

# Internationally-minded students spotlighted

## Windsor Park

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Two Frontenac School students are in the spotlight for helping their classmates

understand the importance of educating girls in developing countries.

Brendan Yeryk and Kevin Huynh, both 13, were featured earlier this month in a video series produced by the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation for International Development Week, Feb. 5 to 11.

The MCIC used the online video series

to highlight nine Manitobans who have made a mark in the field of international development, including Yeryk and Huynh.

The two Grade 8 students were selected last year to attend a conference held by the MCIC, and came back to their school inspired.

"It basically showed to make a difference, it's not very hard at all — you just have to want it," Yeryk said.

The boys wanted to spread that message to other students, so they teamed up with three social studies classes to organize activities last March: a fair-trade bake sale, a book drive, and an interactive assembly.

The assembly focused on the struggles girls in developing countries face when it comes to getting an education.

"They don't really get to go to school," said Huynh, explaining many girls must take care of younger siblings, making gruelling treks to fetch clean water, or end up working as child labourers in factories.

The assembly simulated some of those hardships during a race for students — using activities like dressing a baby doll to represent taking care of younger siblings, and tying shoelaces to replicate the tasks of working in a factory.

Yeryk said the fact that students weren't sitting in a classroom the whole time helped drive the message home to his classmates.

"They're actually having a lot of fun at the same time," he said.

While Frontenac teacher Jennifer

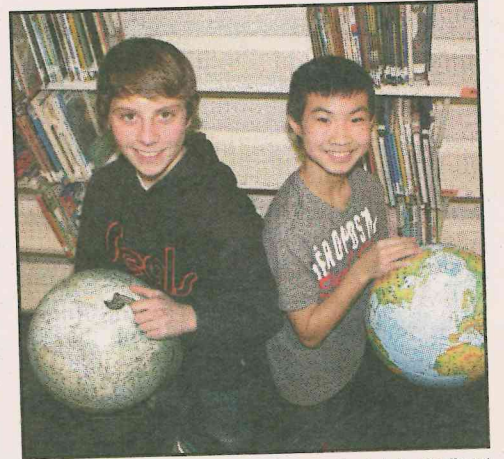


Photo by Arielle Godbout

Brendan Yeryk (left) and Kevin Huynh were featured by the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation for spreading awareness in their school.

Kroetsch said all her social studies students were inspired while organizing last year's activities, Huynh and Yeryk took a leadership role.

"They had an expert knowledge on these issues, so they could explain the 'why' to the other students," she said.

Meanwhile, both students say they're hoping to once again highlight international development this year with new events.

"Children are our future," said Huynh, when asked why spreading awareness is important. "If we don't, who will?"

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