

## Alvie Khandaker Memorial Award

By Colin Gibson

As a very close friend of Alvie Khandaker, the Alvie Khandaker Memorial Award would be much more than an honour to receive. The day I met Alvie was on the first day of grade nine at Markham District High School in our math homeroom class. Ever since that day we grew closer and closer as friends, as we recognized our common interests and understood a very valuable friendship was being generated. But it was in grade 10 and 11 when we became the best of friends, and when I realized what an amazing person Alvie was. Alvie and I worked on countless assignments, projects and summatives together, as well as would frequently work on homework together. The more we did, the more I noticed how remarkably intelligent Alvie was naturally. Alvie's intuition was far beyond my own, as he could remember and understand information after only hearing it once. I am blessed to have been able to work with Alvie, as he taught, pushed and encouraged me to achieve beyond what I believed my maximum potential was. However, much more than simply academics, Alvie was one of the best friends a kid could ask for. Alvie and I were always there for each other and could talk about nearly anything. Specifically, when I was having very difficult relationship troubles Alvie comforted me as he gave me advice to consider and ears that listened. Furthermore, Alvie was not afraid of anything and firmly stood up for everything he believed in. In turn, having Alvie as a best friend I always felt safe and secure.

The absence of Alvie this year has been more than a struggle to say the least. As Alvie was a great mentor and superior influence, emotionally and academically I have felt weaker and lonely. However, all I have achieved in my grade 12 year has been dedicated to Alvie and will continually be. Although, before every test and exam I think of Alvie and I can feel his presence. From this I know there is no way I could be doing as well as I am

alone. In addition, I know that Alvie is watching over me, many other of his close friends, and his family and will continue to guide us through tough situations as he is our guardian angel.

When considering the Alvie Khandaker Memorial Award, the scholarship money involved is irrelevant toward my application. The reason behind it is recognition toward how Alvie Khandaker has impacted me as a person, and how genuinely lucky, blessed, and fortunate I am to have had the opportunity to have shared so much time with him. I value all of the experiences and memories that were created and they will forever be in my heart. If I were to receive this award the money would go towards my post secondary education. As Alvie wanted to be an Anesthesiologist, I am currently striving towards my life long goal of becoming an Environmental Engineer at either Waterloo University or the University of Guelph. I know with the aid of Alvie, my goal is reachable and he would be very proud how far I have persevered.

Furthermore, if given the opportunity, beyond investing in my personal schooling I would like to place the money towards something in specific memory of Alvie. As Alvie loved children, I would like donate money towards the building of a new elementary school somewhere across the world in an undeveloped, 3rd-world country. This way Alvie can continue changing the lives of others just as he has already done so well. Alvie will continue to be remembered and recognized by many others as the hero he has always been.

Overall, it is for these reasons that receiving this award would be much more than simply an honour. Alvie Khandaker was a friend I looked up to in so many ways, a unique man like no other.