

Good News Release

St. Joseph's High School & Bishop Smith Catholic High School

February 26th, 2024

Our secondary schools have been bustling with activity as they begin the new semester!

At St. Joseph's High School, to say a lot is going on would be an understatement. This dynamic community constantly seeks various ways to reach all students to be engaged as lifelong learners.

The Co-op Education students put on a great Career Fair in Town Square on Friday, January 19th. They talked to students and staff in the school, showing samples of the tools they used on the job and photos highlighting a wide variety of their experiences. Some placements included construction worksites, heavy equipment shops, elementary schools, daycare, a town planning office and surveying work.

Additionally, throughout the year, St. Joseph's partners with Our Lady of Fatima Parish to provide a Community Friendship Meal, free of charge, to anyone in the community once a month. They have about 40 patrons every month. The Food and Nutrition class prepares the food and then delivers it, and the Chaplain and some students from the Pastoral Team serve it. The Catholic Women's League members of OLOF Parish provide beverages and assist with setup and cleanup where the meal is served at OLOF Parish Hall.

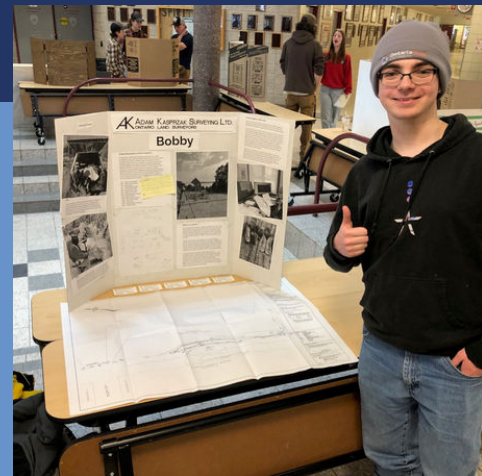
St. Joseph's second Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser takes place on March 5th in support of our "Matthew 25 Fund" which helps students and families in need throughout the school year.

On Ash Wednesday, the school community celebrated a Liturgy of the Word in the gym with the distribution of ashes. During the Lenten Season, they will have their annual 24-Hour Fast in support of charities.

St. Joseph's has also re-launched their Improv teams! They have enough interest to create two teams, and the senior team will be competing in the Canadian Improv Games in Ottawa the week after March Break. An exciting opportunity! The Drama production this year is "The Girl Who Was Asked to Turn Blue". It is a one-act drama, but the amazing cast has added a comedic flare. They have 13 actors and 5 stagehands. St. Joseph's students will be performing this play at the National Theatre School Dramafest (formally known as the Sears Drama Festival) in Ottawa the week after March Break. If they win, as they did last year, they will move on to the Eastern Regionals in Gananoque, then to Provincials in Toronto!

St. Joseph's Athletics teams have seen great success over the past few months! The Jaguars have been busy this winter with a very active playing schedule. The winter season saw the Girls' Volleyball teams, Boys' Basketball teams, Girls' and Boys' Varsity Hockey teams, and the Ski and Snowboard Alpine teams compete in the Upper Ottawa Valley Sports Association. Both the Junior and Senior Basketball teams represented our Association at the Eastern Ontario Championships, and we had 1 skier and 4 snowboarders who moved on to OFSAA, the Provincial Championships.

A big congratulations to the St. Joseph's High School Junior Boys' Basketball team on capturing the UOVHSSA Championship for the very first time! The team will compete in EOSSAA in Russell, Ontario on February 28th.



St. Joseph's Career Fair



St. Joseph's Junior Boys' Basketball team



The 'Junior Jags' have been keeping busy, too! St. Joseph's ski days are always a fantastic school activity, offering students a combination of physical exercise, outdoor adventure, and skill development. Upon reaching Calabogie, students receive an orientation session covering basic skiing or snowboarding techniques, safety guidelines and rules. Qualified instructors conduct ski or snowboard lessons for students, focusing on building fundamental skills such as balance, turning, and stopping. After the initial lessons, students have opportunities to practice their skills and explore the various trails.

Members of the Board Program Team engaged the grade 8's at SJHS with an Experiential Learning Lesson that incorporated coding Micro Bits with an embedded outdoor education component. Students were led through an introduction to coding that enabled them to program one Micro Bit as a radio beacon and a second Micro Bit as a radio receiver. The team then transitioned outdoors and led students in a snowshoe lesson, as well as a search and rescue activity using their two Micro Bits. Connections were made to Pathways and Careers as students began the transition to high school.

At Bishop Smith Catholic High School, exciting opportunities for students are well underway. Students recently participated in an Entrepreneurship Event "Dragon's Den" style, where students had to create their own business and provide a pitch on their great ideas to 'investors.' Students were very creative and knowledgeable on the topics of marketing, investments, and entrepreneurship, answering various questions with confidence! The school was also extremely proud to unveil a new mural hanging in their school hallway. Grade 12 student, Abby Jo Knight, completed this huge project as a part of her independent art project in Mr. Bennett's art course. Congratulations, Abby, on this HUGE achievement. The mural is named "Stars by Name" and is acrylic on wood. Abby Jo Knight reflects on her inspiration for this project:

"As a Christian student at a Catholic school, it is important to me that my art reflects faith. The Bible is full of beautiful imagery, and God's artistic side is seen all throughout creation. Since the bear is the new school mascot, I wanted to include that. I was inspired by Psalm 147:4. God made all of creation, including all the stars, and He knows them by name. God made the bears in the sky - the Big Dipper/Ursa Major and the Little Dipper/Ursa Minor. I want people to see this painting and know that God also created them and knows them by name too."

Additionally, the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) students have been busy with various activities. In January, Grade 11 and 12 students enrolled in the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Transportation program had the chance to participate in a welding clinic hosted by Robert Fleming, a qualified Welder from CNL. Fleming is also a Bishop Smith graduate, and it was a special learning experience for students to explore the variety of welding processes currently used in the industry.

On February 12th & 13th, a 2-day Meat Cutting workshop was offered to Senior Indigenous students from Bishop Smith and St. Joseph's. A total of 14 students participated in this event, 6 from St. Joseph's, and 8 from Bishop. It was provided through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), Skills Ontario, and Seaway Valley Meat Cutting School. Students were instructed on Safe Food Handling, and Basic Knife Handling Skills. They were also taught various meat-cutting techniques. They participated in sausage making and tasting, and all students received meat portions to take home, as well as a tool kit for success.



Entrepreneurship Event at Bishop Smith



Mural by Abby Jo Knight at Bishop Smith



Once again, students travelled to Yamasa, Monte Plata, Dominican Republic from February 9th to the 16th. 4 staff and 11 students participated from both Bishop Smith Catholic High School and St. Joseph's High School. Throughout the week, the team visited 2 high schools and 1 elementary school. They played volleyball and basketball, had Q & A periods in classes, danced, entertained and were entertained!

The team painted homes with the money that participants donated, and concrete entrances will be poured in the coming weeks. One of the homes painted by the team is also receiving concrete flooring poured by the "Floors for Families" group from Deep River. The DR team also worked hard to clean up the Ozama River and finished with 15 garbage bags of waste.

As always, the team went to visit the home of Julia that they built back in 2019, and although she was sick, she continued to praise God and the Canadians on her front step for providing her with a safe home to live in.

Some other highlights from the trip included students and staff attending Mass at Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in Yamasa and being honoured to witness the baptism of over 40 children, ranging in age from infancy to school-aged.

They visited Guillén Brothers to learn about Taiano culture and pottery making. Students were able to mould the clay for the pottery, sculpt, and paint sample pieces, which was a fantastic experience for all. Additionally, the team had an informative tour of the medical clinic in Yamasa, where they did daily reflections related to Scripture, and the students also had a local woman braid their hair.

They also went to Santo Domingo and had the opportunity to tour the walled city, the Monument of the Founding Fathers of The Dominican, The Cathedral of Santa María la Menoren, enjoyed lunch at a local pizzeria, visited Boca Chica Beach on the Caribbean Sea and bartering in Colonial City for a few souvenirs.

The week was an eventful and eye-opening experience. Students and staff are always grateful for the community in Yamasa, as this would not be possible without the Dominican Host Families and local Dominican Friends Ana De La Cruz and Wilton Manzueta.

If you are interested in donating to the Dominican Republic Experience, the team is still holding fundraisers including the maple syrup fundraiser, and an upcoming fundraiser will be "Candles for Any Occasion" which will be just in time for Mother's Day, Father's Day, spring birthdays, bridal or baby showers. The Board has once again partnered with J.P Waxington, and will have 4 scents available. All funds raised will go to supporting the needs of the DR Team's friends in Yamasa.

As you can see, the secondary schools have been bustling with activities. The Board looks forward to seeing what's to come for the remainder of the 2023-24 school year!



Meat Cutting Workshop



The Dominican Republic Experience 2024



The Dominican Republic Experience 2024

