

RWA



News

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MARCH 2015

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Mme Nathalie Cheff, Vice-Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal



Believe it or not, spring has arrived! With spring comes our annual grade level trip to Washington DC for Secondary III students. One hundred and fifty-one students departed for Washington on March 23 for a one-week tour of the US capital. Special thanks goes to Mr. Diacoumacos and the other chaperones for their support of this valuable and enjoyable educational experience.

At its March meeting, the Royal West Academy Governing Board voted to approve a change to next year's Secondary IV grade level trip. As you know, the Secondary IV ski trip was cancelled for the past two years due to low enrollment. As a result, the Administration and staff proposed a grade level trip to Boston MA in September 2015. The timing of the trip coincides with the Secondary I trip in September which was also approved by Governing Board. This will allow Secondary IV students and teachers to focus on their academic workload in the spring when preparation for the Ministry exams is crucial. Students and parents will be informed more about the next year's trip in the coming days.

In order to serve those students that showed interest in the ski trip, Mr. Zigby has organized an ECA trip to

Mont-Sainte-Anne on March 27–29 for students in Secondary IV and V.

On March 20, CBC's Daybreak broadcasted from Montreal West. As part of their coverage of the Montreal West community, RWA students were interviewed about the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Club at their school. Royal West Academy is extremely proud of the courage and initiative displayed by our students, both in the formation of the LGBT Club as well as their willingness to discuss their own struggles in an effort to raise awareness of gender issues within the general public. We hope that our students' stories can be an example for other schools and for students facing similar challenges in the future.

Also on March 20, RWA hosted this year's annual Dance Show, entitled *Zirka*. The profits from this year's show will be donated to the RWA Foundation and the Dans La Rue charity. Over 100 students prepared all year for this exciting display of dance talent from a variety of cultures and styles. As in previous years, the teachers performed a surprisingly great dance routine. Congratulations to this year's Dance Show executive team: Jessica Muha, Sierra Leibner, Emily Tilson, Tali Friedman, Genevieve Shemie, and Emma Lalonde. Special thanks to Mr. Zigby, Mr. Nemeth, Ms. Dillon, and Ms. Suarez for all the time and effort put into this event.

Once again this year, RWA has been crowned GMAA Indoor Track and Field Champions (*see page 5 for details*). This year it was the Bantam Girls team that brought home the championship banner. The team championship was highlighted by an individual championship by Secondary II student, Alison Looper. Alison won the aggregate championship in the Midget Girls category. Congratulations to all the participants.



We are proud of your efforts and your accomplishments. Special thanks to their coach, Ms. O'Neil, for her efforts.

In recent days, parents of students in Secondary III and IV received a course list that represents the tentative academic load for your child for the 2015–2016 school year. It is based on your child's indicated preferences and course availability as well as academic results to date. Please be aware that this academic load is subject to change based on your child's final marks and/or any scheduling constraints. Final marks for Secondary IV and V students as well as several courses (accelerated Math, PPO, and Art) for Secondary III students, will be those printed on the "Résultats des apprentissages sanctionnés" sent by MELS to your home address in early July 2015.

A word of caution to parents of Secondary V students regarding their placement in the CEGEP program of their choice. As you know, many CEGEPs can only accommodate a fraction of the students that apply every year. If your child is lucky enough to be admitted to the CEGEP program of his/her choice, that acceptance is conditional. In the recent past we have had students see their acceptance revoked in July because their grades dropped below a standard acceptable to the CEGEPs. We encourage all students, with the support of their parents, to continue the practices that have ensured their success to date.

As we approach the end of the school year, we begin to prepare for final exams. Parents are reminded that students must be in school for exams until June 22, 2015. The official exam schedule will be available at the end of April. Many exams are already scheduled in May, therefore parents should avoid making appointments for their children during this time. Any absence for an end of year exam must be supported by a medical note. We appreciate your cooperation.

Parents should note that April 17, 2015, originally listed as a tentative Pedagogical Day, will be a regular school day. The date for the Graduation Exercises has also been confirmed: the ceremony will take place on June 4. More information will be going out to Secondary V students in the coming days. The tentative Pedagogical Day scheduled for June 5 will only be confirmed after April 15.

Earlier in March, RWA proudly presented the 2014 Governor General's Academic Medal to Tian Yi Chen. This esteemed award recognizes the outstanding scholastic achievements of students across Canada; it is the most prestigious academic award that Canadian students can receive. The bronze medal, which Tian Yi received, is awarded to the high school student with the highest average in his or her graduating class. On behalf of the Governor General, Mr. Pita—along with Mme Cheff, Ms. Juhasz, and Ms. Holloway—presented the award and accompanying certificate to Tian Yi. Congratulations to Tian Yi Chen for all the hard-work and effort that has resulted in her receiving this impressive award!



Finally, we would like to congratulate Gabrielle Goldman for winning the Art and Essay Contest from the Institut du Dialogue Interculturel Montreal. Gabrielle was presented with a plaque and a laptop!



Provincial Debating Championship

By Ms. Catherine Holloway

Royal West Academy's Debate Team participated in the Quebec Student Debating Association's Provincial Championship on February 20–21. The tournament was hosted by Trafalgar School for Girls and Lower Canada



College. Students at both the Junior and Senior levels participated in six rounds of debate over the weekend.

Senior debater Logan Stack was the fourth place speaker overall. The Junior team of Arthur Ayestas Hilgert and Alexander Rona was the fourth place team, which qualifies them for Nationals. Alex and Arthur will represent RWA and the province of Quebec at the

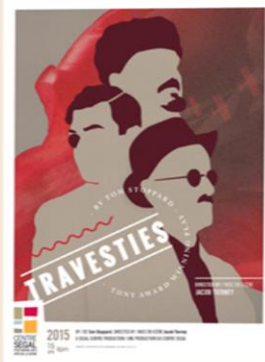
SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

Exclusive reception with Jacob Tierney!

On April 15, 2015, the Royal West Academy Foundation invites you to its fundraising evening at the Segal Centre to see the Tony Award-winning play *Travesties*, directed by none other than RWA grad Jacob Tierney (class of '96), director of the film *The Trotsky*.

And Jacob Tierney has confirmed that he will attend the private RWAF reception following the play! Here's your chance to meet him and get the inside scoop of what it is like to be a director of a Tony Award-winning play, an actor, and a celebrity!

Tickets are \$60 each, only \$1 more than at the theatre box office. The big difference is that for every ticket you purchase, you will receive a tax receipt for \$25, the portion of the ticket price that goes to RWA to help renovate the auditorium. Tickets are limited, so order yours now on the RWAF website at <http://rwaf.ca>.



A quick summary of the play: As World War I rages throughout Europe, three of the 20th Century's most revolutionary minds—communist leader Vladimir Lenin, author James Joyce, and Dadaist founder Tristan Tzara—meet in Switzerland and take centre stage in Tom Stoppard's brilliant and riotously funny modern masterpiece. Winner of a Tony Award for Best Play, *Travesties* is a dazzling exploration of art, philosophy, and politics. The play is suitable for high school students, but probably more interesting for those aged 16 years old and up.

Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 8 PM (reception with cash bar will immediately follow the play). Tickets are \$60 each (taxes included), a tax receipt will be issued for \$25.

You can play a part!

We are always looking for volunteers to join the RWA Foundation. No matter your experience or time available, everyone can play a role. If you have any questions or fundraising ideas, contact Jasmin Uhthoff, Vice-President, at rwafoundation@gmail.com or visit us at <http://rwaf.ca>.

Make a donation! Just go to our website at <http://rwaf.ca> and give what you can. Every donation takes us closer to transforming our 80-year-old auditorium into a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre for our children.

Thank you all for all your support to date and we hope to see many of you at the theatre in April!

Junior National Debate Championships taking place in Winnipeg MB at the beginning of May 2015.

Congratulations to the whole team and best of luck to Arthur and Alex!

Costa Rica Trip

By Emily Sarid



On February 24, a group of 25 Royal West Academy students had the great opportunity to visit Costa Rica. The idea behind this trip came from the amazing Environment Committee and was designated for Secondary IV and V students. We were accompanied by two tour guides who educated and informed us about all the uniqueness of Costa Rica. We had the privilege to learn about their culture and way of life, and explore the different parts of the country.

On the very first full day, we visited volcanoes, waterfalls, and the hot springs. We were amazed by the nature surrounding us and felt privileged to be in this breathtaking environment. We then stayed in

Monteverde for three nights, a beautiful cloud forest where we hiked and cleared trails. During our stay in Monteverde we zip lined across a two-mile distance. It was the most thrilling and amazing adventure I have ever experienced. The zip line overlooked the trees lining the astounding landscape of beautiful mountains.

Our next stay was at Durika. I cannot fully express the impact the group felt when we arrived. There was a sense of peacefulness and joy surrounding us. We felt as if nothing else in the world was going on and there was nothing to worry about, all we had to do was inhale the outstanding nature around us. Durika is a self-sustained community where we participated as volunteers. In the mornings we woke up at 5:30 AM and had the choice of milking goats, clearing the banana plantation, working the fields of the coffee plantation, yoga, or gardening. After the first activity, we enjoyed the freshest and most delicious food for breakfast. Afterwards, we had another choice of activities, which included clearing trails, learning and having a hands-on experience with medicinal plants, making soaps, or



enduring a tiring but rewarding hike to the waterfalls. One of the evenings we had a salsa night where everyone came together to dance and had a blissful time enjoying each other's company. Over the next couple of days we visited a rainforest, different markets, and a beautiful beach where the water was turquoise and the sunset was incredible.

Costa Rica was an incredible experience that not only changed my outlook on life but also taught me many things such as the importance of happiness. This experience made me realize how fortunate we are and how much we have to be grateful for. A great thank you is merited to the outstanding teachers—Mme Cayer, Ms. Suarez, and Mr. Aiken—who not only made this trip an amazing one, but also helped us create special bonds with each other that will last forever.

Indoor Track And Field

By Ms. Marie-Claire O'Neil

The Indoor Track and Field season came to an end on March 21 at the provincials. Our Royal West Academy athletes began training for the season in November, working hard on improving their cardio as well as their jumping and throwing techniques.

The boys competed on February 12, which was well-attended considering it was the same day as the RWA Science Fair. Some highlights from the boys' competition include:

- Spencer Levine: (4th) 800m & (4th) 1500m
- Oliver Sabelli: (6th) 800m
- Michael Almanza: (5th) 1500m & (3rd) 3000m
- Julian Shaw: (6th) 3000m & (5th) high jump
- Kourousch Akhbari: (3rd) high jump
- Noah Kochanski: (2nd) high jump & (4th) triple jump

The girls competed on February 20 and finished the day with many outstanding results:

- Alison Looper: (1st) 400m & (1st) 800m & (1st) 1500m & (3rd) triple jump
- Finn Brennan-Kripp: (5th) 1500m
- Gloria Anastasopoulos: (2nd) 3000m & (5th) high jump
- Sophie Comtois: (2nd) hurdles

- Annalies Smith: (4th) long jump & (1st) triple jump
- Isabelle Ouimet: (5th) triple jump
- Romy Shoam: (6th) shot put
- Audrey Baillagre: (3rd) 800m
- Juliana Lin: (6th) 1500m
- Kirsten Frantz: (1st) 800m & (1st) 800m & (3rd) 60m hurdles & (2nd) high jump
- Maddy Jang: (4th) 3000m & (5th) 60m hurdles
- Emma Lee Hoffman: (4th) long jump
- Arielle Sadaka: (3rd) triple jump



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Apr 2	Public Speaking
Apr 3	Good Friday
Apr 6	Easter Monday
Apr 8	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
Apr 13	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
Apr 14	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
Apr 20–24	Earth Week
Apr 23	Secondary III vaccinations
Apr 23	La Nuit Verte: Utopia/Dystopia
Apr 24	Free Dress Day
Apr 24	Dessert Concert
Apr 27	Pedagogical Day (afternoon only)
Apr 28–May 2	Marine Biology trip
Apr 30–May 1	Book Fair

RWA



News

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RWA News is published during the academic year (from September to May) on the Royal West Academy website at www.royalwestacademy.com. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwanews@gmail.com.





Alissa Sklar, Ph.D. runs risk(within)reason, a Montreal consultancy project focused on kids, technology and risky behaviours. Dr. Sklar has a Ph.D. in communications and cultural studies, taught in the Communication Studies Department at Concordia University and worked in the field of adolescent risk prevention at McGill University. In addition to her academic and consulting work, Dr. Sklar is a multiple award winning feature writer, with a particular interest in parenting, youth and digital technology issues. For more information, please visit www.risk-within-reason.com



Raising Your Child as a Digital Citizen: A FREE Workshop for Students and Their Parents

Presentation and discussion with Alissa Sklar, Ph.D.

- Learn what it means to raise a “digital citizen”
- Understand how technology use has changed the way kids socialize, do schoolwork and sleep
- Set up effective household rules to complement what they are learning in school
- Create and enforce reasonable limits on use of digital devices
- Keep your kids talking to you about what’s on their mind and what’s happening at school
- Build positive online “footprints” for future school and job applications
- How to (mostly) stop worrying by being prepared.

Join us for a practical discussion about what you should know when it comes to kids and digital technology, and what you can do to promote safe, responsible, creative and productive use of these wonderful tools.

Wednesday, April 22

19:00 – 21:00

Royal West Academy Auditorium

Recommended for Secondary 1, 2 & 3

Students of all grade levels and their parents are welcome!

Please register in advance, by email: rwaadmissions@emsb.qc.ca



Royal West Academy