in your chair," said Turner, youth program facilitator with Niagara Falls Community Health Centre. "Imagine your breath just wipes out any thoughts in your head. Your head is a big, empty space."

Turner isn't in a yoga studio. She's in a classroom at Westlane Secondary School in Niagara Falls on Jan. 17, and she's demonstrating mindfulness and meditation to students of English as a second language (ESL). Nearby, the enticing scent of freshly delivered pizza wafts through the room as the students sit and try to tap into their inner Zen.

The peaceful scene is the brainchild of the Niagara Falls mayor's youth advisory committee, a group of two dozen teens who work with Niagara Falls city council by acting as a voice for youth and advising politicians on important recreational and social issues concerning the city's younger population.

Committee co-chairs Daniel Krowchuk and Chantelle Tran, both Westlane students, said the group brainstormed recently and decided there's a pressing need to promote mental health among teens.

Their group has launched a series of mental wellness projects for teens in the city, from distributing exam "survival kits" and contests to bringing in therapy dogs to pet for relaxation.



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The relaxation session at Westlane was taking place just a week before the start of exams — a time that stresses out many teens desperate to get the marks they need to get into their university of choice, said Tran.

“That was one of the initial sparks for our group,” said Tran. “So many teens or youth these days are dealing with mental health issues, and they don’t know how to cope with it.

“So, through our project, we wanted to be able to reach out to them and just lend a hand.”

Krowchuk said his group was able to host a mental health summit for students from each of the city’s five high schools, to de-stress during exams last year, after obtaining a grant from the Ontario 150 program.

When Enbridge Gas Distribution approached the group at the end of the year with an offer to fund projects, the students worked with Beth Angle, community development co-ordinator with the City of Niagara Falls, to submit a new proposal.

The students opted to focus once again on teen mental health, said Krowchuk.

“We’re always looking at key issues with youth today,” he said.

“The exam season can be extremely stressful for students, so we are very thankful to Enbridge Gas Distribution for giving us this opportunity to spearhead teen mental health activities that are truly student-driven,” he said.

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati said the mental health initiative shows the importance of having teens involved in decision-making because they know best what their peers’ needs are.

“This is another example of our mayor’s youth advisory committee having their finger on the pulse of exactly what students need in our community, and taking action,” he said. “We support them in their efforts to show fellow students that they are all in this together.”

Turner, teaching more meditation techniques, told the students that panic that can ensue during an exam can interfere with their thinking. Breathing exercises can correct that, she said.

“Sometimes when we have anxiety we start to breathe faster and we don’t even realize it,” she said. “(This) helps you to calm down and think clearly again.”

Derek Etherington, program co-ordinator with Westlane’s ESL program, said his students come from countries ranging from Somalia and China to the Philippines, Venezuela and South Korea.

“They’re from all over the world,” he said.

Many of the students are here on visas, and most don’t have parents living in Canada, staying instead with guardians or sponsors, said Etherington. Combine that with language barriers, and looming exams can be especially stressful for them, he said.

“It’s a double whammy for them,” said Etherington. “So, the wellness portion of this is huge for them.”



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FRAMES -Skills Competition

On Wednesday, November 21, 2018, Mr. Babony's video design team participated in the annual Frames Skills Competition at Niagara-on-the-Lake, competing against schools from all over the region. The team members (from left to right) are Sophia Neufeld, Nikolija Mladenovic, Ian Moore, Anthony Poirier, and Alex Doyi. The theme that the video had to revolve around was "undo", a challenging concept to grasp. The students decided to use the idea of an interview for their video. The main point is that the person being interrogated by the interviewer will accidentally admit to a crime he committed, but will beg the interviewer to keep it a secret, as it is something he regrets, and wants to "undo".



Architectural Cad - Skills Competition

On Feb. the 17th at Niagara College, Mr Jenkins registered 3 of his Tech Design (TDJ) students in the individual Architectural Cad competition. Brandon Doyi (grade 11), Johnson Luu (grade 11), and Nora Bartholomew (grade 10) each spent 5 hours designing and drafting floor plans and exterior views of a 2 level house. At the end of a busy day Brandon placed Gold, Johnson placed Silver, and Nora placed 6th. This is an incredible achievement for these three students considering how all other competitors, representing the remaining DSNB schools competing, were grade 12. Good luck to Brandon as he is currently preparing to represent Westlane at the provincial skills competition in May.

Art's Tour

The Arts Tour is May 14th and 16th. Over one hundred students will descend on the feeder schools displaying their talents in Fashion, Music, Art, Dance and Electronica, led by Mr. Goode.



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Book Love - English Dept

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." ~ Dr. Seuss

For the Love of Books -

Westlane's Spartans are reading books and loving it. Students involved in the Book Love program read a book of their choice for 15 minutes each day. The Book Love initiative is increasing reading stamina and getting Spartans passionate about reading. Students involved in Book Love are encouraged to read a minimum of two hours each week.

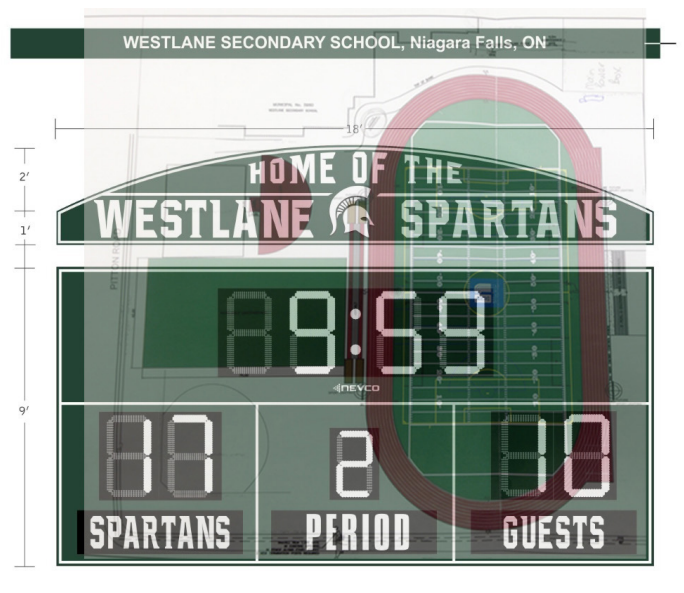


Since the start of the semester students in one of our Grade 9 English classes have read a combined total of over 10,000 pages. They are also doing Book Talks and Book Reviews to find books that might be next on their reading list.

Future plans include a trip to Chapters where students can select a book that interests them. Students will have the option of keeping the book or adding it to our expanding classroom libraries.

Westlane's Turf Facility

Spartans are awaiting the arrival of their new field! In September of 2018 Westlane started construction on their new turf field and track. The long awaited facility is Westlane's newest sports update boasting over 80,000 square feet of professional outdoor space that includes layouts for sports such as: Football, Soccer, Cross Soccer pitches, Lacrosse and rugby. Along with the turf field comes lights for night time action, a rubber track for our track and field team, aluminum stands, and a top of the line scoreboard. The facility is said to be complete and fully functional by September of this year!





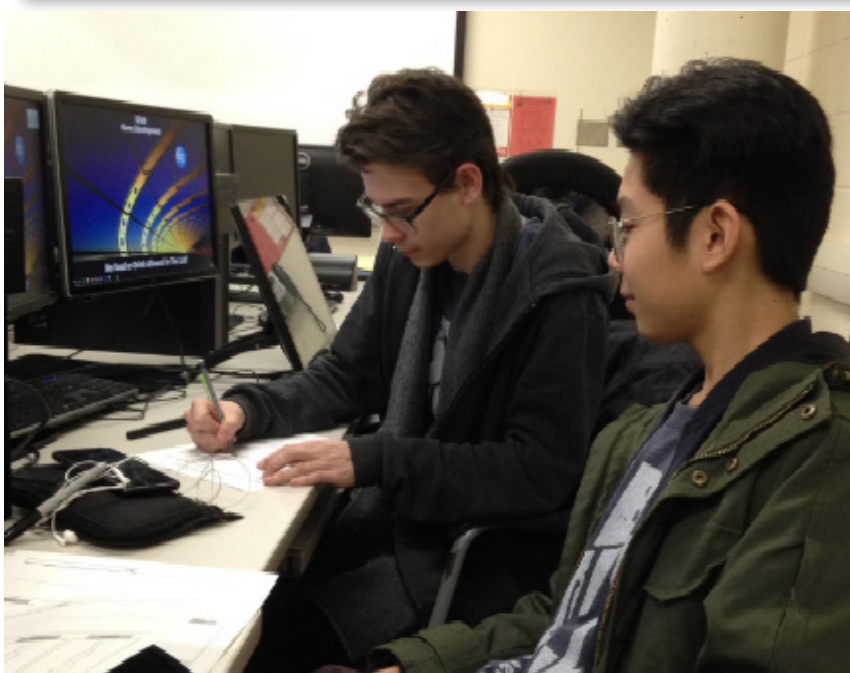
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Skills Ontario

Video & 2D Animation

The annual DSBN skills competition took place on Feb. the 17th at Niagara College. Westlane teacher Jason Babony registered 4, Video Design students Sophia Neufeld and Nikolija Mladenovic, and Aaron Nguyen and , as well as 2, 2D-Animation students Alex Doyi and Anthony Poirier. The teams worked for 5 hours on their creations, with the theme of the video being “possibilities”, and an animation given the theme “escape”. The contestants gained experience through this competition, and are excited and willing to participate in upcoming events. At the end of the day after storyboarding, character creation, and animating, the animation team took gold. Anthony and Alex are looking forward to celebrating as medal winners at the Annual DSBN Technological Skills Celebration on April 17 at Club Italia. Our animation team will now prepare for Skills Ontario at Toronto Congress Centre May 6th – 8th. Congratulations Spartans!





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Forestview Gains Secondary Exposure

The boys working on stop motion animation commented in the car that 'you are treating them like real high school students. They are so excited about what they're learning and motivated to work on their projects back at Forestview in preparation for their next visit.



Stephanie Minor has introduced a Small Group Project-Based Experience at Westlane.

In the tech classes for Green Industries and Communications Tech labs at Westlane, Forestview students grade (7 - 8) are learning about the primary steps involved with current from Mr. Babony and Mr. Granger's assignments from their tech classes. The students have been visiting Westlane once a month since the fall and will carry out until June.

"I wish you could have heard the enthusiasm from our students as we were leaving!

"I know that Alyssa, Emily and Beth are very hesitant to advocate for themselves and ask questions in class. But watching them yesterday with you, you'd never know that! You created an environment that welcomed their questions and encouraged them to take risks in their learning. Their smiles were a mile wide all morning! And it was so great to see the girls interacting with the senior students as well."



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Arcade Cabinet

In first semester, Mr. Jenkins' Tech Design (TDJ) and Computer Engineering (TEJ) classes joined forces to design and create something for the Westlane community. After deciding on building a custom retro arcade cabinet, the design and engineering students were busy at work. Over 300 students voted on multiple designs with the winning one being built. Programmed with many arcade classics students have been enjoying lunch periods playing these retro games.



DECA

Westlane has a growing DECA chapter which participates in business competitions, and teaches aspiring students communication, leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and many other transferable life skills. We have experienced great success with a large number of students who have participated in the program. In our 7th year of competition, 34 Westlane students participated in the DECA Regional competition, with 21 who qualified for the DECA Provincial competition in Toronto. In late April, five Westlane students, Chantelle Tran, Devanshi Patel, Shruti Patel, Ronak Lad and Riya Patel will head to the DECA International Competition (ICDC) in Orlando, Florida. These five students will compete against 18,000 students from around the world, with the goal of bringing back trophies.

As the only school in Niagara Falls with a DECA Chapter, Westlane has a proven track record of winning medals at all levels of competitions. We have won more medals at DECA competitions, than any other school within the Niagara Region. Westlane wishes our teams success at ICDC, and are very proud of our Spartans!





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Junior Girls' Basketball

Westlane's Junior Girls' Basketball team had a record book season this year. The Girls won the annual Laura Secord Tournament and went undefeated in regular season divisional play this year. During the post season the <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiQuoyNys-rhAhWig-AKHS3NAq4QjRx6BAg-BEAU&url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrand.msu.edu%2Flogos%2Findex.html&psig=AOvVaw1Iaf4AGU9vLcNy->



Chess Club

Chess club has begun and is in full swing! Every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at lunch in room 1097. There are currently 20 plus members on the team.

Mr. Damnico



Curling

Westlane Boys curling team at GORE Regionals in Sutton Ontario. Team has advanced to the 71st GORE Mutual Ontario Curling Championship in Pembroke Ontario February 14 - 16.





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Coding - Skills Competition

On Feb. the 17th at Niagara College, Mr Jenkins registered 3 of his Computer Engineering (TEJ) students in the individual coding competition. Dhruv Shah, Dominic Kawa, and Danny Moutilika each had to solve coding questions and program a user interface for a small business. At the end of a long tedious day of competing, Dhruv took home the Silver medal.

Sr Boys Football

This season our Sr Boys Division 1 football team started training in the spring months and throughout the summer where their extra effort and invested time paid off. The team went 6 wins and 2 losses. The Sr boys beat Sir Winston, Grimsby, GFESS (twice), Centennial and loss to AN Myer in the final championship game by two touchdowns. The boys had a season that involved a pasta dinner fundraiser, and finished with a team party at Coach Harle's house. MVP on offense was Mike Osborne and Ty Bennett and on Defense was Josh Bigelow.

