

# Our

# REFLECTIONS

FALL 2020

NEWSLETTER: NEWS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI UPDATES



## FINDING WAYS TO CELEBRATE AND CONNECT

Rockway's 2020 Grade 8 Graduation may not have been what we originally planned, but it ended up being picture-perfect!

In June, graduates and their families were invited to drive through 'Grad Alley' in front of the school. Driving through, they stopped long enough for a photo with Ms. Schultz and to wave to their Grade 8 teachers.

They then moved to the North parking lot, remaining in their parked vehicles around the perimeter. Amidst the music and the fanfare, families rolled down their windows to greet each other and celebrate their graduates.

In the centre of the parking lot, faculty members led a roll call of graduates, each enjoying a moment of recognition. The short ceremony was capped off with confetti canons. Families then headed home to watch a formal online graduation program. We celebrate both our graduates and finding imaginative ways to connect. **#RockwayResilient**

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## WELCOME BACK!

Fall greetings. What a joy it is to have our community together again on campus! I celebrate the work of faculty and staff preparing a safe return to school. I am heartened by the resiliency of our entire community in the face of ongoing challenges.

We focus on resiliency in Rockway's Chapel theme for 2020-2021 – *Resilience: Strength in Standing Together*. I look forward to exploring this theme with students during our weekly online chapels.

I saw this strength in faculty and students last spring when they abruptly had to switch to online learning. I see it this fall as we settle into new routines and new ways of doing things.

To learn more, join us online for **Rockway's Annual General Meeting, Tuesday, November 24, 2020, 7:30 pm** (stay tuned to [www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca)). Peace, health and blessings to you and your family.

Ann L. Schultz ('84), Principal

## DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS

The end of the 2019-2020 school year brought with it several departures from our faculty and staff team:

*Danette Adams* – after 15 years of service, most recently guiding students through challenges and decisions, Danette is working in the private sector.

*Witold Bruhns* – after 12 years of supporting Rockway's IT needs, Witold has moved to a full-time position elsewhere.

*Erin Harrington* – although only with us for two years, Erin will be missed for her deep connections, strong collaboration, and focus on peace and social justice. She and her partner, with their new daughter have returned to America.

*Marlys Neufeldt* – as Music Department Head for 7 years, Marlys set very high standards and was committed to student learning. She takes this passion to a new role with the public school board.

*David Penny (2007)* – during 4 years of teaching Grade 9, David also made many contributions to our drama and chapel programs. He has recently moved away.

**Deep gratitude and heartfelt good wishes abound to all.** At the same time, we warmly welcome:

*William (Bill) Grobe* – as our new Vice Principal, Bill dove in head first this summer and has been swimming alongside our team ever since. We are grateful for his calm, positive, steady leadership.



Look for a few more new faces amongst our faculty, staff and Cohort Counsellors.

## FOR SAFETY, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY REDESIGNING 'SCHOOL'



Many people have asked, "What has changed at Rockway?" The short answer is, "Everything". When it became clear that physical distancing and classroom cohorts would be part of the new school year, we completely redesigned Rockway's **Academic Program**. We focused on: Safety, Academic Integrity, and Community.

After months of planning, we launched a new Academic Plan for Grades 7 & 8 and for Grades 9-12. The plan calls for four terms (Quadmester school year) with instructional blocks of 2.5 hours in the morning and afternoon.

The younger grades stay with their class cohort of 15 or 'bubble' for the entire day. Older students have in-person classes in their cohorts for half the day, and then the option for the other half of the day to study their elected courses online off campus or study them online with a cohort group on campus. Students maintain classroom and cohort seating plans to ensure each has a safe personal space. Each cohort is supervised and supported by a Cohort Counsellor, a newly created role that ensures students have the support they need when doing their online classes.

All Grade 7 & 8 students are assigned a Chromebook to support their studies. Grades 9-12 use their own devices or borrow a Chromebook if necessary. We have increased our internet bandwidth to accommodate expanded online learning, and will be making more investment in this area.

This new academic plan required: course selections by highschool students to be resubmitted; the student timetable to be completely revised; teaching assignments to be changed and professional development increased; and, the hiring of several new personnel.

Guided by the leading public health experts, Rockway also released a **COVID-19 Health Protocol**, which details the many steps we are taking to keep our school community safe:

- numerous facility upgrades such as touchless faucets and improved ventilation
- hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes and signage throughout the school
- controlled access to the school: students arrive at staggered times at multiple entrances and head directly to class. At other times, entrance to the school is limited to those teaching, working, learning or by appointment. We are not presently hosting any rentals, special events or afterschool activities in the building.

*Continued on p.9*







Alumna, Wendy (pictured second from right), Class of '91, shared her graduation photograph with her daughter, current Rockway student, Yoanna, Class of 2023 (pictured right) and with her spouse (pictured left).

## EDUCATING WITHOUT BORDERS IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

It was Rockway's International Program which first alerted us to the potential challenges of COVID-19. Early in the year, when international students started contemplating heading home for March Break 2020, Rockway had to start grappling with 'What if?'

Fearing the worst, but hoping for the best, we created the first ever Rockway Summer HomeStay program. This gave international students the option of remaining in Canada for the summer if they planned to continue their studies with us this fall. Several chose to do this.

As the pandemic swept around the world, and borders closed and flights were halted, our attention shifted to students yet to arrive in Canada. We worked tirelessly with families and government authorities throughout the summer to ensure the appropriate paperwork was in place.

As school started, fourteen students were still awaiting visas, and two had been denied entry due to a bureaucratic requirement of which we had not been notified.

Presently, Rockway continues to advocate on behalf of international students awaiting visas; most have deferred their studies to the second term, hopeful they can join us in November. Another two have opted to defer to next year.

In the short-term, we have also prepared a submission for consideration to be added to the approved list of schools, which border security refers to when monitoring access to Canada.

In the long-term, we continue to evaluate the COVID-19 situation and will evaluate what our International Program may look like next year, and beyond.

*“For over 40 years, international students have been an important part of Rockway's community. We are grateful for the diversity, global perspective, and broader awareness they bring to our school, and for the opportunity to engage with them in Canadian culture and Mennonite education. We look forward to continuing this fruitful partnership.”*

David Lobe ('96),  
Director of Admissions & Recruitment



JOIN US FOR...



**TO GO**



BECAUSE WE CAN'T HOST YOU IN THE SCHOOL,  
THIS YEAR WE ARE OFFERING **CURB-SIDE PICK UP**  
– STILL THE **SAME GREAT SPAGHETTI SUPPER**,  
BUT @ HOME WITH YOUR FAMILY/BUBBLE,  
AND AT YOUR CONVENIENCE.

**MENU:**

*Garlic Bread, \*Spaghetti (pre-cooked), Rockway Cookies*  
*\*Traditional, Gluten Free, Vegetarian, or Vegan*

**ORDERING:**

Meals will be available to order in advance in the following portions:

Spaghetti Supper To Go! for ONE - \$12 (HST included)

Spaghetti Supper To Go! for FOUR - \$45 (HST included)

Order your **Spaghetti Supper To Go!**

online at [www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca) by **Monday, October 26, 2020**. Only advance orders will be taken.

*Any proceeds will go toward adding picnic tables to  
Rockway's campus for outdoor education and student recreation.*

**CURB-SIDE PICK UP:**

**Rockway students & families: Thursday, October 29, 2020, 3:00-6:00 pm**

**Rockway Alumni & community: Friday, October 30, 2020, 4:00-7:00 pm**

- Consider dropping off a cash donation for Spaghetti Supper for a Neighbour, supporting local emergency food security programs.

**ENJOY!**

Round up your family/bubble for Spaghetti Supper @ home.

- Or consider sharing your meal online with your family and friends near and far. If you're Alumni, maybe your Class can gather online?
- Whenever, and with whomever, you enjoy your Spaghetti Supper, be sure to send us a SSTG photo for our Spaghetti Photo Wall ([Instagram](#), [twitter](#) and [FB](#)). We will miss seeing you at *Connections Homecoming Weekend* this year, and want students to see the many people who are part of their Rockway community.



## FOUNDERS' DAY

*Mark Your Calendars!*

**ROCKWAY FOUNDER'S DAY CHAPEL 2021**

**Thursday, February 11 | 9:30 am**

*A time to celebrate and remember*

**ROCKWAY FOUNDER'S DAY ONLINE 2021**

**Friday, February 12**

*One day of giving*



**[www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca)**



## CONGRATULATIONS!

**Katie Goerzen-Sheard (2017)**, recently named Interim Coordinator of Youth Events with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

**Kristen Duimering (2006)**, and Rockway faculty member, David Harder, welcomed in February, future Rockway Alumna, Adeline, seen here with her big sister Kate.



**Jonah Boehm (2017)**, drafted 57<sup>th</sup> overall to the National Lacrosse League, Vancouver Warriors.

Send your Alumni updates and stories to Andrew at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca)



## ONE ROCKWAY FAMILY'S STORY

*"When it came time for my wife and I to choose a high school for our children, we knew we wanted them to be at a school where they would feel safe and nurtured. A school where they would feel part of a meaningful community. A school that actively fosters the values that we want our kids to take into their adult lives. Values like social justice, respect for others, respect for oneself, peace-building, mutual aid, a love of diversity, a desire to explore spirituality.*

*We wanted them to make deep friendships that they would take with them beyond graduation. We wanted them to become self-aware, compassionate contributors to a global world. And we wanted them to come home from school every day feeling both happy and challenged.*

*No doubt all parents want something like this for their children. But we felt that our kids, especially, needed a school like Rockway. Their early lives, before we adopted them, had been tumultuous. Broken and problematic relationships had been modelled for them. They had been shunted from one temporary home to another. They were hurt and at risk.*

*Adopting our kids has been a blessing for us. And, I think, for them. But it has also been physically and emotionally exhausting. And it has impacted us financially. Weekly therapy costs have been ongoing. And there have been years where we had to be a single-income family because the time and energy needed to support our children – to help them recover from their early childhood traumas – was overwhelming.*

*Without tuition assistance, our children would not have been able to attend Rockway. They would not have experienced its extraordinarily nurturing community. They would not have been steeped – at least not as deeply – in the values that I named above. And I don't think they would have come home from school each day feeling both happy and challenged.*

***But thanks to generous donors, we did receive tuition assistance. And as a result, our children are well on their way to becoming what we hoped for: self-aware, compassionate contributors to a global world."***

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One family's story shows us the difference tuition assistance can make in the life of a child, and to the health of a family. At Rockway, tuition assistance is only possible through donations.

This year, as part of its 75<sup>th</sup> celebrations, Rockway was blessed to receive a grant of \$250,000 from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada for tuition assistance for students from new Canadian MCEC congregations. Inspired by this, we launched a fundraising campaign to light 75 candles. Each candle represents the average amount for one year of tuition assistance (\$3,600) for a Mennonite student.

Before the school closed in March, 5 candles had been lit.

**As we return to the classroom and support families dealing with the financial impact of the pandemic, it is time to renew our efforts.**

Join others who have sponsored all or part of a candle by donating online at [rockway.ca](https://rockway.ca) or by sending an e-transfer to [accountant@rockway.ca](mailto:accountant@rockway.ca) or by mailing your cheque to the school (Rockway issues charitable tax receipts for donations of \$10 or more). 100% of your donation will be invested in tuition assistance. **Let's keep the flames of Mennonite education burning bright!**

75 *candles*   
FOR 75 YEARS

## HONOURING ROCKWAY GRADUATES OF 2020

Even though we could not host formal graduation ceremonies this year, we could not let the 2019-2020 school year pass without recognizing in some way the achievements of the 2020 Graduating Class. Each graduate received a special delivery at home from Rockway faculty. It was our way of honouring their accomplishments in advance of their graduation ceremony to be held at a later date.

The delivery included Graduation lawn signs and gift bags with messages from faculty and their Alumni candle. Recipients of Grade 12 Graduation Awards also received their Awards. All graduation awards will be formally recognized at the graduation ceremony next June.

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## CONGRATULATIONS 2020 GRADUATION AWARD RECIPIENTS:

- Abundance Spirit of Generosity Award – *Rebecca MacNeil and Hathapon Songsawatong*
- Bridging Cultures Award – *Ding (Chris) Hao*
- Civic Leadership Award – *Alexander Cvetic*
- Dennis Wikerd French Language Award – *Micah Peters Unrau*
- English Scholarship – *Emily Loberto*
- Governor General's Award – *Emily Loberto*
- Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award – *Emily Moffat*
- Lobe Cross Cultural and Service Scholarship – *Ethan Troupe*
- Math & Science Academic Achievement Award – *Da-in Yoon*
- Peter Hallman Athletics Leadership Scholarship – *Isaac Weber*
- The Record – *Julia Kehl and Sydney Chiang*
- Rockway Diploma Scholarship – *Micah Peters Unrau*
- The Salome Bauman/Benjamin Eby Scholarship – *Maxwell Dominy and Julia Kehl*
- William Kruger Scholarship – *Ruth Charette*
- Valedictorian Scholarship Award – *Emily Loberto*
- Visual Art Scholarship Award – *Annalee Bender and Zhuo (Jeff) Chen*

## BOOK YOUR TOUR TODAY!

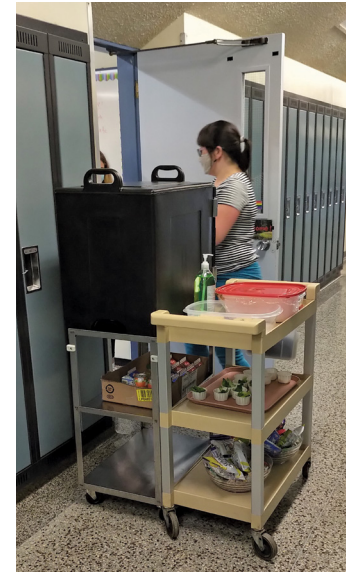
**"Rockway provided an environment that supported and encouraged my growth as a teammate, leader and thinker. Thanks to Rockway, I'm off to University, confident in my ability to tackle challenges and succeed."**

Isaac Weber - Class of 2020  
McGill University, History

**[admissions@rockway.ca](mailto:admissions@rockway.ca)**







- strict protocols for identifying, tracking, communicating and responding to any COVID-19 outbreak

The Health Protocol emphasizes personal safety. All are asked to wear a facemask at all times, unless eating, outdoors with their class or cohort, or exempted by a medical circumstance. For student cohort or bubble safety, our cafeteria is temporarily closed. Food Services now provide students with snack baskets and lunch options in their classrooms. At lunch or break times, students can also head outside to picnic tables, where signage reminds them to be safe. We also encourage outdoor learning when possible.

Amidst all the plans and protocols, we still find time to **build community** through weekly online pre-recorded chapels, Cohort Connections (fun activities done in cohorts), online clubs, and Student Council.

As you can see, school has radically changed, and we are still adjusting. Thanks to our resilient and caring community, this year, students can feel safe, parents can be confident in our academic integrity, and our community will continue to support each other. After 75 years of faithful education, Rockway remains a strong, vibrant school.

## VALEDICTORIAN SISTER ACT

Emily and Samantha Loberto (pictured, left and right) were 2020 Class Valedictorians for Grade 12 and Grade 8 respectively. This is a first in Rockway history!

Samantha gave her Valedictorian address online as part of the pre-recorded Grade 8 formal graduation program. Well done! Emily will give her speech at the 2020 Graduation ceremony, re-scheduled for next June.

Congratulations to both for being selected by your peers, and for making Rockway history!





## LOCAL ARTIST CAPTURES ROCKWAY'S 75<sup>TH</sup> YEAR WITH NEEDLE AND THREAD

Kathy Janzen held her first needle and thread as a child of 8 years learning to embroider and hand sew doll clothes and quilt blocks for her church's quilts. She interrupted her sewing vocation with a stint as a primary school teacher for 28 years. In retirement, Kathy has returned to the fabric arts with a passion and especially enjoys all aspects of quilting.

*"The 75<sup>th</sup> Rockway Anniversary Celebration Quilt celebrates both the legacy of community and learning at Rockway. The pixilated Rockway Cross is the focus of the quilt. It represents Rockway's strong mission for learning, character, faith and passion for peace in service to God and creation. Its pixilation recognizes the multitude of ways that each of us have in engaging with and living out this mission. This centre piece is embraced on two sides by a traditional pattern of log cabin blocks, recognizing that such a mission can only be accomplished through the faithfulness of generations of learners and supporters. The colours of the fabrics (blacks, reds, purples and whites) have all been used over the years in various images representing Rockway. The quilt stitching features an apple tree. It evokes thoughts of rootedness, growth and fruitful living, a privileged heritage gained through settlement on Haudenosaunee land. The best response to such a legacy of learning is to live with gratitude toward peace and justice for all."*

The quilt is currently hanging in Rockway's Silo as part of our Alumni 75<sup>th</sup> Quilt Exhibition. We will be featuring other quilts from the exhibition online in the months ahead. The 75<sup>th</sup> quilt will be up for auction at Rockway's BIG Night Out 75<sup>th</sup> Fundraising Dinner mini-auction next May.



## THANKS FORE CHIPPING IN!

While Alumni and friends could not connect on the links this year for Rockway's annual Golf Classic, they certainly kept the spirit of the tournament alive. They chipped in to raise over \$20,000 for tuition assistance, helping future Alumni. **Thank you to everyone who chipped in.** See you next year, **Wednesday, June 2, 2021, at Willow Valley Golf Course** for a very special 25<sup>th</sup> Rockway Golf Classic (Round 2).



# THANK YOU!



## FUELLING SUSTAINABLE MISSION



Over **600** Donors

Over **\$3.2 MILLION** in GIFTS & PLEDGES

**3** years of balanced budgets

## INSPIRING MINDS

- ✓ Students Learning in Community
- ✓ Robotics
- ✓ Business



NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS = MORE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES!

## REVITALIZING ROCKWAY

GIVING STUDENTS A BETTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

### RENOVATED SPACES:

Art  
Computer  
Digital Media  
Family Studies  
Assembly/  
Chapel Area  
& Music Rooms

### CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS:

Replacement of Roofs  
Upgrades of HVAC,  
Incl. Addition of A/C  
Refurbishment  
of Outdoor Track  
Sports Banners  
Sound Booth  
Exterior Lighting,  
Landscaping, Silo  
Windows & Siding  
New School Sign  
(in the works)

### NEW EQUIPMENT:

School Bus  
Chromebooks  
Digital Camera  
& Instruments

## LEAD US ONWARD

Fundraising Campaign  
August 1, 2016 – July 31, 2020

## EMBRACING MORE STUDENTS

Higher Enrollment

**210** Gr. 12 Graduates, adding to over 4,000 ALUMNI

More Support for Students:

- ✓ More Tuition Assistance
- ✓ New Awards & Scholarships

### Investment in International Student Program

New English Language Learner Lab, Improved HomeStay program operated by Rockway, additional staffing support

Introduction of Restorative Justice

LEADING ROCKWAY STUDENTS ONWARD TO BRIGHT FUTURES



### OUR MISSION

As a Christian educational community within the Anabaptist Mennonite tradition, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate integrates sound academic learning with growth in character and faith, together with a passion for peacemaking and service to God and all creation.



## STAYING CONNECTED

Our number one priority is keeping our school community safe. Although we are back in the school, we have made the difficult decision **not to host** any rentals, special events such as 2020 Graduation and *Discover Rockway*, or Alumni Basketball in the school for the remainder of 2020. This also means we will not be gathering for *Connections Homecoming Weekend* this October.

**We miss you and look forward to connecting in other ways throughout the year.** Stay connected online this year and at future events next year. We hope to host the Graduation of the Classes of 2020 and 2021 in June 2021.

### ROCKWAY'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us...**ONLINE!**



Chapel Theme 2019-2020

Tuesday, November 24, 2020  
7:30 pm | ZOOM Meet  
[www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca)



### Connect With Us

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Collegiate

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#lifeatRockway



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