

Our

# REFLECTIONS

FALL 2022

NEWSLETTER: HAPPENINGS, EVENTS AND ALUMNI NEWS



## CELEBRATING THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2022

On Saturday, June 25, 2022, students, families, faculty and staff gathered in Rockway's Gym for our first in-person Grade 12 Graduation Ceremony since the beginning of the pandemic.

*"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."*

This quote by Martin Luther King Junior was the graduation theme for the Class of 2022. Retired Principal Ann L. Schultz '84 spoke to the theme in the Graduation Address entitled, "Take Time," where she offered seven pieces of advice that she hoped would serve the graduates as they left Rockway and entered young adulthood. She then joined Rockway's current Principal, Elaine Ranney, for the presentation of the diplomas and awards.

Guests were encouraged by the words from our co-valedictorians Thomas Beech and Sharon Gil, and moved by the musical performances of their peers Jessica Li, Jonathan Chau, Alvina Ho, Angie Lee and Rockway's Senior Choir.

We hope to see our new alumni and their families, return 'home' to Rockway this October 28 for our annual Spaghetti Supper and Alumni Sports Challenge. Check [www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca) for details in the coming weeks.

### What's Inside?

- Graduation Awards: PAGE 2
- New School Year: PAGES 3-4
- Chapel Theme: PAGE 5
- Rockway's 5 Priorities: PAGE 5
- Social Concerns Tour: PAGE 6
- Outdoor Classroom: PAGE 7
- Rockway Alumni & Robotics: PAGES 8-9
- Musical: PAGE 10
- Connections: PAGE 11
- Save the Date: PAGE 12



Principal Ranney welcomed graduates and their families during the graduation ceremony on June 25. She was joined on stage by (left to right): Betty Pries, Board Chair, Ann L. Schultz '84 retired principal, Stacey VanderMeer, Director of Admissions, and David Lobe '96, International Student Recruiter, who gave the Invocation.

## CONGRATULATIONS GRADE 12 AWARD WINNERS

- Abundance Canada Spirit of Generosity Award – *Rebecca Janzen-Martin*
- Benjamin Eby / Salome Bauman Award – *Sharon Gil, Erin Movold*
- Bridging Cultures Award – *Jessica Li*
- Dennis Wikerd French Language Award – *Sydney Sanscartier*
- English Award – *Erin Movold*
- Governor General's Award – *Thomas Beech*
- Lieutenant Governor's Community Volunteer Award – *Fayth Bender*
- Lobe Cross Cultural and Service Award – *Teresa Xiao*
- Math & Science Academic Achievement Award – *Sherry Caiying He*
- Peter Hallman Athletics Leadership Award – *Fayth Bender*
- The Waterloo Region Record's Top Student Award – *Thomas Beech, Olivia Hirsch*
- Rockway Diploma Award – *Jonah Willms*
- Valedictorian Award – *Sharon Gil, Thomas Beech*

During the graduation ceremony, alumni and faculty members Justin Martin '97, Jo Scott '05 and Lindsay Shantz '02 welcomed the Class of 2022 into the Alumni Association through a candle lighting ceremony.



## A NEW SCHOOL YEAR AT ROCKWAY

No matter how young or old you are, there is a certain excitement that one feels as a new school year approaches. This year it's particularly true as we anticipate a return to the many special events that Rockway students and families, supporters and donors, alumni and friends, faculty and staff have come to know and love. Students, staff and faculty are so excited to return to twice weekly chapels, full extracurricular activities and the use of our library (during COVID, it served as a classroom to allow for physical distancing). As a school, we look forward to welcoming guests back into our building for community events such as the evening session of Spiritual Emphasis Week, Founders' Day and the Ultimate Alumni Picnic. We are delighted with the full return of our Athletic and Music programs and eagerly anticipate the energy and excitement when rehearsals begin later this year for our all-school musical!

Our return to "normal ways" of Rockway life this school year means we need to make an intentional effort towards **rebuilding a sense of community**. In our school, COVID restrictions prevented students, faculty and staff from freely interacting with one another and developing widespread connections. In our world, the pandemic contributed to a polarization of groups breeding misinformation and misunderstandings. We also know the isolation many experienced contributed to widespread mental health challenges. This reality is why we have chosen the theme of "**Compassion: drawing the circle wide**" for our chapel theme this year. We will explore what compassion means and its implications for our lives. We will seek to build compassion for those around us, for our world and for ourselves.

This new school year brings a new Administrative Team to Rockway. I am very excited to welcome our new *Vice-Principal*, **Josh Hill**, new *Director of Advancement*, **Chris Ainsworth**, and new *Director of Finance and Human Resources*, **Steven Reesor Rempel**. In the few short weeks that we've been working together, I can already see that each comes with great talent, energy and commitment to Rockway's mission. I am excited to be building a new team and have great confidence in the road ahead.



From left to right: (front row) Stacey VanderMeer, Elaine Ranney (second row) Josh Hill, Chris Ainsworth, Steven Reesor Rempel

Rockway's community extends far beyond the immediate people in the building. Rebuilding a sense of community means reconnecting with Rockway friends and families. Our first opportunity of the year is **Connections Homecoming Night** which takes place **Friday, October 28**. Please be sure and add the date to your calendar, this is an event you will not want to miss! Please watch for more communications with information about our Connections Homecoming Night, AGM, Christmas Concert, and other Rockway community alumni events taking place this year.

– Elaine Ranney, Principal

## WELCOME TO THE ROCKWAY TEAM



### **Josh Hill, *Vice-Principal***

Josh was the Head of Music at Cameron Heights Collegiate and is passionate about using music as a vehicle to create inclusive communities, and to work towards social change. As a Learning Support teacher, Josh worked with his peers to help learning spaces become more inclusive as well as improve pedagogy and assessment. He is excited to live out his Mennonite faith with his new Rockway community while sharing his passions for equity, inclusion and anti-racism practices. He and his family attend Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church.

### **Chris Ainsworth, *Director of Advancement***

For the past five years, Chris has been working for rare Charitable Research Reserve and prior to that he was the Development Manager for Drayton Entertainment. He has worked in the not-for-profit sector almost his entire career and brings with him significant fundraising, event planning and marketing experience. Chris joined the Administrative Team in August and is looking forward to connecting with families, supporters, donors and alumni within the Rockway community.



### **Steven Reesor Rempel, *Director of Finance and Human Resources***

Steven comes to Rockway from Shalom Counselling Services where he has been a member of the Leadership Team as the Business & Operations Director. He has an extensive background working in non-profit organizations such as Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support and Camp Micah. As an active member of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Steven appreciates Rockway's Anabaptist values and is excited to support Rockway's mission.

*Join us!*

**DISCOVER ROCKWAY**

Thursday, November 10, 2022 | 7 pm

**“Rockway’s nurturing atmosphere allowed me to explore my gifts to their fullest potential. I could authentically live into each aspect of who I am.”**

Thomas Beech – Rockway Class of 2022  
University of Guelph, Bachelor of Arts and Sciences



## 2022-2023 CHAPEL THEME

After two years of online chapel, we're excited to be planning to gather as an entire school community to sing, pray, and nurture our spiritual growth together.

Rockway chapels are an integral part of fostering responsible, globally-minded, compassionate and reflective learners. This year's chapel theme is:

**"Compassion – drawing the circle wide."**

Our theme grows out of Ephesians 4:32 *"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you"* and the song *"Draw the Circle Wide"* from the new hymnal *Voices Together* (# 802).

Our chapel theme is intimately tied to our commitment as Mennonites to actively work for peace and restorative justice. Jesus' call to compassion and forgiveness leads us to honour each individual, and choose "power with" instead of "power over" in all our relationships.

As we open ourselves to the invitation to "draw the circle wide" we will explore what it means to commit ourselves to showing compassion for ourselves, for each other, and our world.



---

## ROCKWAY'S 5 PRIORITIES

Rockway is a small community with a big heart. Pre-pandemic there were countless opportunities for students, faculty and staff to find a place to live out their passions and their interests. As we emerge from COVID, we are in a time of tremendous opportunity as well as transition. It is a time to take stock of what has traditionally been done, and discern what the future looks like - how can Rockway live out its values in a way that is sustainable, and intentional?

Rockway admin, faculty and staff have been evaluating the activities, events, and initiatives that have been a core part of the Rockway experience. Inspired by the new MCEC Priority Statements, Rockway has developed 5 Priorities that will help to guide, and structure our community life.

Most of these priorities are not new for the Rockway community. The intention of naming these priorities specifically, is to help give focus and direction to the ways in which we as an organization design events, activities, and connect with the outside community. To be clear, **these priorities do not replace or shift Rockway's Mission**, they are intended to be anchors for the Rockway community to realize that mission. They are mechanisms for us to live out our commitment to walk with students as they become *responsible, globally-minded, compassionate, and reflective learners*.

These priorities will unfold in the Rockway community through student-led campaigns, chapels, physical resources in the building, events, etc. in many of the same ways that they always have. However, we hope that they will also inspire our collective imagination to create and innovate new ways of living out our values in the coming years. Now is the time of thoughtful reconstruction, while moving forward with a firm sense of our collective history, and staying grounded in who we are.

### Rockway's Priorities

- RACIAL JUSTICE
- RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
- CLIMATE JUSTICE
- FULL INCLUSION OF 2SLGBTQIA+
- MENTAL HEALTH

## SOCIAL CONCERNS LEARNS FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

In June two Rockway classes, led by the Social Concerns Committee with faculty members Kristen Mathies and David Harder, toured Indigenous historical sites (route available from Kitchener Public Library). Indigenous peoples have over 13,000 years of history locally, but are community-members, not museum displays. More than the official number of 16,000 Indigenous people currently live in Waterloo Region, including many leaders and innovators such as:

- **Amy Smoke and Bangishimo** (who proposed to the Region of Waterloo, an Indigenous hub)
- **Ashley Hynd** (poet/community-gardener and past Writer's Craft guest at Rockway)
- **Anishnabeg Outreach** (employment and mental health programs; Reconciliation Garden; student mentoring; junior hockey and other programs)
- **Anishanaabe Maamwaye Aki Kiigayewin** (Knowledge Guardians creating an Indigenous-led model for mining, promoting health and healing the land)

The tour started at the YMCA near Rockway. An Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) Nation trail curved from the Mississauga Road, towards planting grounds. Another road followed Schneider Creek from present-day Doon through Victoria Park, to an Attiwonderonk village, now Strange Street. Mill Street approaches the original route of the Mississauga Road. Highland Courts Park is located where the Mississaugas of the New Credit wintered until the 1860s. Not far away was the Strange Street Earthworks, where 1,000+ Attiwonderonk people lived in the mid-1600's. Earthworks were huge constructions, sometimes for defense, more often burial mounds to honour the dead, and meeting places for ceremonies, socializing, and trade. This earthwork formed a semi-circle around four acres of land, as was reported in an 1894/1895 archaeological paper. There was a Neutral Nation (Chononnton) village here. Archaeologist David Boyle worried in 1894 that the land would be sold and all traces of the earthworks removed, rather than preserved.

The group then walked to Victoria Park, former winter location of the Attiwonderonk, later the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe Nations. In 2020 O:se Kenhionhata:tie (a.k.a. Land Back Camp) was nearby, with Indigenous leaders temporarily occupying the space. Since then, Land Back Camp has successfully advocated for the waiving of fees for Indigenous public gatherings and advisors to government. They continue to teach cultural practices, and call for land to gather on. The students



came unexpectedly upon 6,321 orange footprints painted on the park paths by the Every Child Matters Crosswalk Committee (see photo left). The painted footprints represent Indigenous children who died while in Residential Schools, and conversation quieted as the Rockway group realized this.

The students continued to Schneider Haus (1816), located on the former Mississauga Road, and the site of a reported gift exchange between a New Credit Mississauga family and the Pennsylvania-German Mennonite Schneider family. Before returning to school, the group considered: *What are our individual and collective responsibilities?* This is a difficult conversation and one that requires careful thought and consideration. Students will explore this topic as they continue to meet as a group throughout the school year.

## OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The visioning of this project has spanned many years. Thanks to the generosity of our donors through such campaigns as: *A Taste of Spring To Go!*, and *Envirathon Servathon*, we are now able to officially open our Outdoor Classroom in time for the return of students. Starting the first day of classes, teachers will be able to sign-up and reserve the space offering students a one-of-a-kind place to learn, surrounded by nature.

Approximately 100 parents who joined us for our "Kick Start Welcome" event on Friday, September 2 had the opportunity to experience the space first-hand. The response was overwhelmingly positive and we have no doubt this will enhance the student experience here at Rockway. We invite you to explore this new space the next time you are on campus!

*Ray Boehm '84 and his  
Gr. 11 PE class.*

---



*Lush green space surrounds the Outdoor Classroom providing a unique space for students to learn.*

---

## SHOP ROCKWAY COMING TO AN END

Our **SHOP ROCKWAY** Rewards Program is coming to an end. A limited quantity of gift cards are still available. For more information, please visit [rockway.ca](http://rockway.ca) or email [office@rockway.ca](mailto:office@rockway.ca)





# ROCKWAY ALUMNI

## ALUMNI UPDATE Bernie is a Grandpa!

For those of you who went to school with Bernie Burnett '73 or played on one of his many Basketball teams while he worked at Rockway, you might like to know that he recently became a grandpa!

Pictured right, Bernie sits with his son, David Burnett '05, while he proudly holds his grandson. Two alumni holding a future alumnus.

This is just an example of the many wonderful and exciting things happening in the lives of our alumni, and **we want to hear about YOU!**

Email us at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) to share a story about yourself, or to update your contact information and communication preferences so that you can stay informed of events happening at Rockway.



## ALUMNI BABY T-SHIRTS

Is there a new addition to your family? Let us know and we'll send a size 2T t-shirt for the future Rockway graduate, at the beginning of 2023.

Email Kristen at [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) with the name of the baby, parents, date of birth and mailing address.

When you receive the t-shirt, we'd love to see a photo of you and/or the future alumni!

## THANKS 'FORE' ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!

On June 1, 2022, 49 golfers came out to Foxwood Golf and Country Club in Baden for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Rockway Golf Classic. Together we raised \$26,000 for Student Tuition Assistance.

Thank you to all golfers who invited family and friends to *'chip in fore Rockway students'*.

Congratulations to this year's winners, *Rob Klassen, Josh Klassen '11, Evan Bechtel '11, Andrew Lichti '03 (pictured right)*.

The planning team is already working hard behind the scenes to make preparations for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Classic to be held spring 2023.

Stay tuned for more updates soon!



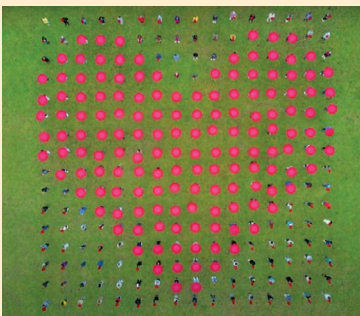


# ALUMNI CODES THE ROCKWAY UMBRELLA APP

Rockway's latest all-school video "**Someone To You**" required us to coordinate 250 umbrellas. Students needed to open and close their umbrellas at the correct time to create overhead patterns filmed by a drone. This seemed like an impossible challenge... until we talked to Rockway Class of 2021 alumni and programmer extraordinaire, Joe Wildfong !

Joe was approached with the project back in 2020 when he was a Grade 12 student and leading the Rockway Robotics Team. Project leader, Sara Wahl asked Joe if he could code a custom application for students' phones that would tell them, based on their position on the field, when they needed to open and close their umbrellas. Joe began to code the app during COVID shut-downs, and its development required multiple versions and extensive testing. After graduation, he continued to perfect the app during his gap year, where he worked as a programmer for PeaceWorks Technology Solutions.

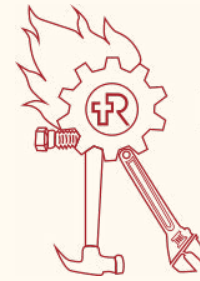
After two years of testing amid COVID delays, the Rockway Umbrella app was finally launched and filming could begin! The app works a little like "Guitar Hero", where your phone lights up when you need to open or close your umbrella. Joe's app allowed us to film complex patterns like the word "ROCKWAY" scrolling across 200 umbrellas. Be sure to watch the video to see the app in action!



Joe is looking forward to beginning his studies in Systems Design Engineering at University of Waterloo, while he lives at Conrad Grebel University College in September. We are so grateful to Joe and his willingness to share his gifts as an alumni to make this project successful. We couldn't have done it without him!



*Thank you, Joe, for sharing your expertise and passion!*



## Rockway Robotics

The Rockway Robotics team, alongside their faculty/staff mentors and volunteers, had a very successful 2022 season:

- St. Mary C.S.S. Ontario District Event Winners
- U of Waterloo Ontario District Event Finalists
- Judge's Award Winner U of Waterloo Event
- Ranked 27th of 67 teams at the Ontario Provincial Championships

**Congrats, students, mentors and volunteers!**

## ROCKWAY ROBOTICS NEEDS YOUR HELP

We are so grateful to the faculty, staff, parents and alumni who shared their passions with our students.

***If you have skills to share and time to spare, we'd love to talk with you!***



The Rockway Robotics team took Gold at the regional competition in April 2022.

**ROBOTICS MENTORS** are needed for Administrative Assistant, Business, Design, Energy Sector knowledge and Programming.

**ROBOTICS SPONSORSHIP** is needed for building materials, event registration and to help bring Robotics Kits to the Grade 7&8 classrooms.

Email [volunteers@rockway.ca](mailto:volunteers@rockway.ca) to learn how you can support this incredible STEM and Business opportunity while helping support the work of our Rockway students.

## THE ALL-SCHOOL MUSICAL HAS RETURNED

If you don't work in the Performing Arts today, you may be tired of hearing how hard it's been during the COVID-19 pandemic. But it's true, in more ways than any of us alive today have ever seen before.

So, for our little Rockway, which has so many gifted and big-hearted students, you can imagine how exciting it was for us to get back onstage this past March, two years after the pandemic began, with our all school production of "Anne of Green Gables".

Auditions were held in December of 2021. Going on our Christmas break, we were all very excited. Then came the word...*we weren't coming back to school right away after Christmas.*

We began rehearsals in January of 2022 with an online read through of the play – everyone was still home. It was very difficult to not be present all together, but we made it through because of the resilience of our students, faculty and staff.

Finally, at the beginning of Quadmester 3, we were back and beginning in-person rehearsals, albeit with masks. We were following all of the Public Health protocols and the cast was exceptional in how they respected the protocols and each other.

It's difficult to put into words how thrilling it was to have the students performing for their peers and eventually, a public audience. The students did so extremely well, every one of them, and we had an incredible backstage crew to support them. Live theatre has returned to Rockway!

**Which brings us to 2022-2023, which is an all-school musical year.**

Every three years Rockway presents a musical. The last scheduled musical was "The Sound of Music" which had to be cancelled due to COVID. That was in 2020. Our last fully staged musical, then, was "The Wizard of Oz" in 2017. So, we are giddy with anticipation of producing a musical in 2022-2023!

The summer was research time, and *we have landed on a title that we think will get everyone excited!*

At the time of this publication, we don't yet have the performance rights, so you'll have to wait just a little longer to find out which show we will be producing. We are excited to hear voices that have grown silent over the last few years getting back into action. And for the students, well...it is a time to strengthen bonds of friendship as well as make new friends.

This is the work that the theatre does at its best...rehearse, refresh, renew, and finally, inspire.



*Action shot of our cast during rehearsal – Anne breaking her slate over Gilbert Blythe's head while the class reacts.*

# CONNECTIONS <sup>2022</sup>

HOMECOMING NIGHT  
Friday, October 28

WE ARE  
EXCITED TO  
HAVE YOU  
RETURN TO  
ROCKWAY!

JOIN US FOR  
TWO AMAZING EVENTS  
THAT CELEBRATE ALUMNI,  
FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

On Friday, October 28

## SPAGHETTI SUPPER



- 5 - 7 pm
- Enjoy this delicious homemade meal prepared by our wonderful Food Services staff and served by students!
- Arrive between 5-7 pm, stand in line and reconnect with your former classmates, teachers and friends.
- The Spaghetti Supper is a student fundraiser. Proceeds go toward our Grade 7-12 Trips Week in May.

### MENU

Caesar Salad • Spaghetti with Meat or Vegetarian Sauce (GF noodles available)

Dinner Roll • Cupcakes • Water/Coffee/Tea

### COST

\$20 per person

(you will also receive 3 Raffle Tickets!)

## ALUMNI SPORTS CHALLENGE

- 7:15 pm Basketball  
- Alumni vs Rockway Sr. Girls BB
- 8:30 pm Volleyball  
- Alumni vs Rockway Sr. Boys VB
- Calling all alumni! We're looking to form alumni teams to play our current student teams. Email [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) to join your team today!



## STAY CONNECTED – GET INVOLVED

As you read this publication, student life has returned to Rockway. Our hallways are once again filled with the sound and energy our faculty and staff long to experience.

**Now we need your help!** After almost three years of restrictions, we are finally in a place where students can experience everything Rockway has to offer. Your involvement enhances the student experience, whether it is attending sporting events to cheer on our athletes, applauding loudly during our musical performances or answering the many calls we have to volunteer, we want to encourage you to take part in what is happening at the school.

Please review our list of upcoming events and be sure and add the dates to your calendar.



### 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 peace-making and service to God and all creation.

## UPCOMING EVENTS...

 Spiritual Emphasis Week

“VERY GOOD” and other  
compassionate truths



JOIN US FOR OUR EVENING SESSION\*  
October 5, 2022 @ 7 pm  
Stay tuned to [rockway.ca](http://rockway.ca) for more information

Sara Erb

\*Sponsored by MCEC



ANNUAL  
GENERAL  
meeting

Thursday, November 24, 2022  
@ 7:30 pm on Zoom

Stay tuned to [rockway.ca](http://rockway.ca) for more information.

### Stay Connected

We'd love to hear from you!  
You can connect with us at:

**Rockway Mennonite Collegiate**

110 Doon Road  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2G 3C8

T: 519-743-5209

F: 519-743-5935

[office@rockway.ca](mailto:office@rockway.ca)

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

Principal: Elaine Ranney

Charitable Number: 119122091RR0001

 **ROCKWAY**  
VOLUNTEERS

Rockway has reimagined its volunteer program and we would love for you to **get involved**. Consider becoming a **Rockway Volunteer** and get reconnected with your Rockway community.

Check out our  
Interest survey:



Save the  
Date!

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Tuesday, December 6, 2022  
@ St. Peter's Lutheran Church



Reflections is a publication of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. Please let us know if you prefer to receive your copy by mail or email. Contact us at [advancement@rockway.ca](mailto:advancement@rockway.ca), [alumni@rockway.ca](mailto:alumni@rockway.ca) or 519-743-5209 x3011. Thank you.



#lifeatRockway