

## **Rotary Club Great Student Awards 2023**

### **Alex Hebert**

Northern Secondary School

A grade 11 student at Northern Secondary. He is generous, kind, and respectful and goes out of his way to help others.

Alex has raised nearly \$18,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation by participating in yard sales and soliciting donations from family and friends. His goal for September 2023 is to reach \$20,000.

He has also been involved with treaty education awareness over the years, most recently doing voice-over recordings for an elementary online treaty education resource. He has volunteered to help with many teacher training sessions and has volunteered at Treaties Recognition Week events.

Alex is a considerate student who is always looking for ways to help others. For example, he often helps put up chairs and clean up after activities in classes that are not his own when he notices that a teacher needs help.

Alex is a student who goes above and beyond. He has been a mentor to other students and goes out of his way to help others in class. He has also exhibited this on his co-op placement at West Nipissing Water and Wastewater Management, where he chose to participate in extra health and safety training with the technicians on working in confined spaces. Alex is enthusiastic on his placement, looks forward to new tasks each day, is always on time and is eager to help. Alex is a trustworthy student who can be counted on by everyone who works with him.

### **Elijah Dunn**

Chippewa Secondary School

Elijah is a student at Chippewa who volunteered with the Best Buddies program, and he raised the most money in his class for the Terry Fox walk. Elijah is an active participant in his church youth group and takes every opportunity to support his classmates in a positive manner.

### **Ian McCallum**

École secondaire publique Odyssee

Ian is a grade 12 student at Odyssee and is always respectful and empathetic towards others.

At school, he is very attentive to details and is perseverant in his academic assignments and everything he undertakes.

Ian was chosen because he has the most volunteer hours to his credit.

COVID protocols have restricted volunteer hours and community work for some students, but Ian has found a way to continue to help others.

He has several hours as a youth-leader at Outloud here in North Bay. There he helped with workshops and presentations, was a youth mentor, helped with the centre's fundraising efforts and was a gentle voice and advocate for youth who needed it. This exemplifies how he strives to help others in the community who may be marginalized and how he is always concerned for the welfare of others.

Ian is the student body president and remains involved in community and school events. He organises in-school activities for students and is always keen to help out anyone with challenges. He is also the student representative on the board's senate.

He demonstrates "**Service Above Self**" qualities by often being the first one to offer to help in many situations. He is busy with his studies but is always there to help teachers when asked.

Ian is mature, caring, and kind-hearted and always strives for high standards and encourages others to do the same.

He is planning to become a police officer, and this will be another great example of his selflessness and implication in his community.

### **Zoé Bigras**

École secondaire publique Nipissing Ouest

A grade 10 student at Nipissing Quest in Sturgeon Falls. Her teacher, Mme Bisailon had this to say about Zoé: "I thought of her because of her many community hours and her kindness to the people around her. She is always ready to help." Zoé has accumulated over 200 hours of community service since starting high school. Throughout her time, she has helped youths, peers, and elders within her school and her community. She is often found after school helping everyone with various tasks and projects.

Examples of services she has provide to her community are:

- Tutoring young children
- Participating in the school's spirit committee
- Organizing of school activities, fundraising for the school and local food banks
- Volunteering for various community events such as the Parade of as well as the lighting of the community Christmas tree.
- Helping seniors learn new technology such as sending emails, various programs or applications on tablets and laptops, and communication skills on smart phones.

### **Alexie Bélanger**

École secondaire Franco-Cité

Alexie is a remarkable grade 11 student at Franco-Cité who has the biggest heart. She cares about the people around her. She sits on the school council where she spends many hours organizing activities and making sure that the students in the school have the best time during their high school years. She is shy by nature and reserved, therefore, she works a lot in the background. She does not seek attention or gratitude, rather she seeks to make her environment a good place to live. She dedicates a lot of her time at the hospital to screen visitors for covid. At school, she is a reliable member of the pastoral group who devotes a lot of her time to the welfare of others. She is busy raising funds to help people in need at school and in the community.

In fact, she raised funds to buy Easter bunnies for the children at the Family Resource Center. She also helped a child with cancer by sending him funny jokes to make him laugh and to help him forget about his sickness (*for a little while*). She designed Christmas cards for the residents of the Retirement Home in our community. She also helped plan Orange Shirt Day at school to honor residential school survivors. She helped organize the food

drive to help people in need in the community for Thanksgiving. She organized a bake sale to help a teenager from Ukraine to relocate in our area. She also raised funds for a student in great need at our school. She collected mittens, scarves, and tuques for children in need in our elementary schools. She also helped with the Christmas baskets at her school.

### **Hannah Lyons**

West Ferris Secondary School

A grade 11 student at West Ferris. She is incredibly warm and caring towards her peers and members of our greater community ...in fact, she lives and breathes these attributes. Hannah has no idea what an incredible human she is.

Hannah is consistently observed helping those who are often excluded...she's a cheerleader of everyone's efforts and achievements. She may not be winning cross-country running races, but she's at the finish line celebrating her team's efforts. Hannah isn't looking for accolades for herself, but she generously offers them to all. Hannah is involved in many extracurricular activities: Cross-Country Running, Nordic Skiing, Track and Field and the Cheer Squad.

She is part of the "Best Buddies" program which brings together high school students with and without an IDD in the hope that they will develop a lasting friendship. Hannah is an incredible role model for all students and staff alike.

Hannah is a regular volunteer with the Special Olympic Soccer and Swimming programs. She is in the pool and on the pitch swimming and running alongside the athletes—always encouraging and modeling good sportsmanship and genuine kindness.

Beyond these contributions in our school and community, Hannah and her parents continue to spearhead the "Light it Up Blue" autism awareness campaign in memory of her brother, Jack. They have raised considerable funds for the inclusive playground at One Kids Place.

### **Charlie Hall**

Almaguin Highlands Secondary School

Charlie is a grade 11 student at Almaguin Highlands who embodies the principle of "service above self".

From a very young age, Charlie has always been heavily involved in both his school and community. Charlie has been involved in many extra curricular activities as well as the school culture at Almaguin. His involvement includes but is not limited to: being a strong member of the student council, a positive team member for volleyball and track and field, a volunteer scorekeeper for volleyball, basketball and hockey, he is a senate representative for the Near North District School Board, he is an excellent peer tutor and role model, a lead organizer for the Christmas cookie drive for seniors, a Christmas cheer volunteer, he assists with Grade 8 day, and he helps to organize and run assemblies. He can always be counted on to complete any task without hesitation.

Outside of school, Charlie is well known and liked in his community. He works at the local grocery store and has his own property maintenance business. He also works with youth as a volunteer figure skating coach. He cares about members of his community and the community itself volunteering for the Strong Agricultural Society Fall Fair, raking leaves at the Sundridge United Church and helping to remove phragmites on Lake Bernard.

**Randy Blackned**

Nbisiing Secondary School

Randy is a student at Nbissing and has shown dedication and growth towards his education. He has been working hard all semester to be successful and at midterms he received 100% in Discovering the Workplace. Randy consistently demonstrates the seven grandfathers teachings, especially respect towards all teachers, staff and students at Nbisiing. He is always willing to lend a hand both inside and outside of the school. He is often the first to volunteer to help our staff and the last one working to clean up from events. He welcomes everyone to volleyball games during lunch and provides feedback to students to help them with their game. Randy is always willing to teach people about his culture, demonstrating how proud he is to be Cree. He even created Cree language charts to hang in our cultural room. We are all very proud of Randy and all of his hard work.

**Arianne Savard**

École secondaire catholique Algonquin

A grade 11 student at Algonquin. Arianne is an engaged student and citizen of this community. She is an active member of many different school groups and is always at the forefront of many activities to help organize and to give a hand anytime help is needed. Arianne also helps students through tutoring at school but what impresses teachers even more is the help she will give to students around her in her courses. Arianne understands the need for people to give of themselves to make this world a better place. She is the kind of student that answers the call whenever she is asked. Arianne is also very involved with her community. One of Arianne's great gifts is her willingness to help others. She has been involved in a multitude of causes in the community such as volunteering with Outloud North Bay as well as the Centre des Arts du Nipissing Ouest among others. Arianne has accumulated an over 300 hours of community service thus far. She continues to give to her peers and to her community. Arianne is kind, empathetic and is very accepting of others putting their needs before her own. Her positive energy is appreciated by all who meet her. She is a strong individual who embodies the values of a person who serves others selflessl

**Sophie Bangs**

École secondaire catholique Élisabeth-Bruyère

Sophie is a warm and caring grade 10 honors student at Élisabeth-Bruyère, who is active on Student Council. She is the voice for morning announcements. She volunteers in the community as a helper at the Royal Canadian Legion's bingos, and events at the Mattawa Golden Age Club.

**Hannah Wunsch**

F.J. McElligott Intermediate Secondary School

Hannah is a grade 10 student at FJ McElligott Intermediate Secondary School in Mattawa. She is very involved in our extra-curricular sports and has participated on teams such as basketball, volleyball, and badminton.

Hannah was selected for this award because of her willingness to help her fellow peers both academically and personally.

An academic example of this was in a computer studies class when she noticed a student having challenges navigating a computer program and understanding the assignment expectations. She prioritized helping and was patient, kind and helpful without doing the students work for them.

On another occasion Hannah noticed a student struggling socially. Hannah took the time to talk to him as a friend, to give him some advice on how to navigate his issues. She gave advice on how he could act and react differently when challenged by classmates. She also shared a bit of her own experiences and that of her younger brother who has similar struggles. This showed the student that he was not alone, and that if he chose to put his mind to it, and make an effort to act and react differently, different social outcomes are possible, and that his days and individual relationships with others would be better. Hannah was honest, candid, yet offered support for another student so that he knew he was not alone, and that someone cared to help him be and to feel socially accepted, in hopes to belong.

### **Ella Oschefski**

St. Joseph Scollard Hall Catholic Secondary School

Ella is a student at Scollard who began dedicating herself to the service of others at a young age. While attending St. Theresa's elementary school, Ella was a prominent member of the school's Leadership Committee. Due to her exceptional involvement in that committee, Ella was invited to join the RISE Committee when she was still in grade 8, as the Grade 8 Representative. In this role, Ella was able to offer considerations for mental health needs at the elementary level. Now in her grade 11 year, with her hard work and dedication she is the Student Chair of the RISE Committee. Throughout her years of involvement with RISE, Ella has been instrumental in coming up with or assisting with mental health initiatives to benefit our school community. Some of these initiatives include but are certainly not limited to volunteering at the Defeat Depression Walk/Run, helping to organize a school-wide Movember Campaign and Moustache Competition highlighting men's mental health and so much more.

Despite also being a member of band and a musical theatre student, Ella's dedication to the RISE Committee has never wavered. During the school closure period, the RISE Committee continued to meet virtually with Ella remaining one of the most dedicated members at that time. She has always been a strong voice for her peers, shining a light on the current issues of students that need to be addressed and being an avid advocate for inclusivity for our marginalized populations.

Ella is also a strong leader outside of the RISE Committee. She has been identified by many peers as a safe person to turn to with questions about accessing mental health support due to her innate ability to make others feel welcome, and always included. In her 16 years, Ella has already made a deeply profound impact on her peers as well as the adults around her.