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## The Herald

# MBCI grad has sights set on MIT

By: Dan Falloon

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PHOTO BY DAN FALLOON

Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute graduate Alex Czehryn was recently awarded a 2014 Schulich Leader Scholarship.

A recent Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute grad received a major boost for a cause close to him.

Alexander Czehryn, 18, was awarded an \$80,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship to study engineering at the University of Manitoba beginning this fall. Czehryn was one of 40 winners selected from over 1,100 nominees who demonstrated at least two of the attributes of academic excellence, outstanding community, business, or entrepreneurial leadership, and financial need. The award is given to students taking a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics academic path.

The Windsor Park resident is inspired by his father Peter's battle with hemophilia, a genetic disorder that impedes the body's blood-clotting ability.

Though Czehryn said treatment for the condition has improved over the past decade, there is still no cure, something he hopes to help remedy. He plans to study mechanical engineering here in Winnipeg before progressing to study tissue engineering at another school, with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as the dream school.

"They do have medicine, but it would be nice to completely eliminate the whole issue," he said. "When we were younger, they didn't have as-good medication, so we would have to go to the hospital regularly. A few times, he would get a bleed, and then he would have to be rushed to emergency.

"That impacted me, knowing my father was always in danger. It was never completely safe."

Czehryn said because of advances in medication, the family hasn't had to make a hospital visit in several years.

Czehryn also said several people the family knew through the Hemophilia Society of Canada were affected by the tainted blood scandal, contracting AIDS or Hepatitis C. His father also contracted Hepatitis C, but was able to benefit from interferon treatment, though Czehryn said it was largely ineffective.

Czehryn added the scholarship will help him immensely, as it will more than cover the cost of his undergraduate schooling, and will give him a starting point for his education beyond that.

"Getting this amount means I can further my education even more, and go to the absolute extremes I want to in whatever field," he said. "It's so great knowing there are people to support me through whatever I want to do."

Czehryn was involved in MBCI's Youth in Philanthropy group, serving as its co-chair from Grades 10 to 12. Academically, he scored 100 per cent averages in biology, chemistry, and pre-calculus and 99 per cent in physics and calculus.

After initially being hesitant to switch over to MBCI for Grade 6, Czehryn said he now realizes the quality education he received has given him some academic advantages over some of his peers.

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