

Mayfield's top scholar is looking forward to life in Montreal

By Bill Rea

Commencement at Mayfield Secondary School is still some weeks away.

But graduate Michelle Shi said she's looking forward to it. And she has a special reason to have anticipation.

She's the top graduating scholar in Mayfield's Class of '14.

Shi accomplished this with a 97.8 per cent average in her six Grade 12 courses. She received marks of 99 in advanced functions, English, calculus and data management, as well as 96 per cent in chemistry and 95 in earth and space sciences.

She'll be collecting her award in November.

"It will be nice to come back after university," she commented.

She will be coming back from McGill University in Montreal, where she plans to study business and commerce.

"I like the campus and I like the city," she said, commenting on her post-secondary selection. "The school has a great reputation."

Shi said she's also looking forward to getting away from home and experiencing some independence. "And I'd really like to learn some French while I'm there too," she added.

As well, Shi said there's lots of potential for business contacts in Montreal. She said she's not made any definite career plans yet, but she might like to start her own business, possibly involving the music industry. Exposure to a city like Montreal, along with certain courses and people she expects to meet there, should help in that direction.

"I just want to go with the flow for now and see," she said.

Shi commented that she's been part of the arts and drama program at Mayfield.

"It really helped me develop as a person," she said, adding she was also involved in bands and choirs.

Coming out on top of her class was a bit of a surprise for Shi. She said her marks were good in Grade 9, but it wasn't until Grade 10 that she started getting close to the top. The following year, she got the highest marks in all her classes.

"That was a big surprise to me," she remarked, adding it helped set her goal for Grade 10.

"I just really tried my best," she said. "That's all you can do, really."

"I aim to do the best I can do, and see how far that takes me," she added.

When it comes to the secret of academic success, Shi said it's "balancing everything," adding it involves prioritizing between life, curriculum, family, friends, etc.

She also said it involves adapting to different teaching styles, adding her experience in drama helped in that area.

"Adapting and organization are the two most important things," she said.

And in the final analysis, Shi said there's really no secret.

"If you're going to do anything, you might as well give it your all."

Shi is not working this summer, as she plans to spend the next couple of weeks travelling. That includes a trip to her future stomping grounds. "It's kind of like a preview of what Montreal's going to be like," she said.

And it is an experience she's looking forward to.

"Just making new friends and meeting new people," she said. "Living in Montreal, eating poutine and other parts of living in Montreal."

