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Jun 9, 2016

Calgary Christian student earns \$80,000 scholarship



Palliser Regional Schools Associate Superintendent Pat Rivard congratulates student Andrew te Linde on his scholarship, during a special announcement at a student leadership celebration event in Calgary this spring.

Andrew te Linde joins prestigious group as Schulich Leader

A Grade 12 student at Calgary Christian School has been awarded an \$80,000 scholarship to study engineering at the University of Saskatchewan.

Andrew te Linde was nominated by his school for a Schulich Leader Scholarship. Of more than 1,500 applicants across Canada, te Linde received one of 50 scholarships to high school graduates pursuing undergraduate programs in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM).

Calgary Christian Secondary Principal Jason Kupery says Te Linde possesses high academic and emotional intelligence and is an incredible leader, having served on student council, as a mentor and tutor to other students, and as an organizer and emcee of Discover U, Palliser's leadership conference for Grade 7-12 students.

"Beyond the walls of the school, Andrew has been a leader and champion in the community as well, designing a hand bell choir for seniors with dementia — something he developed a heart for while serving a summer internship through the Career Pathways program last year," Kupery says. "Andrew is a bright light and a wonderful example for others in our community."

Te Linde says while researching scholarship opportunities at the start of the school year, he came across plaques on the wall at his school acknowledging two former students who were nominated for Schulich scholarships.

"It is a big thing just to be nominated," Te Linde says. "I was very excited that the school would nominate me and didn't really expect more."

Te Linde was thrilled to receive the big news.

"It was phenomenal," Te Linde says, remembering the phone call from the university, one of Schulich's partner schools. "I had to sit back for a minute to take it all in. I'm still shocked to this day."

Aside from the scholarship itself, the Schulich Foundation offers webinars featuring other scholars and opportunities to network with others in STEM professions. Coupled with the freedom of financial stress related to post-secondary costs, Te Linde says the award creates phenomenal opportunities for mentorship, career exploration and networking.

"It's very exciting in that respect," he says.

Te Linde, whose sister is studying to be an engineer, says engineering has always been an interest, but his long-term goal is pediatric medicine. In speaking with mentors, he says he's confident his goal is achievable through this less conventional route.

One of the highlights of his high school life was his work with the Palliser student leadership conference as a member of the "Blue Team," a nickname for student organizers and volunteers who helped plan and run the event. When approached about volunteering with the Blue Team, he initially hesitated out of concern the work would take time from his academics.

"Quickly I found that what I was learning at the meetings and during the actual conferences was really applicable," he says. "I just see a process that's very transferable to a career or university, the process of effectively brainstorming."

"Being part of the Blue Team has taught me lots of things — just sheer organization, coming up with great ideas and following those ideas out into something you can stand by and say 'hey this is something we got out of this process.'"

He says some people might think attending a small high school is a sacrifice. Instead, he found the experience enriching.

"I'm very blessed to have some very important mentors in my high school career," he says. They offered encouragement, suggested new books to read, or offered new challenges that pushed him out of his comfort zone. "They offered simple things to spark curiosity in a student. . . Those things build on each other. One opportunity kind of leads into the next."

As a member of the Blue Team, he was invited to join a group of Palliser students presenting at the National Congress on Rural Education in Saskatoon this spring, another way "to share the cool stuff we did."

"The opportunity I was given through Palliser was phenomenal," he says. "I learned so much in that last year."

Te Linde, who will serve as valedictorian at the school's graduation ceremonies on June 28, has even taken a collaborative approach to his speech, consulting with classmates about what they hoped would be reflected in his address.

"You step back and you realize you need other people around you in order to have a good end product," he says. "It's not all about me. It's about everybody else who brings something to the table and it's about the product you're able to create collectively."

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