



Pawsitive Press

The latest in good news & announcements from Outreach Christian Education

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Wise Beyond His Years: Jacob de la Cruz



By Shannon Santschi

Jacob de la Cruz is on the cusp of graduating from Outreach Christian Education. He is taking honors courses this year and his favorite themes are language and science. He is a self-proclaimed nerd, bookworm, comic book aficionado and video-gamer.

I sat down to visit with the naturally curious, introspective and independent-minded Jacob, and realized within minutes that I was talking with someone whose wisdom is far beyond his 18 years. Some of this wisdom can be attributed to the diverse cultural experiences that his American father and Mexican mother have each given to him, some to the blessing of being the last born of the family, but more than these, it's his relationship with God that is shaping his mind and heart as he moves toward adulthood.

cont'd p.2

Wise Beyond His Years...

Jacob attended OCE in his freshman year, was away for his sophomore and junior years, but returned for his senior year. He explained to me a frustrating experience he'd had at another school in the that almost caused him to leave mid-school year. He remained and finished his junior year, but wanted a better experience for his senior year.

Jacob: *(When considering where to go)* I asked myself, Jacob, what's the one good experience that you can remember where [teachers] cared about you, where you've been able to practice not just your religion, but what you believe and know to be true? Where have you felt that openness? OCE was the only [place] that came to mind.

Q: What are some key differences between your past educational experiences at other schools and Outreach?

Jacob: At a public school, it's easy to get lost in the cracks...as long as you pass the test, you're fine. But at OCE, I was like, Whoa! People pay attention to me and my development, and how I'm doing in my math and social studies. It was an experience I'd hadn't had before...Other schools might have prepared me for college or a job, but they weren't preparing me as an individual to face life. And that's something that OCE does *very* well...Life is a lot bigger than black and white paper tests.

Q: Is there a teacher at OCE who has positively influenced you?

Jacob: One of the teachers who has most made an impression on me is also the one that has terrified me the most just because of the subject matter (math). Mrs. Trnka cares about all of her students and she works hard. Her subject is something I'm not good at and I've let that completely block me [in the past]...And I love her because she is very much 'tough love'. She's always telling me, "Jacob, it all depends on your work ethic and how much you want something." [I've learned] that just because something's hard, doesn't mean it's not possible! Because both lesser and greater men have gone through this. I'm not a 'straight A student' in her class, [but] I work my butt off...and if it wasn't for her prodding, I would never have gotten to where I am now.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

Jacob: I had always felt ashamed of my faith in the past, because I was surrounded by people who just thought [my faith] was weird. They would persecute [me] in small ways... [At OCE] I've been able to be in a place where they teach God every Wednesday at chapel...they are spiritually nourishing us. We are starved everywhere else! Ultimately, I got baptized at OCE, and I honestly believe I would not have found God like I did if I had not gone to this school.

Jacob plans to attend college this fall. He's not 100% sure of what field God wants for him, but he hopes it involves sowing the gospel in other's lives through ministry, or perhaps education. He's even considering returning to OCE as a teacher because, as he says, "Without places like OCE, there would be fewer harvesters for the harvest."





TAX TIME IS NEAR!

Should YOU contribute to MO Scholars?

1.

- Do you support parents' natural right to choose the education that is best for their children?
- Do you pay at least \$1,000.00 in taxes (personal or business) to the state of Missouri?
- Would you like to redirect up to 50% of the taxes you pay to the state of Missouri to a fund so that **parents can choose the school** that best serves their child's needs?

IF YOU
ANSWERED
YES TO ALL
OF THE
ABOVE, THE
MO
SCHOLARS
PROGRAM
WOULD BE
GREAT FOR
YOU!

The MO Scholars program allows taxpayers in the state of Missouri to allocate up to 50% of their annual tax liability to provide a better education to low-income students or students with disabilities.

Best of all, signing up takes only a few minutes!
Feel free to watch this [explainer video](#), then fill out a simple form, following the instructions below:



GET STARTED HERE!

2.

Step 1: Go to this website <https://bit.ly/4at6qjD>

Step 2: Select "Herzog Tomorrow Foundation" as your EAO (Educational Assistance Organization) to ensure you receive your tax credit.

Step 3: Mayela Esser with Herzog Tomorrow, will follow up with you in an email after the State receives your tax credit reservation.

Step 4: Mention Outreach Christian Education when asked.



THANK YOU!

From Fights to Fellowship

When Sean Peralta's school switched to online schooling during the pandemic, his grades took a nose dive. He says he would generally check in at the start of the school day, "turn off the camera, and go back to bed." He says that even on the occasions he was awake and watching, "Nothing stuck."

When his public school finally reopened, the environment and values had changed significantly. "An ideology was being pushed that didn't align with our family's values," Sean recalls.



Sean Peralta (center) with teammates.

Now, not only were his grades suffering, but Sean's trust in the administrators and staff began to wane with each assault of his personal convictions. At the end of the semester, his mom removed him from school and decided to try her hand at homeschooling. The environment was better, but both mom and Sean realized by May that additional assistance and expertise would be needed for the subjects he was struggling with.

Over the summer, Mom researched area schools and found OCE. When school started that fall, Sean could see that the teachers at his new school believed in him, his intellect, and his ability to work and excel in his studies. "When I was in public school...I would be pulled out of class for certain subjects like math...I didn't get a sense that [my teachers] had a big expectation of me...all they believed was 'do the work I tell you to, and you'll pass.'" The goal was not to learn or rise to grade level work, but to simply pass on to the next grade. Unsurprisingly, Sean was uninspired by the plan his public school teachers and administrators had crafted for him.

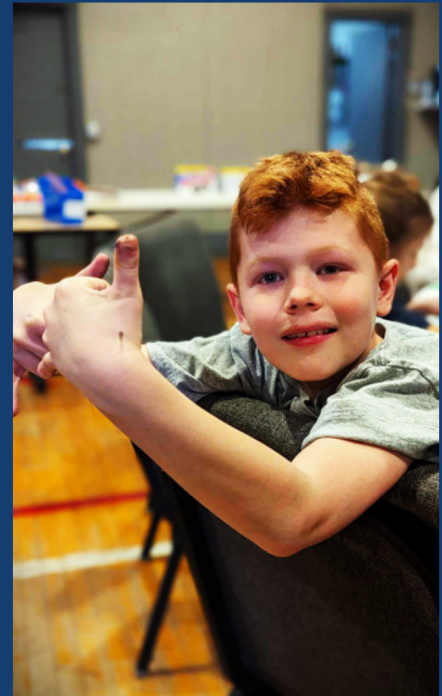
At OCE, instead of simply creating a program of the minimum needed to pass to the next grade, Sean was shown a path that would help him learn and to move toward grade level work, at a pace that depended only on how hard he was willing to work. He tested in at a 6th grade level in math at the beginning of the year. Sean says he was inspired to work so that he could "graduate on-time...and to know a lot more about math for when go to trade school to become a mechanic." He has worked diligently in school and at home and so far this year, has advanced 3 grade levels. He is humble, but knows he has every right to be proud of what he has accomplished.

He also credits his teachers, in particular, Mr. Dunlop who teaches Bible, for... [cont'd p.5](#)

Take the OCE Survey!

Our board and administrative team see God's handiwork in the growth that we've experienced over the past 4 years. We want to stay in tune with His plans for this school. We invite you to pray with us so that we may "know what is the hope of His calling," for Outreach Christian Education! (Ephesians 1:18)

We are also seeking input from parents, teachers, friends and supporters of OCE. We invite you to take our 15-question survey to help us know what we're doing well, and where we could do a better job. The survey should take just a few minutes. Please get started on the survey [here](#).



Fights to Fellowship, cont.

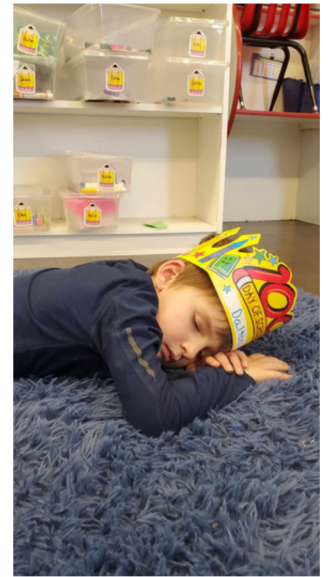
making a difference in his life. "Here, [the teachers] actually care you--they care about where you will end up further in life...Mr. Dunlop tells us about God, he cares about everything about us, we're like his kids."

Sean notes the difference not only in teachers, but also in his fellow students. He and his peers work to build an atmosphere of respect and confidence which he says is done "by the way we talk to each other." He previously thought private schools were for "rich, snobby kids," but as a Bulldog, he can now tell you otherwise. "Instead of walking out of class and seeing a fight, I walk into class and see fellowship. It's like a big family," he says with a smile.





OCE participated in School Choice Day at the Capitol in Jefferson City. Dr. Bullard was the Master of Ceremonies.



100 Days of School !?
I need a nap!

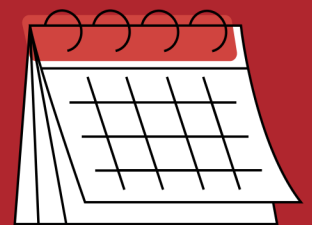


Taelyn Sanders speaking to legislators and peers at School Choice Day!



Superbowl Champs, again!!!

March Events



8	END OF 3RD QUARTER
8	ALL SCHOOL CHAPEL
15	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
22	PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES
25-29	SPRING BREAK

The \$15 Challenge for Children!

Each year, at least 20% of OCE families experience a significant financial hardship by the midpoint of the school calendar. The hardship can mean a family will be faced with having to withdraw their child from OCE and enroll them in a public school.

And although we are one of the most affordable Christian schools in the metro, we often receive calls from parents and grandparents who desperately want their child to attend our school, but find themselves ill-prepared to make the move due to limited financial resources.



THE SOLUTION

For about the cost of 3 Starbucks drinks, you can become a safety net and a beacon of hope for these students. We are seeking 100 donors to commit to partnering with us for 1 year. As of this mailing, 11 people have partnered with us!

Will you be one of the remaining 89 to partner with us for \$15/month?

Your regular donation of \$15 or more each month will help cover the cost of books, tuition and activity fees for students. You can begin giving today on a monthly basis by visiting this link.

Outreach Christian Education relies on the generosity of people like you to support the longevity of this ministry to children and their families. Through your giving, you advance our mission to provide a customized, quality, traditional education with a Biblical worldview for each and every student who walks through our doors. Outreach Christian Education welcomes and sincerely appreciates your partnership. Thank you in advance for helping to provide stability and continuity for our students and families!

