

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

- **November 9, 2015 NHCHC Closed, Pathways Programs Cancelled**
- **November 17, 2015—Volunteer Training Workshop, “Influencing Youth to Invest in Themselves”**
- **December 17, 2015—Last day of Programs for 2015**

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## Volunteer Profile: Simon Williams

This month in our Volunteer Profile section we are happy to highlight one of our volunteers from the NHCHC Site, Simon Williams.

Q – Why did you decide to volunteer at Pathways to education?

I was inspired by many of the young people we have hired at the engineering company I work at. They all have impressive resumes with outstanding grades and work experience, and almost all have a long list of volunteer work. Volunteering was on my mind for several years and when I learned about Pathways I became very interested.

Q— What is your most memorable Pathways experience?

One of the most memorable experiences was attending the Pathways to Education graduation ceremony. Seeing familiar faces and listening to their long list of accomplishments including graduating from High School was very special and helped to show everyone at the event the value of the Pathways

program.

Q— What are your hobbies and interests outside the Pathways to Education program?

At home, one of my favorite hobbies is woodworking. My garage has never seen a car, it's my workshop. One of my first jobs was framing houses and I have always enjoyed creating with wood. If I'm not woodworking I enjoy long walks all over Hamilton.

Q—If you could take a course of study on any topic, what would it be?

Definitely a language starting with improving my French. When my family first came to Canada from England, we lived in Montreal for about 3 years. My parents placed me in an English speaking school to help with the transition, but in hindsight, a French school would have helped me to become bilingual in a short time. I've been fortunate to travel in my career and have seen the benefits of speaking more than one language. Once I've improved my French, on to Spanish!

Q - —What is the best investment you've made in your own success?

The best investment I have made is staying with my deci-

sion of not being afraid to take on new challenges. I've had many roles with my current employer, each one has expanded my skill set, allowed me to meet new people and travel to many countries. Some challenges have definitely pushed my comfort zone, including my first few months at Pathways. However those are the challenges that have helped me to grow and continue to search for the next new opportunity.

Q – What is the greatest investment a student can make in his or her success?

Invest in yourself by enjoying and getting the most value from the time you have now for your education. We are very fortunate to have our school system, dedicated teachers and programs like Pathways. Graduating from High School and possibly continuing your education after that will open doors and provide opportunities you may have never considered. It's great to have specific goals in mind today, but also accept that those goals may change over time for many different reasons. The time invested in your education will help you to be prepared for those changes and new challenges as you keep moving forward.



## Quotes to Remember

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest”

Benjamin Franklin

## From the Editors: Influencing Youth to Invest in Themselves

While our volunteers seem, for the most part, to find their work at Pathways both challenging and rewarding, we sometimes hear comments from volunteers that sound like this:

“I can’t help but notice that so-and-so has so much energy for all sorts of things, but doesn’t use any of that energy to help himself.”

This is perhaps the greatest irony of working with youth. Energy seems limitless, but is often unfocused and channeled into things that many adults might deem trivial. Winning in our work with Pathways youth might look

like helping our students find ways to channel their energy into worthwhile pursuits that will benefit their future selves. This task, of course, is much easier said than done.

Our issue this month is dedicated to this “problem of all problems.” How do we get young people to invest their energy in themselves? How can we connect their future dreams with their present actions? How can we help a generation fully realize its potential?

In our Youth Engagement section we offer a few simple, low-risk actions that offer a potentially huge payoff. In our

advice column, we look at how improving our relationships helps students succeed. Our volunteer profile this month is Simon Williams at the NHCHC, while our Beat on the Street looks at some of the bigger desires our youth possess.

We hope you enjoy the ideas and stories in this edition of the Volunteer Times. As always, we are grateful for your ongoing dedication to the youth of our program. If you’re interested in learning more about this topic in particular, be sure to talk with your fellow volunteers or staff, and always feel free to ask questions.

## Student Story: Student Leader Rises to the Occasion

“I ran for student government as a way to get involved in my school” says

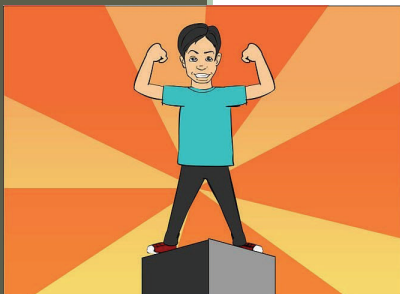
Richard Hendsbee. Mountain and Parkview high schools merged and Richard wanted to be the school’s student President because,

“I really wanted the two schools to get along”.

Richard continued by saying, “I love the experience it has given me! The schools have merged well and now I’m glad to say, proud to say, I’ve made some amazing new friends here. Being involved in student government has made me really grow as a person because it has made me more mature and grown up. It’s helped me become even more responsible”. Richard’s current priority as student body

president is, “to help the student body get their voice heard, have the school really listen to what the student body wants, and then bring it to the student council”.

Everyone at Pathways to Education-NHCHC is very proud to have such a great student leader in the program. He is a great role model for all of our students!



## Youth Engagement: Small Investment Pay Big Dividends

In the world of investing there are big investments and small investments; simple ones and complex ones. Here are Pathways, and working with youth everywhere, there is a similar dynamic.

Just like with money, there are little things we can do every day that can allow us to get the best return for our investment. In our case, a string of simple small investments can be the foundation of a strong relationship with our participants, and we know that these relationships are fundamental to being able to help our students achieve their goals. The following tips can either start or strengthen a relationship with a Pathways student.

### Learn the students Name

This is a simple fact that is

easy to overlook. Knowing someone's name is a simple way to show you care.

### Share a funny or cheesy (appropriate) joke

Sharing a laugh is always a good way to get the ball rolling on building rapport; if you don't have a joke, ask the student if they know one.

### Ask about a previous encounter

If you have worked with this student before, ask about what you worked on last time. Maybe you aren't working with them this week, but checking in for a minute about how their assignment or test went shows you remember and care.

### Bring in something you enjoy

This is not expected, but feel free to bring in a game you

like, an activity you enjoy or even food you have cooked. It will help you find some common ground with students and can open up a new experience they might not know they are soon to love.



### Ask Questions

This simple idea can pay off in spades. Asking questions about stuff outside of their homework or activity you are working on with the students shows you care about them as a person.

### Do a small favour

Sharpening a pencil, getting a glass of water or a snack can go a long way to showing them that you are there to support them. Finding a way to do a small kindness to a student will earn you a little bit of trust.

## Pathways SNOW DAY Plan



Inclement weather conditions, such as freezing rain or significant snowfall, can occur during the fall and winter months.

In such conditions, if you are uncertain as to whether the program is open, we urge students/parents to contact North Hamilton Community Health Centre at [905-523-6611](tel:905-523-6611) or at [www.nhchc.ca](http://www.nhchc.ca) for closure notification before attending Pathways Programming.

While service to students and parents is a priority, and programming will be kept open as reasonably possible, student and staff safety is the primary consideration.

## Beat on the Street: What Would You Do With 1 Million Dollars?

**“Globally, the average private return for one additional year of education was found to be a 10 per cent increase in income, according to computations from more than 800 surveys in 139 countries.”**

**The Investment Case for Education and Equity - UNICEF**

The Beat on the Street is the place to go for information on youth culture. Each issue we will interview our students to give you insight into the world of youth. As this issue of the Volunteer Times is about “investing,” for this issue of the Times, Pathways Coach Amaris Rimay spoke with some of our students, asking them the questions, what would you do with one million dollars.

What would you do with one million dollars? This is the question we asked our students. We didn’t know what to expect, and we didn’t know whether it would produce much of an article, but we put our trust in our students, and we were amazed and fascinated by the results. Some of the youth would wisely invest the money. Others would spend it on meeting celebrities or people they look up to. Still others would indulge a little in their hobbies or collect items that they enjoyed.

Overall, the students’ responses were overwhelming and heart-warming with their willingness and desire to make sure that



once they had what they needed, that they would make sure that others were cared for. Famous comedian Louis C.K. once told his daughter that the only reason she should ever look into someone else’s bowl was to make sure that they had enough. Here at Pathways, our students overwhelmingly were thinking of others to make sure that they would have enough. Here are the students’ responses when asked what they would do with one million dollars:

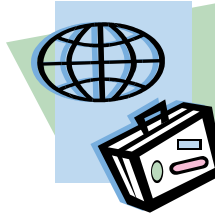
“If I got a million dollars, I would spend it on an old truck that is broken and I would fix it”

“If I got a million dollars I would pay off all my parents’ debt and help them buy a house. The remainder would go towards schooling for me and my siblings.”

“I would save 50% of it and give 50% of it to a charity.”

“I would give it all to charity.”

“Buy a house and travel. I would also buy clothes and a car and 3 dogs.”



“I would buy meet and greet tickets for a few artists that I like.”

“I would donate a quarter of it, the rest I would split in half and give half to my mom and invest the rest.”

I would donate some and travel the world.”

“I would give half to a charity of my own choice. A quarter I would spend on books (fictional, teen fiction and fan fiction), I would save the rest and go to Comic-con in San Diego.”

“I would buy a car and a house.”



“I would buy shoes. I would give some to my family. I would buy my mom a lot of things or give it all to my mom but keep about \$100 000 for myself.”

“I would fly to Korea to see BTS, get an apartment and live there for a couple of months.”

“I would buy J-hope’s love because he is my hope, my angel.”

“I would put one million dollars into investments.”

# Dear Pathways...

Dear Pathways,

I am a volunteer at one of your sites, and sometimes it feels like I put a lot of effort into getting students to get involved with their studies, but often I don't get anywhere. Too often I end up playing games or just talking with students. Sometimes it feels like the time I spend at the program isn't so meaningful; that I don't make a difference. Is there anything I can do to help students get motivated for their studies and dedicate their energy into school success?

Yours sincerely,  
Ben Tryinhard

Hi Ben,  
That is a great, and common, question. This whole issue of the Volunteer Times is about how our volunteers and staff can work with students to get them to invest in

their own improvement. Have a look at a few of the other articles for some other tips and ideas. I will say however, that often when we think we are not being impactful, we are.

Much of the focus of Pathways to Education is on relationship building with our youth participants; and this is for a reason. We recognize that our influence as Pathways volunteers and staff comes from our interactions, whether those are specific learning lessons in tutoring or workshops, or casual interactions over games and during social times. It is important to keep this fact in mind. All of our interactions, whether fo-



cus on the productivity outcomes (what we call Hard Outcomes, like homework or learning activities) or relationship outcomes (called soft outcomes), do



contribute to student improvement.

A recent internal study at two Pathways to Education sites conducted with a broad spectrum of alumni students showed that the key factor that students identified as most impactful in their lives was the relationships they formed. It is our connections with youth, our conversations and personal interactions, that can have the most lasting impact.

So, next time you are at the program and feeling like you aren't helping, know that the positive influence you have on our students began the moment you walked through the door.

## Call for Submissions

Want to contribute to the Volunteer Times? We are looking for questions for Dear Pathways..., ideas for topics you want to know about in the Beat on the Street, or an original article about a topic relevant to volunteering at Pathways to Education. Email your suggestions to Pathways Coach Brandon Love at [love@nhchc.ca](mailto:love@nhchc.ca)