

The GOAL Post

Viewpoint

It takes a community to orient a child

by Marielle Stewart



Marielle Stewart

My dad used to say, "If you love your job, it's not really work." Those words have always stayed with me and I find it very sad when people are stuck in jobs that they don't like.

That's why I believe so strongly in GOAL's emphasis on bringing community partners into the classroom. If we can encourage students to explore all kinds of careers early in their lives, there is a better chance they will make a personal connection with what they are learning in school and find the path that's right for them.

There's no question that it takes time and effort to build successful partnerships. This can be an obsta-

cle for our teachers and other staff who are already very generous with their time. But I can attest to their resourcefulness and creativity. The projects our schools present to the Québec

Partnerships with the community allow kids to explore all kinds of careers . . .

Entrepreneurship Contest respond to a community or a school need. Parents and other members of our community participate in "Take our Kids to Work" and they are invited into classrooms to talk to students about their own career journeys. An initiative called "Jeune explorateur d'un jour" allows CQSB high school students to job shadow for a day in a Québec government department. Science fairs and career days bring the community into the schools.

Sharing strategies

The more you work at creating partnerships, the easier it is to find those connections that make learning relevant. At CQSB, our elementary and secondary principals share GOAL strategies at their regular meetings. The same is true of our professionals.

Nothing will motivate a student more than seeing the link between their studies and where they want to go in life. And for teachers, that means fewer behavioural issues and students who truly want to learn.

Marielle Stewart is Director General of the Central Québec School Board.



She's reaching for space, never mind the sky



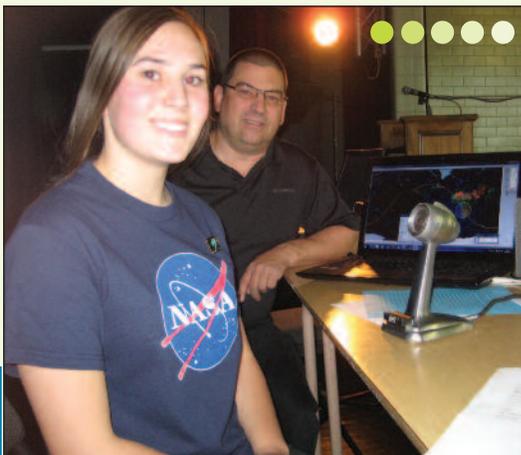
Usually it's the community that inspires the student. But at A.S. Johnson Memorial High School in Thetford Mines, it was the student who inspired her community.

Those present remarked on the awesome quiet that reigned among the more than 300 students, faculty and guests assembled in the school gym as they strained to hear through the static. Then, right on schedule, at 10:41 a.m. on November 14, Secondary III student **Vanessa Leblond-Drolet** made live contact with astronaut **Michael Fossum** aboard the **International Space Station**.

During the 10 minutes the ISS was in range, all eyes and ears were riveted on the stage as Vanessa invited 12 fellow students to approach the microphone and ask the astro-

naut one question each about life on the ISS.

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Vanessa Leblond-Drolet, supported by her dad, Luc, expanded her community to include the International Space Station. Photo: Ian Bussières – Le Soleil

What does the space station smell like?

Listen in on the full conversation between A.S. Johnson students and astronaut Michael Fossum at www.youtube.com/watch?v=cloylDkflTE

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Making Dreams Come True



Fractions have never been this much fun

Spurred on by their new role models at Lakeside Academy, grade 6 students at Dorval Elementary have developed a taste for fractions.

Brenna MacBeth is a grade 6 teacher at **Dorval Elementary**. **Rosie Chiappetta** is a nutritionist with the Lester B. Pearson School Board who teaches cooking skills to **Lakeside Academy** stu-

dents in the Work-Oriented Training Path. The two teachers recently collaborated on a learning activity that left both sets of students clamouring for more.

a muffin-baking lesson with Rosie's 10 students. In the process of combining ingredients, the Dorval students learned how to use measuring tools to better understand fractions. "It took a



With measuring cups and spoons, Lakeside Academy students helped their Dorval visitors to make sense of fractions.

In the spirit of GOAL, Brenna likes her students to use recipes as a real-world application for practising fractions in math. (In English language arts, she then gets her students to read recipes and write about whether they think they'd enjoy eating the end results.)

"Can we do this at home?"

This year, her recipe-themed unit took on yet another dimension, thanks to Rosie's students, several parent volunteers, and Lakeside Academy's new restaurant-style kitchen. Dividing her two classes into small groups, Brenna sent them, over a two-day period, for

“It took a math concept and put it into their world.”

math concept and put it into their world,” says Brenna. “And for some, it was their first time cooking.” Her students are still excited about using recipes to practise fractions and are asking, “Can we do this at home?”

The experience was equally positive for the Lakeside students who got to showcase their skills and be mentors. “These kids haven't had a lot of success academically, and that takes a toll on your self-esteem,” says Rosie. “To be able to plan this activity and teach it six times pretty much autonomously was a real confidence-booster.”

Have focus, discipline and a Plan B, says former NHLer

You don't have to look far to find a young boy—or girl—who dreams of making it big in the NHL. But how many understand what a career in pro sports really entails?



Students at **St. Monica Elementary School** now have a more realistic idea since **Sergio Momesso** came to visit. The former NHLer who started his career with the Montréal Canadiens is now a hockey analyst with TSN Radio 990.

reached his late teens and realized he actually had a chance for a career in the NHL, he had to make some difficult sacrifices. When his friends were out partying, he had to train hard, eat well and get to bed early.

Sergio also let his young audience know that his son who plays Junior A hockey in Ontario still has to attend school. Explaining that sometimes the dream and the discipline aren't enough, he said: “It's important to have a back-up plan.”

- As reported by Marsha Gouett, EMSB

A note about ethical guidelines

The **Conference Board of Canada** defines **business-education partnerships** as “mutually beneficial relationships between employers and educators that are designed to enhance learning for students and other learners.” To assist those interested in creating and sustaining such relationships, the Conference Board has published *Ethical Guidelines for Business-Education Partnerships* http://www.conferenceboard.ca/Libraries/EDUC_PUBLIC/ethical.sflb

On a morning in late January, Sergio was back in his old elementary school to speak to its newest generation of students. Of course, he wasn't there to lecture them. But in between questions about what position he had played and how many trophies he had won, he slipped in some GOAL-friendly gems.

Train hard and get to bed early

Like the fact that knowing three languages has helped him in a hockey career that has taken him throughout Canada and to the U.S. and Europe. Or that when he was a young boy playing cosom hockey in St. Monica's gym, he, too, dreamed of being a star. And that when he



Who knows on which receptive young ears Sergio Momesso's message landed?



She's reaching for space ...

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Photo: Ian Bussières – Le Soleil

It all started in 2010 when Vanessa (the daughter of two ham radio operators and herself a licensed operator) visited the Kennedy Space Station in Florida. There, she and her family learned how schools could apply to link up with the ISS.

Twelve months and a thousand emails

On their return, she exchanged the first of a thousand emails with the NASA school selection committee. Over the 12 months it took to make the contact happen, Vanessa was supported by her principal, **Lisa Larente**, math teacher **Philip Thivierge** and her dad, Luc. Once the initiative became public, the whole school came on board. Secondary I and II science teachers used the ISS as a focus for discussion in class. English teachers got every student to write down the one question they would pose to the astronaut. From these, Vanessa selected the final 12.

This amazing experience has fuelled Vanessa's dream to pursue a career in astronomy. It has also earned her a "personality of the month" award from the local Chamber of Commerce, and an invitation to Québec's National Assembly. Says the enterprising student: "I'll be happy if just one person will see that if you really persevere, you can do pretty much anything you want."

An in-class resource for the asking

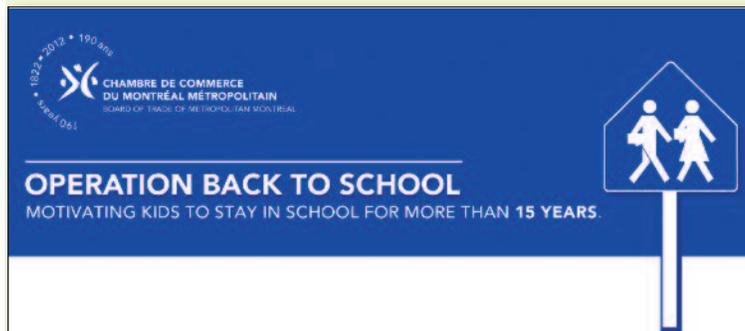
Speakers share their passion and practical career advice

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montréal launched Operation Back to School 16 years ago to help motivate kids to stay in school.

Through classroom visits that last approximately one hour, volunteer business people give high

importance of learning," adds **Antoinette Scarano**, work-study coordinator with the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

"One owner of a multi-million dollar company who never finished high school reminded students that both times and technology have changed. 'What worked for me might not work for you,' he said. 'Find your passion and go for it and keep on learning, whatever it takes.'"



school students an insider's account of their career successes and setbacks and the education that helped them along the way.

"Kids can have a very limited and skewed perspective about careers," says **Steve Scallion**, who has taught the Personal Orientation Project (POP) at Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board. "They may dream of becoming a professional musician but have never taken a music lesson. When you have a guest speaker come in and talk passionately about what he or she does, it makes careers real for kids."

"Our students have really enjoyed hearing from individuals who didn't take the normal high school/CEGEP/university route and yet know the

Operation Back to School is a natural fit for career development courses such as POP, Exploration of Vocational Training and Entrepreneurship. But it also benefits students in any subject or program. "We really try to match

“ Kids can have a very limited and skewed perspective about careers. ”

the profile of the speaker with the needs of the classroom teacher," says the Board of Trade's **Julie Desjardins**, who coordinates Operation Back to School. Participating teachers are also invited to nominate students for the Board of Trade's *Stay-in-School* scholarships.

Want to book a speaker?

Learn more at http://btmm.qc.ca/en/boardoftrade-Getting_involved-Operation_Back_to_school or call **Julie Desjardins** at 514-871-4000 ext. 4047.

Community Learning Centres have technology and contacts

Even in remote areas, students can be exposed to a broad range of careers.

As development agent of the Littoral School Board's **Netagamou Community Learning Centre** in the Lower North Shore community of Chevery (population 350), **Ana Osborne** works with POP and EXPLORATE teachers, an academic and vocational information counsellor, as well as federal, provincial and other local partners to facilitate student career exploration. The hope long-term is that many of the community's young people will be able to build rewarding lives in their home region. "First we ask our students what type of careers they are interested in," says Ana. "Then we

invite professionals and small business operators from the region to come to speak to them in person or by video conference."

Get them thinking outside the box

Students are usually aware of the main career options in education, health and the fishery, but the idea is to get them thinking outside the box. "One day they might become a lawyer or IT specialist for the entire region," points out Ana. "Or they might create their own position by identifying a need and filling it as a self-employed person."



A Netagamou success story

After leaving home to pursue environmental studies at Concordia University, Netagamou alumna **Andrea Roberts** is now back in Chevery with a full-time career. A YMCA Youth Eco Internship coordinated by the Netagamou CLC, in partnership with the Municipalité de la Côte Nord du Golfe Saint-Laurent, led to her permanent position as the land planner for the MRC du Golfe du Saint-Laurent.



Andrea Roberts

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Start young to develop an entrepreneurial spirit

Québec's new entrepreneurship strategy sees schools playing an important role in the development of an entrepreneurial culture.

There is a clear link between the level of entrepreneurial activity in a region and its economic health. Yet, according to the 2011 *Québec Entrepreneurship Index*, Québec has almost half as many entrepreneurs as other Canadian

Canadians. We also have a more negative perception of financial success and are less likely to acknowledge ambition as a positive entrepreneurial quality.

Pilot projects to provide "continuity of service"

To remedy this situation, the Québec government has launched a comprehensive entrepreneurship strategy that recognizes a key role for schools in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and culture. In December 2011, every Québec school board was invited to apply to participate in a pilot project aimed at developing an entrepreneurial culture within 10 different regions of the province.

This pilot project would see an interested high school partner with feeder elementary schools, a vocational centre and possibly even a college. The idea is to provide "a continuity of service" to students interested in pursuing an entrepreneurial path. Within this framework, support will also be offered to seven additional schools in seven other areas. More details will be available in the coming months.



Québec's entrepreneurship strategy "Foncez! Tout le Québec vous admire (Go for it! All Québec admires you)" is available online.

provinces (9.5% of the population vs. 16.3%). While 62% of Quebecers consider entrepreneurship a desirable career, as a culture we are more risk-averse than other

Marketing workshops support student entrepreneurship

Sometimes a knowledgeable community partner can be very close to home.

The Cycle 1 teachers at **Beaconsfield High School** routinely encourage their students to flex their entrepreneurial—and cross-curricular—muscles. Students work in teams to come up with a product, service or event that will "benefit their school, community, the environment or make the world a better place." In developing their ideas, they also put into practice their language arts, math, French language, media and other skills.

Four P's of marketing

To support their students, the BHS teachers have been inviting **Nancy Battet** (the LBPSB's community and partnership liaison coordinator) to give each of the grade 7 classes a one-hour workshop on marketing. (Before joining the school board, Nancy worked in marketing for what was then CP Hotels.)

Using examples close to the students' own experience (cell phones, lawn cutting, dog walking, etc.), Nancy

has shown the kids how to apply the basics of product development, pricing, placement and promotion to their entrepreneurial projects. She has even worked in some Canadian history by explaining how the entrepreneurship behind the building of the railway led to major economic development. This has helped the students grasp the entrepreneurial concept, notes teacher **Rosemary Hill**. "The students explored the needs within our school and community in order to create viable products . . . It is rewarding to observe them take on leadership roles and demonstrate just how capable they are."

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