

## December Student Trustee Report

J. Serdetchnaia

### STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT

At this time, Student Trustee J. Serdetchnaia made the following remarks.

*“Good evening, Mr. Chair, Mr. Director, Trustees, Staff, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

*As students we are encouraged to ask questions, and today I have a specific one to ask.*

*We are approaching the holiday season and the start of second semester, which marks the latter half of the last academic year for grade twelve students. We are finishing up our high school careers and looking forward to the future, excitedly at times and tentatively at others.*

*The fast-approaching future provides us with perspective to look back on the past four years and to ask questions. My questions today are: Why did we choose to take those particular courses? Why have we made these certain friendships? Why were we part of those specific extracurricular activities? What have we learned? What have we contributed? What have we gained from this experience?*

*In a way, I believe that school takes away from our ability to ask questions, especially when it comes to questioning our motives. We follow a set of pre-determined guidelines and strive to meet and exceed the expectations. Perhaps we do not look for the reasons behind what we are doing.*

*This question came up last week, when Sepideh and I received an email from a student attending York Region’s Westmount Collegiate Institute who is writing an article in the school newspaper on the intention behind student activism. The question she poses is: If a student does not care about the club or cause and is joining for his or her personal benefit, does this student take away from the activity? Could the student even be considered a detriment to the activity?*

*I responded with a resounding no for the general scenario. After all, few students that I know can honestly say that they have never considered how joining a club or activity would be a benefit to them. In fact, I believe that passion comes with involvement. In order to truly care about something, you have to experience it first.*

*Perhaps sometimes there is no answer to the question of why, at least not at the moment.*

*On a different note, it is that time of the year again. The halls are decked with holly, the staff and students are all jolly. If not because of the various holidays, then at least because of the well-deserved upcoming vacation. At any rate that is the situation here in York Region, where we are fortunate to have the opportunity to enjoy this season.*

*Around the world, the case is quite different. Some regions may not be able to take part in the materialistic aspect of the holidays but may still enjoy the season. Others may not even be aware of it.*

*For that reason, December the sixth marks the first shipment of a pilot project between me and a group of my friends. We are calling it 'Project Gold Star'. The concept is simple, we collect new and used school supplies that would otherwise end up in a landfill and divert them to places in need. 'Project Gold Star' is a double-edged sword, serving as an environmental and international social justice tool. The first set of 'Project Gold Star' supplies is making its way toward Mexico in time for the holidays.*

*This project was the combined effort of a group of people. We can easily answer any question of why, any inquiry into motive. With involvement and previous initiative came passion. If previously we did not know why, we have now developed the ability to say with a certainty, "because..."*

*Now, Ladies and Gentleman, I would like to wish you all the joy of this festive season, a time to spend with family and friends, and a Happy New Year, but first, a successful remainder of a meeting.*

*Thank you."*