

BREBEUF COLLEGE SCHOOL

GIFTED & ENRICHMENT
PROGRAMME



ANNUAL REPORT OF PROGRAMME &
ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

2010-2011

MICHAEL DA COSTA '92
GIFTED & ENRICHMENT CO-ORDINATOR

June, 2011

Dear Students, Parents, and Colleagues,

It's a very rewarding experience to work with our Gifted students. Each year our Gifted numbers increase, and we strive to improve the breadth and improve the quality of the Enrichment opportunities that we offer to Brebeuf students. This report outlines the initiatives of the Brebeuf Gifted and Enrichment Programme and other activities with which the Gifted Co-ordinator was involved. None of these would be possible without the tremendous collaboration and support of all members of our community: administrators, teachers, support staff, guidance counsellors, librarians, and parents. Our Gifted students and those seeking enrichment continue to amaze me with their enthusiasm, commitment, and participation. Their success stories bring honour to our school and of that I am proud.

Our programme aims to help students to achieve their full potential through “**L.E.A.D.S.**”:

Leadership in the school and beyond;
Enrichment activities beyond the classroom;
Academic opportunities with like-minded peers;
Development of talents of the whole person, and;
Social justice and service to others.

Our programme themes are: Self-Advocacy (Gr. 9), Communications (Gr. 10 & 11), and Leadership & University Entrance and Scholarships (Gr. 12).

We are lucky that the TCDSB supports a model of having Gifted co-ordinators in each school; many boards do not and as a result the opportunities for Enrichment are substantially reduced for many students. My colleagues in other TCDSB schools are outstanding contributors to the quality of education for gifted and academic students and are an unceasing source of support and inspiration.

Any ideas that you have to improve and expand our Gifted and Enrichment programme are always welcome. I look forward to another year of working with all of you in 2011-12.

Michael Da Costa '92

(1) GIFTED NUMBERS

- Brebeuf's Gifted programme continues to grow and we have one of the larger concentrations of Gifted students in the TCDSB.
- This year Brebeuf had sixty identified Gifted students. Many schools count non-identified students in their numbers; we do not.
- With more Gifted students, we will be able to offer a more regular programme of classroom withdrawal and activities.

(2) INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP'S)

- Each Gifted student is monitored based on his needs as outlined in his I.E.P. and to encourage academic success and involvement.
- Students can book appointments with the co-ordinator at any time for individual counselling.
- Grade meetings are held from time to time to announce important Enrichment activities and to develop skills for student success (i.e. exam study skills, scholarship portfolios, etc).
- Each teacher has a copy of the gifted student's I.E.P.

(3) ENRICHED (PRE-AP / AP) COURSES

- Brebeuf offers Enriched courses, which move as a faster pace and have more breadth than the Academic stream. In 2010-11, we offered them in the following subjects:

- English (10,11,12); Mathematics (10,11); Science (10); Calculus (12)

- By Grade 12, these Enriched courses prepare students to write Advanced Placement Examinations.
- Students not in Enriched courses can still prepare independently and with teacher assistance (where available) for all AP examinations.
- Next year, we will expand the Enriched courses to include Grade 9 Mathematics and Science.

(4) ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAMINATIONS

- This year, students wrote AP examinations in: English Literature and Composition, English Language and Composition, Calculus AB, Computer Science A, US Government and Politics, US Comparative Government, and Microeconomics. Students who are successful will can university credits for their work done at Brebeuf.

- 16 students wrote AP English Literature – the highest number ever!

(5) “PERSPECTIVES” GIFTED CONFERENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

- Twenty Brebeuf students participated in a variety of engaging workshops led by professors and professionals, including: engineering, computers, Jesuit spirituality, music, scholarships, and effective university essay writing.

(6) CANADIAN CLUB LUNCHEONS AT THE ROYAL YORK HOTEL

- Ten students had the opportunity to hear the Hon. Gary Doer, Canadian Ambassador to the USA and former Premier of Manitoba.

(7) IQ@B – ENRICHMENT NEWSLETTER

- Two annual issues highlighting Enrichment activities and opportunities – both inside and outside the school - were produced and delivered to all students.

(8) BREBEUF DEBATING SOCIETY

- Twenty-five students meet weekly over the year for practice debates, tournament preparation, and skills presentations.
- Gifted students lead the Debating Society and mentored the younger students.
- Students participated in four Saturday Pro-Con Tournaments, all of which were hosted at Brebeuf.
- Topics for debate included:

B.I.R.T. High school varsity sports should be eliminated.

B.I.R.T. Classroom learning would be enhanced if students could use smartphones.

B.I.R.T. Religion yields more good than harm.

B.I.R.T. Teachers should not be friends with students on Facebook.

B.I.R.T. Ontario needs a new flag.

B.I.R.T. Group work should be eliminated from the evaluation of a student's grade.

B.I.R.T. Ontario should discontinue the use of nuclear power.

B.I.R.T. The Royal Wedding is newsworthy.

B.I.R.T. Democracy is a viable political system for the Middle East.

- M. Da Costa completed his sixth year as President of the Pro-Con Debating League, of which there are thirty members from Catholic, public, and private schools.
- Many students earned community service hours for assisting as timekeepers and statisticians.
- Brebeuf also hosted the **TCDSB Elementary Gifted Debate Tournament** in February for over 400 students. Our gifted students were among the judges and helpers.

(9) ESSAY AND WRITING CONTESTS

- Students were given the opportunity to enter many essay contests, with teacher feedback. Some included: the Blessed Edmund Rice Contest, sponsored by Brebeuf and the Presentation Brothers; Mathieu Da Costa Contest; Commonwealth Essay Contest; Right to Life Essay Contest; Student Poetry Contest.

(10) BREBEUF SOCIAL JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

- Fifteen students (the majority being Gifted) planned and facilitated the sixth annual Brebeuf Social Justice Symposium for Catholic high school students on the topic: **Welcoming the Stranger: Refugees in Canada**. The event was held at St. Michael's College at University of Toronto and over 250 students from across the TCDSB attended. The keynote speakers included Fr. Jack Costello S.J., Director of Jesuit Refugee Service; representatives and refugees from Romero House; Luke Stocking of Development and Peace; TCDSB students who volunteered in Africa; and Deacon Ron Williams from Chalice - Catholic Child Sponsorship. Students also provided social justice workshops from various groups to encourage students to become active in putting their faith into action in their schools and local communities.

(11) ACADEMIC AWARDS NIGHT & GRADUATION EXERCISES

- The Gifted Programme planned the event in October to recognize the hard work of our students who attained Honour Roll status and who received the top marks in each subject. The event was held at night so parents could attend and celebrate their sons' successes.
- The Gifted Programme also co-ordinates the Graduation Exercises and other opportunities to recognize students' academic success.

(12) BREBEUF FAMILY COMMUNION BREAKFAST

- Our spirits were nourished by a Mass at the school for students, staff, and their families, followed by a breakfast and a celebration for all in our Atrium. This has been an important tradition in building community since 1963.
- The organizers were Ms. I. Martin and Mr. M. Da Costa.

(13) WINTER ACTIVITY DAY

- The Gifted Programme planned a wide variety of events for all students to enrich their school experience beyond the classroom. This year's activities included: Royal Ontario Museum, skating, skiing, hockey, bowling, badminton, table tennis, Playdium, Hockey Hall of Fame, martial arts, and films. A new addition this year was volunteering at the Good Shepherd Homeless Refuge, Gibson House Seniors' Home, and Cummer Lodge.

(14) BREBEUF ALUMNI MENTORSHIP

- Gifted students often have specific questions about careers in which they are interested. They are put into e-mail contact with Brebeuf alumni in those fields to get a first-hand account of the professions and mentorship opportunities.
- M. Da Costa has been the Vice-President, Staff Liaison, and webmaster of the Alumni Association since 1998.

(15) *The B* NEWSPAPER

- Gifted students are encouraged to put their thoughts and ideas into writing in Brebeuf's own newspaper.
- There were three issues of *The B* published this year.
- The moderators were Ms. I. Martin and Mr. M. Da Costa.

(16) SOCIAL JUSTICE CLUB

- This student group meets weekly and is involved in social justice projects, such as:
 - Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
 - Sponsoring a child in the Developing World through Chalice: Christian Child Care International
 - Ghana Week – events to raise awareness and funds for the Presentation Brothers' school we sponsor in Yendi, Ghana. The money is raised under the **Brother Lawrence Maher Fund for Africa**, a fund named in honour of our former Principal and a true embodiment of our school's ethos of forming "men for others".

(17) THEATRE

- Gifted students enjoyed Shakespeare's *Richard III* at the Stratford Festival (with S.J.M.P.).

(18) LETTERS OF REFERENCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- Grade 12 students received tips, proofreading assistance, and letters of reference in applying for university programmes and scholarships.
- Grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 Gifted students receive a mini-workshop on applying for scholarships and creating a scholarship portfolio.

(19) COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS

- Students in Grade 9 were advised that their IEP's will allow them to substitute Grade 10 Careers and Civics for other courses that they need in order to fulfil career and university goals (subject to the Principal's discretion). Students who substitute these courses receive mini-classes on valuable aspects of the Careers and Civics curricula.

(20) MODEL UNITED NATIONS

- Forty-five students attended the **Catholic Student United Nationals Assembly (C.S.U.N.A.)** and four participated in the **Bishop Allen Model United National (B.A.M.U.N.)**. Students represented countries in mock simulations of the U.N. and honed their skills in debating, research, writing, and public speaking. Students wrote resolution papers on world issues and argued their merits in committees and in front of the whole Assembly. Over 500 students from across the TCDSB participated in CSUNA and 100 in BAMUN.
- Fifteen Brebeufians also volunteered as "security" assistants at CSUNA and helped the ladies of SJMP run this phenomenal learning opportunity.

(21) ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROMOTION

- A website to promote the Gifted Programme was put online – <http://brebeufgifted.yolasite.com>
- A bulletin board near the library also promoted events and activities to the student body.
- A new facebook group was established: "Brebeuf College School Gifted Programme".
- M. Da Costa edits the *Brebeuf Relations* newsletter which highlights good news from the Brebeuf community and cites many of the Enrichment opportunities and successes of our students.

(22) DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARDS

- Students were assisted in signing up for the internationally-recognized Duke of Edinburgh Awards programme, which encourages students to become volunteers, learn new skills, be physically active, and undertake an adventurous journey.
- Next year we hope to sign up all Gifted students.

(23) JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

- Our Gifted students ran workshops for their elementary school Gifted peers in such areas as public speaking and social justice.

(24) QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY'S E=MC² ENRICHMENT WEEK

- Eight Brebeufians travelled to Kingston to study for a week at Canada's best university (my bias) with Gifted peers from across the Province. The programme gives them a taste of university courses and campus life.

(25) KAIROS RETREATS

- Brebeuf ran two Jesuit Kairos retreats, which promote student leadership, community cohesion, and Ignatian spirituality. Next year we hope to have two or three for Gr. 11 and 12 students .

(31) EDMUND RICE VOLUNTEER AWARDS

- Based on a similar programme in the Irish Presentation Brothers' schools, this awards scheme recognizes students who perform twenty hours or more of volunteer service to their communities and reflect on it in light of their faith and the life of Bl. Edmund Rice. It is an excellent way for students to show they are "men for others", the goal of a Brebeuf education.

(32) ST. ANTOINE DANIEL SCIENCE FAIR

Brebeuf Gifted students serve as judges for the science fair projects of their elementary school peers. This provides a valuable service to one of our local feeder schools and develops critical thinking, communication, and leadership skills in the students.

(33) PREFECTS

Thirty students were chosen as prefects. These students; model good behaviour and comportsment; represent the student body as ushers and tour guides; perform other duties as asked. Next year, these students will be "upper year buddies" to the Grade 9 students to act as mentors, tutors, and sources of information.

SOME GOALS FOR 2011-2012

- Increase numbers following the Duke of Edinburgh Programme. Ideally we will sign up every gifted student.
- Increase numbers of students writing AP exams
- Bi-weekly meetings with all Gifted students (by grade or as a group)
- Establishment of an Enrichment Council to help plan and promote Enrichment activities and develop leadership potential
- Increased number of activities with Gifted students from SJMP and Loretto Abbey
- Increase gifted involvement in Enrichment activities
- Testing of students for giftedness who were not identified in primary school
- Visiting elementary school gifted centres
- Brebeuf Guest Speaker Series
- Public Speaking Contest
- Reviewing all OSR files from non-TCDSB students to determine giftedness of students not in Trillium.