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St. Mary student sets local scholarship first

Perry Bergson
 Published on June 12, 2014

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Mark Krammer won't soon forget his awards day at St. Mary High School on Wednesday.

The 17-year-old student was the first person in Prince Albert to be offered two Schulich Leader Scholarships. The four-year, \$60,000 scholarship will allow him to attend the University of Western Ontario in the fall.

He also captured the University of Toronto National Book Award, which recognizes the top students across the country.

"It was a great day," he said with a wide smile on Wednesday afternoon.

York University also offered him a prestigious Schulich scholarship in early April.

"When I got the call from York it was a real shock because I didn't really expect to get anything out of the Schulich," Krammer says. "I just thought I'd put in my application. I didn't think seriously that I would be chosen."

A few weeks later he heard from Western.

While York offered space engineering, the program at Western was for his chosen field of astrophysics. It



© Submitted
 Mark Krammer stands on the campus of the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont., where he'll be starting school in the fall. The St. Mary student captured a lucrative Schulich Leader Scholarship, the first to do so in St. Mary history.

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was that distinction that ultimately made up his mind for him.

“They’re both really good schools,” he says, adding another factor that weighed in was when he was picked for the scholars select group at Western.

That’s an elite program that allows him to take an extra class in which he does research with a professor.

“Since I plan on going into research, especially since I got that opportunity, I’ll take it from Western.”

He admits that his goals may change as he begins his post-secondary studies but for now Krammer hopes to go into astrophysics research that would allow him to examine the start of the universe.

The Schulich awards are for students enrolling in science, technology and engineering areas of study. There were 1,147 applications for a total of 40 Schulich awards among the 20 participating universities.

St. Mary teacher and guidance counsellor Janice McLeod helped Krammer with his applications. She has a theory about what set him apart.

“He excels in academics,” she says. “He has a very high average but he also has outstanding community leadership. He volunteers at the food bank, he volunteers at his parish ... He’s been on our student leadership council since Grade 9 and he’s always willing to help with any activity.”

He served as treasurer of the council this year.

“He’s very humble about his achievements,” she says.

Krammer was quick to praise all of the teachers at St. Mary but says he was particularly inspired by physics teacher Dennis Corcoran.

St. Mary nominated him for the University of Toronto award, which is worth \$5,000 in the first year and \$1,500 for three additional years. The university’s website says the award is presented to “students who demonstrate superior academic performance, original and creative thought, and exceptional achievement in a broad context. They excel in academic pursuits, demonstrate enthusiasm for intellectual exploration and have a strong involvement in the lives of their schools and communities.”

That’s similar to the requirements to win the Schulich

Krammer says he also thinks it’s the latter part that may have led to his success.

“The award was based on a combination of academic and community-based criteria” he says. “I did quite a bit in the community as well ... I think that helped me get an edge over the candidates who just had great academics.”

No St. Mary student has ever won either award.

“It’s quite an achievement,” McLeod says.

The significance isn’t lost on Krammer.

“I know that St. Mary produces a lot of great graduates,” he says. “A lot of our alumni have gone on to serious scholarships and do great things.”

He’ll head to Western at the end of August.

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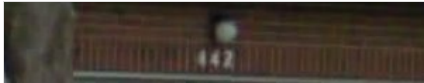
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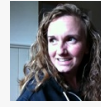
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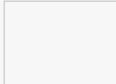
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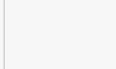
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