

REMARKS BY SAM BLYTH, CEO OF BLYTH ACADEMY  
AT 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
TORONTO, September 20, 2017

Good evening Minister, Ambassadors, Consuls general, Blyth alumni, teachers and staff, parents and students.

Thank you Minister for your kind words.

I would like to recognize you for your outstanding work as both an MPP and the Minister leading the province's economic development.

You have been a relentless and superb promoter of Ontario creating and preserving jobs tens of thousands of jobs and a business environment that allows Ontarians to thrive.

When Blyth was founded in 1977 bell bottoms were still fashionable, Jimmy Carter and Pierre Trudeau were in office, the Vietnam was a recent memory and interest rates were soon to climb to 22%. and my hair was brown....

Also, coming down the path of history was the Iran Contra affair, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, AIDS, wars in the Falklands, Afghanistan and Iraq, a major recession, a banking collapse, 9/11 and the internet.

If I had known I would have moved to the Gulf islands and grown organic vegetables.

Tonight, I would like to honour some of the people that have distinguished themselves and perhaps exceeded our motto of 'Be Brilliant' and present them with a 40th year diploma.

They are just a handful of the more than 100,000 students who have gone through Blyth, worked hard and exceeded their personal expectations.

1/ Neria Aylward. Neria was born in Newfoundland and applied for a Blyth scholarship to Cambridge when she was a 16-year-old.

Not only did she win but she earned a first in her Part One exams and dazzled some very serious academics in Cambridge.

Her graduation thesis was described to me as brilliant-rare praise particularly as she managed to find time to row for her College and win a Cambridge blue as Captain of the University Men's and Woman's polo team.

In December 2016 Neria was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford and leaves in a few days to take up her place there.

Ladies and gentleman Neria Aylward.

2/ In the summer of 2016 I was lucky enough to attend the Rio Olympics where on my first day there managed to snag tickets to both the tennis (which I dearly love and try to play) and swimming, which is usually just a contest between a bunch of Americans.

To say I was surprised to see a 16-year-old Canadian win a silver medal in the 100m butterfly is a great understatement--of course she then went on to win three more medals including gold in the coveted 100m freestyle.

Returning to Toronto Penny was tutored by Blyth faculty and joined our online school.

This September she joined Blyth Academy Yorkville as a full-time student where we are helping her juggle her academics, sports and public life.

Ladies and gentlemen Penny Oleksiak.

3. Maya Burhanpurkar first gained fame as 10-year-old scientist with an invention of an intelligent antibiotic that attacks pathogenic bacteria.

At 13 she won the Platinum Award a Canada wide Science fair, the first of many for her work on two Alzheimer's drugs.

At 15 she made a film on climate change and its effects on the Inuit featuring Margaret Atwood and Chris Hatfield which won the Gloria Baron prize.

At just 13 she was voted to Canada's top 20 under 20 and was awarded the Queens Jubilee medal.

Maya was a student at Blyth Thornhill from which she garnered scholarship offers to most of the top Canadian universities as well as Cambridge, MIT, Caltech and Harvard where she is now a member of the class of 2021. Ladies and gentlemen Maya Burhanpurkar.

4/ Steve Kasper and the Chinese Men's U18 and candidates for the Chinese Olympic Hockey team.

Steve is a Canadian who had a 14 year career in the NHL and won the Frank Selke award as the top defensive forward in just his second year in the league.

As a coach, he is preparing these young men for International competition and ultimately the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics to be held for the first time in China.

The team is attending school at Blyth Downsview our school for elite athletes and training both at the school and at Chesswood arena.

Hockey is a great Canadian export and we are delighted that you both came to Canada to train the team and to Blyth for their education.

5. Next is the parent's award given to the individual who through their love and support for their child and inculcation of values best exemplifies Blyth's ideals of academic achievement and all round personal development.

Brian's son entered what is now Blyth Downsview with the support of Neil Doctorow as a 12 year old athlete whose dream everyday was to get up and play hockey.

Wisely Brian insisted that school work had to come first and his son did well in both. At 15 he was chosen first overall in the OHL draft and shipped out to a small town on the American side of Lake Erie-probably never to be heard from again.

Not so fast, as a 16 year old he won rookie of the year honors and the Bobby Smith award as Scholastic Player of the Year in the OHL and later captained his team and starred with the Canadian U18 team.

At 17 he was selected first overall in the NHL draft and again shipped out, this time to Edmonton where he has since been appointed captain, the youngest in NHL history, won the Art Ross, Ted Lindsay and Hart Trophies and starred with Team Canada.

A little-known story about him is that after signing his first NHL contract and becoming a household name he spent the summer before joining the Oilers in summer school at Blyth completing his high school diploma.

Ladies and gentlemen Connor McDavid's dad and our partner at Blyth Downsview, Brian McDavid.

As we look forward to our next 40 years I wanted to honour two girls just 9 and 7 years of age and both math prodigies. Carlie and Saige Weinreb Carlie, 9, has lectured at the University of Western Ontario and at the Schulich School at York on math and finance and appeared on the Steve Harvey Show.

The CBC described her as 'the symbol for financial literacy" and Bloomberg TV as 'a local and online celebrity for her tax knowledge'.

CTV described her as 'the young math queen'. Both defy the notion that girls are somehow less capable at math and science.

Carlie and Saige joined us this fall as Grade 9 students at Blyth academy Online in our "LEAP" program which will for the first time allow Canadian elementary students to accelerate through high school math and science courses.

Ladies and gentlemen Carlie and Saige Weinreb...

Again, looking forward i wanted to introduce our new Chairman.

John Makinson joins us as our first outside chair to guide us in our international growth and brings a great deal of experience with him.

Educated at Cambridge, he joined the Financial Times as young reporter, eventually becoming managing Director and leading its global expansion.

As CFO and Director of Pearson PLC he was a leader of the world's largest education company, eventually becoming CEO of its subsidiary Penguin and merging it with Random House and becoming Chair of Penguin Random House, the world's leading literary publisher.

Outside of work, John Chaired the National Theatre in London and has recently been appointed Chair of the Bodelian Library Foundation, Oxford.

John knows Canada well having sat on the board of George Weston for more than 10 years.

Ladies and gentlemen John Makinson.

I wanted to conclude this evening by announcing the location of Blyth Academy's newest school.

But I have to preface the announcement by offering our deepest condolences.

Because our school will be in Mexico City, which as we know is dealing with a tragedy today—an earthquake that has cost many lives, both in the capital in several regions of Mexico.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all our Mexican friends.

All of the members of the Blyth Academy family are with you in spirit.

And in September 2018, we will be with you in person on a happier day when we open the doors of our new school.

This decision reflects the growing affection and cooperation between Canada and Mexico in both good and challenging times...including today, and including the ongoing NAFTA negotiations.

Blyth Academy Mexico City has become a reality only with the outstanding support of the Mexican government and I am particularly grateful to Ambassador Dionisio Arturo Perez Jacome Friscion and Ambassador Porfirio Thierry Muñoz Ledo. Ladies and Gentleman Ambassador Ledo.

On behalf of all of us please accept our thanks and our commitment to be an important part of the Mexico City community in the years to come.

Finally, and most importantly i would like to thank all the Blyth team members both past and present for your outstanding work and belief in the dreams that i have had over these past 40 years.

You have been extraordinarily dedicated, talented and caring in your work and and patient with me.

Today more than 1,000 teachers lead Blyth classes here and in more than 30 countries around the world supported by a brilliant group of Heads of School and staff here led by Patrick Shaw.

Thank you so much alumni, parents and students for your belief in us. It has been a wonderful, sometimes challenging but always fulfilling 40 years and I can't wait for the next chapter.