

Humberview's top scholar stresses importance of being focused

By Bill Rea

Mackenzie Claggett is interested in philosophy and politics, and he hopes to put them to use in the days to come.

He should do well at that, and he has the marks from school to prove it.

Claggett, 18, finished at the top of the Class of '14 that is graduating this year from Humberview Secondary School in Bolton.

He finished up with a 98.83 per cent average, and that included three perfect scores in law, philosophy and world issues. His other courses saw grades of 99 per cent in economics, 98 in English and 96 in biology.

Claggett said the secret to academic success is actually rather simple.

"Hard work and setting goals for yourself," he said. "Just staying focused on school. Staying committed to your education."

Claggett said he's always done well in school, although he said he hadn't thought he was going to finish at the top of his class. He observed that he was in with a lot of other talented students.

"I was really focused," he explained. "One of my goals was just to do as well as I possibly could."

He also said the work was more in the interests of a personal achievement, as opposed to getting into a good school.

As for the future, Claggett said he plans to go to Western next year to study political science, and after that, he's hoping to attend law school.

"That's just what I've always been interested in," he explained. "I'm good at debating."

He also like philosophy, commenting his favourite philosopher was probably Simone de Beauvoir.

"I could relate to what she was saying and could apply it to issues I had read about," he said.

Although he was focused on his studies, Claggett said he found time for other activities, such as the Mentorship program at Humberview, the Clean Team environmental group and Mock Trial. He also tutored at school.

During the summer, he's working as a lifeguard and swimming instructor.

Claggett stressed that staying focused on education was the best advice he could offer students entering high school.

"Don't burden yourself with too many responsibilities," he said, adding getting involved in too many activities can be distracting, and that can take a toll. "You need to find a proper balance to ensure that can adequately complete assignments to the best of your ability."

He also suggested students take courses that are appropriate for them and that they are going to like.

"If you don't like a subject, your commitment to that class is going to decrease," he said

