

Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2013

ALL IN THE FAMILY

From 1975 to 1988, members of the Mounsey family made Thomson C. I. their school home. Cheryl graduated in 1980, Robert in 1982 and Roslyn in 1988. All three made positive contributions to our educational community. Robert and Roslyn were our valedictorians for their graduating years. We thought it would be interesting to catch up with them today and asked them each to write us a note. Here are the results:



CHERYL: I was the first of my siblings to walk the halls of Thomson - Thomson without the "p" of course. As I reflect, I remember the walks through Thomson Park from home to school and back. I remember that my friends and I would pretend to be pioneers as we walked in the blistering winds and snowstorms of winter.

I remember the rivalry between the two best football teams of Woburn and Thomson; the United Way drives and Multicultural Nights; the band performances; and the Entertainment Nights. I even remember the politically incorrect Beauty Pageants.

I am thankful to my music teachers and for the opportunity to be a member of the school band. I still think the French horn is the most beautiful and regal-sounding brass instrument. I thank my English teachers for introducing me to Shakespeare and for trips to Stratford. I also remember *Death of a Salesman*. I am also thankful to my Latin teacher for teaching me about togas and a lost civilization and to my social science and history teachers for sparking my interest in social issues. As for Relations and Functions (math), it must have served some purpose. I am now in law.

After Thomson I went to the University of Toronto and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and then went on to receive a Masters of Arts degree at McMaster University, also in Sociology. I then decided it was time to leave the world of academia and see what the real world was like and ended up in the public service helping to shape policy in the areas of justice and gender equality.

After working for both the federal and the provincial governments I decided to return to academia to study and fulfilled my dream of becoming a lawyer. I now practise in Toronto in the areas of family, civil litigation and criminal law.

As for my life outside the law, I now enjoy my nieces and nephew, am a gym rat and enjoy going to see documentary films. I am also involved in several community groups. Looking back now, I am most grateful for the sense of community that Thomson provided while I was there. Thank you, Thomson!

continued on page 2



ROBERT: It's great to have a chance to reconnect with people who attended Thomson. Although it was over 30 years ago, Thomson was a wonderful experience, which provided me with very fond memories of basketball, band, car rallies and classes. I will never forget our production of *Bye Bye Birdie* and the speed and precision with which Mr. Duff rewrote the musical arrangements so that the band could actually read and play the accompanying music. I will never forget the fun we had planning school dances, car rallies and school fairs. The friends and relationships forged at Thomson all taught me important lessons which continue to serve me and helped me become the person I am today.

After graduation I attended the University of Toronto and was accepted into medical school. I completed a residency in Otolaryngology and then a subspecialty in Facial Plastic Surgery. Today I practise as an Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon in Scarborough and I am on staff at the University of Toronto. I also serve as Medical Director of Revesse, a Facial Plastic Surgery clinic in the city.

After Thomson I thought my days of English classes and the arts were over. I couldn't have been more wrong! Now that I am married and have two children of my own, I have started writing in my spare time and have published an eBook, "The Face Transplant" on Amazon.com. Writing and reflecting on literature provide a refreshing change of pace from a busy life.

Remember one day it will all come to an end.
When it does, what really matters?
That you lived. That you loved. That you tried.
Above all else never forget, life is a gift.
When you receive a gift, especially an unexpected gift,
you must take it gently, cherish it dearly and use it fearlessly.
And never forget to say thanks.

---Robert Mounsey

Thank you, Thomson, for all that you have given me.



ROSLYN: Hello to my fellow Thomson alumni!

It's been 25 years since graduation - who would have thought that time could go by that fast? I often reflect upon my high school days, fondly reminiscing about the fun we had attending football games, participating in band, working on Student Council, attending school assemblies in the auditorium and helping out with the school production of *Guys and Dolls*. When I listen to Frank Sinatra's version of "Luck, Be a Lady" I remain utterly convinced that he had nothing on the members of our Thomson cast! Perhaps the biggest surprise is how much I continue to rely upon the knowledge, insights and friendships gained at Thomson. (Amazing how much Latin comes up in the real world!)

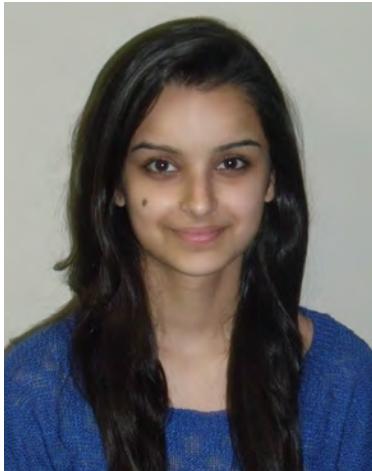
After Thomson I attended the University of Toronto, Scarborough College, where I studied Commerce and met my better half, John. After U. of T. I was accepted into the study of law at Osgoode Hall Law School, York University. I am currently a litigation lawyer with the federal government in Toronto, focusing on the defence of class action and constitutional claims. I also defend the government in hearings concerning decisions by federal tribunals. In 1999 John and I were married and in 2006 we were blessed with the arrival of a daughter.

With many more grey hairs and a few more pounds than at graduation, I know that Thomson has given us the friendships and resilience to keep going and keep things in perspective. I think about and talk about all of you more often than you'll ever know. I still keep in touch with many people, including classmates Nadira Khan and Allison Peart. But perhaps the best part of it all comes when I run into people in elevators or at city events. The face is always familiar even if memory sometimes dims the name. I've recently set up a LinkedIn account (<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/roslynmounsey>). Please write me with news and updates. It's been too long and we had too much fun not to keep in touch!



ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS, 2013

We are pleased to introduce you to the Alumni Award winners for 2013: **Sachi Thakar** and **Piranavan Balasingam**. Both were born in 1998 (does that make you feel old?) and both emigrated to Canada in 2000, when they were just two years old. Both graduated from Edgewood Public School before arriving at Thomson. Past that, however, their stories diverge.



Sachi remembers arriving in Canada from India not knowing a word of English and, in fact, just starting to speak her native language, Gujarati. She still speaks Gujarati at home, but her English is equally fluent.

During her Grade 9 year, she was heavily involved with the Student Council. She was a participant in the Future Aces program developed by Herbert Carnegie to help youth gain the self-knowledge and self-confidence to take control of their lives and to use their abilities in a positive way. She maintained academic scores in the mid-80s. This year, in

Grade 10, she has been selected as a Prefect, taking on more leadership roles while representing her school. Outside of school she has already accumulated over 100 volunteer hours tutoring mathematics at a Kumon branch near the Scarborough Town Centre, averaging about six hours a week. While admitting that her future plans are not set in stone, at present her interest in medical technology has her eyeing Queen's University to become a radiologist. Since math and science are her favourite subjects, that seems like a natural. She also admits to being a Bollywood fan!

Piranavan was a Grade 9 rep on Student Council for 2012-2013 and a Future Aces participant. He played rugby. He assisted with assembly programs, including spirit assemblies, helped with Field Day in September and with Mayfest (an outdoor carnival in...May!) and took part in bake sales and food drives for charity. He had an amazing experience attending Leadership Camp, a character-building adventure. He also attended a three-day student leadership conference at a hotel in Barrie with 200 students from across the province. He admits it took a while to balance these activities with his academic pursuits but by the second semester he had worked out a successful system.

At Edgewood he enjoyed participating in a "Roots of Empathy" program with about 20 other classmates. The class learned how to take care of children, among other accomplishments. Piranavan has delightful memories of the occasions when an actual baby was brought in for the students to handle. Would this have anything to do with his own early days when his mom and his older brother guided him through his arrival in Canada? Although the family is of Sri Lankan background, they actually arrived from Germany.

Piranavan also lists math and science as his favourite subjects. About once a week he tutors younger students (as he was once tutored) in math at Eelem Tech near Markham and Ellesmere. He would like to major in Robotic Engineering at the University of Waterloo. Interestingly, while admitting that he has always had some difficulties with French, he has hopes of taking a five-week immersion course in the language in Québec this summer. Ironically it was a French class that he had to leave so that we could interview him for this profile. Finally, he is also looking for a part-time job, if anyone can offer leads!

It's good to be reminded that Thomson is still home to some outstanding students. The alumni thank Sachi and Piranavan for representing our old school so well and congratulate them both on being deserving winners of the 2013 Alumni Awards. The presentation will take place at the Awards Assembly, October 24.

