



April 23, 2020

Darren Josephison nominated for Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching

Leduc — STAR Catholic School Division is thrilled to share the news of teacher Darren Josephison's nomination for the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Mr. Josephison has been teaching for 32 years, 15 of which have been at St. Augustine School in Ponoka, and is dedicated to helping students learn about history and the realities of war.

"History has so many lessons to teach us about not making the same mistakes again and again," Mr. Josephison explained, also noting he was both surprised and honoured to learn he had been nominated for the Excellence in Teaching Award.



"I was thankful that someone recognized I have been passionately trying to teach students to understand and remember the horrors of war and the sacrifices earlier generations have made for us, our country, and the world."

Mr. Josephison has organized student trips to European war memorials and historical sites including the Vimy Ridge War Memorial and Juno Beach Centre in France, and the former Dachau and Sachsenhausen concentration camps in Germany. He has also travelled with students to Italy, Greece, England, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

During one particularly moving and memorable visit to a small cemetery in France, a student located the grave of his great-grandfather. As part of a touching ceremony, the student read the letter that his great grandfather's commanding officer wrote to his family to inform them of his death.

"Students can learn a lot more from these trips than a textbook or in a classroom. It really makes the history real and hopefully encourages them to learn and investigate even more," Mr. Josephison said. "The more knowledge and experience students have, the better choices and decisions they can make about the world we live in."

The Governor General's History Awards were established in 1996 by Canada's History Society to recognize excellence in teaching Canadian history by educators across the country.

The parent who nominated Mr. Josephison for the award wrote, "He has taught all four of my children and made a huge difference in their lives. He works tirelessly towards student understanding of soldier sacrifice. One only has to see the yearly Remembrance Day ceremonies to understand the impact this amazing teacher has had on our school culture."

Based in central Alberta, Saint Thomas Aquinas Roman (STAR) Catholic School Division represents 12 schools that serve the communities of Beaumont, Drayton Valley, Lacombe, Leduc, Ponoka, and Wetaskiwin. The STAR Catholic Schools team of teachers and support staff are committed to giving more than 4000 students across our division every opportunity to achieve their potential in a caring, safe and Christ-centred environment.

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