



The P.A.

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Student Spotlight: A Man on Many Missions

By VHS Admin. Posted in [Student Spotlights](#) on May 16, 2016.



Meet Ethan Rigby! Ethan lives in Arva, Ontario with his family. He is currently in grade 11 at his day school where he is working in Peer Leading for the Developmental Education classes, playing percussion for the senior and jazz bands, and competing with the wrestling and track teams. This year, Ethan is also excited to be involved with the Special Olympics!

Outside school, Ethan works part-time at a fine dining restaurant in London and teaches snowboarding at [Boler Mountain](#) - the local ski hill. Ethan also volunteers as a snowboarding coach for special needs kids through [London Track 3 Ski School](#), and he is an active member of [Scouts Canada](#) as well as a Beaver Activity Leader. As a Venture Scout, he loves camping, hiking, and canoeing. Ethan plays hockey in the winter and soccer in the summer. He is also certified by the [Professional Association of Diving Instructors](#) as a diver. During the summer of 2016, Ethan will be volunteering with special needs kids at [Camp Kodiak](#) as well as spending a month in leadership training at [Camp Arowhon](#).

Ethan heard about [Waterloo Unlimited](#) after we shared information about the program on our [blog](#):

I just completed a fantastic week at Waterloo Unlimited with their Grade 11 Design Program (thanks to seeing it on your website) and now, more than ever, I hope to attend the University of Waterloo

when I finish high school. I think I will apply for software engineering, mechatronics, or computer engineering, but I also absolutely loved a small group session we did on Quantum Computing!

Ethan began taking courses with Virtual High School in grade 9 so that he could take a wider variety of courses. Besides his interest in the math and science courses, Ethan also enjoys designing and building computers and composing music. His day school has wonderful tech programs that he wanted to take, such as Design Tech, Construction Tech, and Computer Tech. With his interests spanning across multiple departments, Ethan wouldn't have had room in his timetable to take all of these courses. Because Ethan is so continuously busy, he finds that taking courses with VHS has allowed him to meet many of his personal goals as he notes here:



Ethan with a kangaroo during his Global Journeys adventure in Australia & New Zealand.

I love being able to work at my own pace, and my teachers are really great. They taught me how to write really good essays, and this has helped tremendously with the grade 11 English that I am taking now. It is really helpful to be able to hand in rough drafts and then get feedback from your teachers before handing in your final copy. I have found all my teachers very friendly and willing to help me. The courses are very well laid out and easy to follow. I used to dislike writing, but now that I can do it at my own pace, I find that I really like it, and I've found that I am actually pretty good at it. With VHS, I can earn my compulsory credits while still taking all of the electives and co-ops that I want. I should finish Grade 12 with around 38 credits.

Another really great program that Ethan enjoyed is [Global Journeys](#), which is a partner with VHS. Global Journeys designs exciting and meaningful travel programs during which students can complete Ontario Secondary School Diploma courses. Ethan took part in Global Journeys' grade 10 English program at Oxford University, as well as their grade 11 biology program in Australia and New Zealand. Ethan says, "Both were awesome experiences, and I highly recommend their programs as well as Virtual High School."

Thank you, Ethan, for sharing your exciting story!

UPDATE (May 9, 2017): We are excited to share that Ethan was recently awarded the the \$100,000 [Schulich Leader in Engineering Award](#) for the University of Calgary. The award is intended to assist exceptional students in pursuing their dreams to become the next global pioneers in technology, mathematics, and science. Ethan says, "Taking courses with VHS has definitely helped me win this award because I could take all of my technology courses at my day school." VHS is proud to have had the opportunity to support Ethan throughout his high school journey and we wish him all of the best as he transitions into post-secondary studies at the University of Calgary this fall.

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