

MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

I have a fascinating programme to tell you about, recently attended by the daughter of one of our vendors.

Kalea Kirsh, daughter of Ted of Ted's Knick-Knack-a-Tory and his wife, Bonnie, had the honour of being chosen to attend Shad Valley earlier this summer.

Shad is a month long programme for exceptional high school students, at a pivotal point in their lives, helping to transform them into tomorrow's leaders. Students from Grade 10 to 12, from all across the country and beyond, go through a grueling application process.

Approximately 50 out of about 1,000 are chosen, based on high academics, extracurricular activities and creativity.

The Shad programme revolves around a STEM foundation, which stands for science, technology, engineering and math. However, Shad is more than STEM - it is where 50 young people work together to reach common goals. They call this 'an uncommon purpose', meaning that all members are high achievers and change makers despite having different motivations.

Another main aspect of the Shad programme is the Design Entrepreneurship Project. Each year Shad chooses a large, complicated issue and asks all participants to find an audacious and effective solution.

This year, the issue chosen was food insecurity in Canada. Students work together in groups with the goal of advancing to national judging of their solutions. This project teaches students skills in areas such as business, entrepreneurship, teamwork and communication.

The Shad programme is governed by five values: community, creativity, diversity, excellence and responsibility. Students are reminded to strive for these in their everyday life, both during and after completion of the programme.

These are valuable assets in a teamwork setting and help shape the students into tomorrow's leaders. Beyond the values, Shad's students gain confidence and self-motivation through inspiration, to push themselves beyond their comfort zone in order to recognize their full potential.

Kalea describes her Shad experience as remarkable and transformational. She was thrilled with the endless opportunities and experiences she obtained there. While at Shad, Kalea went on a cancer centre tour, met a geobiologist from NASA, had lunch with the heads of McMaster University, worked on a project to help find a solution to food insecurity in Canada and climbed a 52 foot tower, all while surrounded by amazing like-minded peers.

In addition, Kalea was part of lectures and workshops that were fascinating and intellectually stimulating.

At Shad, she felt as though she gained new confidence and became convinced that she can accomplish whatever she sets her sights on. She has experienced an early taste of university life as well as learned what it takes to become a leader of tomorrow.

Overall Kalea says, 'Shad is an experience that was life changing, phenomenal, and the best month I could have ever experienced.'

Between now and October 8, when the Farmers Market ends our outdoor season, please stop by Ted's booth and ask Kalea to tell you more about her life altering experience at the Shad programme.

Our next Special Event is our Apples and Honey Fest on Sept. 17th. We will have exciting musical entertainment at the bandshell as well as apple themed activities and treats. As usual we will have a draw for a Market bag full of goodies from the Market vendors.

See you at the Market!