

Chalk Talk

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators:

Jackie Robinson, #42, for the Brooklyn Dodgers once famously said:

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”

Anyone who has ever attended a Major League game knows that Robinson's life had an indelible impact on baseball. In 1947, Robinson broke the colour barrier and became the first black baseball player to play in the Major Leagues. Today,



Robinson's uniform number 42 — the only number to be retired on every team — is displayed proudly in every major league baseball park in North America.

Robinson inspired generations of baseball players from all racial backgrounds. His name was invoked again this week during a ceremony to honour the career of retiring Toronto Blue Jays' manager, Cito Gaston, who led the team to 4 pennants and 2 back-to-back World Series. Many great moments were recalled and emotional testimonials were offered by players and fans alike. During the ceremony, words of gratitude were expressed, often through tears, for the soft-spoken but determined manager. Cito chose his number, 43, as a tribute to his hero who had made it possible for him to follow his dream to one day be a Major League player and later a batting coach with the Atlanta Braves, and eventually to becoming one of the game's most successful team managers.



The importance of biography is that it connects us as human beings. It helps us to understand what it is like to walk a mile in someone else's shoes. It can inspire us to be better people, to want to achieve more, and sometimes it motivates us to try to change the world.

This week's **Chalk Talk** features an opportunity for students across Canada to write about people who have made a significant impact in 2010. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing access to free classroom resources and programs. We invite you to visit our website at www.4edu.ca. [Your feed-back is welcome!](#)

Mary Kovack

Mary Kovack

A&E Classroom 2010 Essay Contest

A&E Canadian Classroom's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST' challenges students in grades 5-12 to write an original 300 word essay on the life of a person they believe made the biggest difference on Canadian society in the past year. Students can win cash prizes for themselves and teachers can win cash prizes for their classrooms.

The submissions will be judged by a national panel of education experts and A&E representatives. The essays will be judged based on the following criteria: persuasiveness (33 per cent), creativity (33 per cent) and relevancy (33 per cent). Two winners from each grade level — 5th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade — will be selected.

2 GRAND PRIZES: 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$3,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

2 FIRST PLACE PRIZES: 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$2,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

[Note: Due to Provincial restrictions the contest is void in Quebec.]

Each entry must include the student's name, complete address, postal code, telephone number, age, grade, name of teacher, school, school address, and local cable system (if known). Send entries to: LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST, c/o Temple Scott Associates, 250 The Esplanade, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1J2.

Educators are encouraged to set aside time in their social studies, current events, civics, literacy and history curriculum to have their students participate in this year's contest. **Deadline is December 15th, 2010.**

For more information and contest rules, please visit www.biography.com/class/canadianclassroom. To read about last year's winning entries, see below.



A&E Network's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE' 2009 ESSAY CONTEST — WINNERS!

Be Inspired — Read the Winning Essays

Last Spring, A&E Television Networks awarded cash prizes to the winners of its **2009 Lives That Make a Difference Essay Contest**. Selected from over 1,800 entries, the Grand Prize winners are **David Edgar**, a grade 8 student from Burnaby South Secondary in Burnaby, BC for his essay on former VANOC Chair Jack Poole and **Alisha Sawhney** from Streetsville Secondary School in Mississauga, ON for her essay on Free the Children founder Craig Kielburger. First place winners are **Charles Pallett**, a Grade 7 student from Fisher Park Public School in Ottawa, ON who wrote about Corporal Jody Mitic, a heroic Canadian soldier injured in Afghanistan and **Kaitlyn Vleming**, a Grade 12 student from MacLachlan College in Oakville, ON for her essay on human rights advocate Somaly Mam. "It is refreshing to see that our children draw such inspiration from the people and issues, both triumphant and trying, that dominate our headlines," said Dr. Libby O'Connell, Chief Historian, Senior V.P., Corporate Outreach AETN. "The [winning essays](#) demonstrate that today's youth are informed and insightful about the stories shaping Canada."



Jack Poole (Canadian Olympic Committee photo)

Grand Prize, Grades 5-8: David Edgar, grade 8, Burnaby South Secondary, Burnaby, BC

The Legacy of Jack Poole — "Why will we remember 2009? In the years to come, what would have been so significant? As a Canadian, I'll remember it as the year of the torch relay. The Olympic torch, blazing a trail across Canada, for all to see, When Jack Poole decided to head the bid for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, he lit that torch, that burning flame, in all our hearts. He united Canada by that simple action that would affect the whole country. Jack Poole was chairman of the VANOC committee ..." [Read more](#)

First Place, Grades 5-8: Charles Pallett, grade 7, Fisher Park Public School, Ottawa, ON

Corporal Jodi Mitic Soldier On — "This year the actions of one man, Master Corporal Jodi Mitic, have helped to change Canadian perceptions concerning the war in Afghanistan and the sacrifices made by our Armed Forces personnel. In addition to this, he has also raised awareness about the urgent need for specialized rehab services for veterans of the war in Afghanistan. Corporal Mitic is an inspirational role model for all Canadians ..." [Read more](#)



Master Cpl. Jody Mitic
Soldier, double amputee

Grand Prize, Grades 9-12: Alisha Sawhney, grade 11, Streetsville Secondary School, Mississauga, ON

The message: Me to We — "It can be said that a nation's energy and vision are measured by the actions of its youth. Awakening the social conscience of youth and igniting adolescents to take a proactive approach in making the world a better place is precisely what Craig Kielburger (left) has accomplished. The founder of Free the Children is living proof of the enormous power of a single individual to goad a generation into action..." [Read more](#)



First Place, Gr. 9-12: Kaitlyn Vleming, grade 12, McLachlan College, Oakville, ON

Soft Hands, Kind Heart — "What does it mean to impact a society? Some would say that politicians are influential; other would name entrepreneurs, celebrities, scientists. But true influence — lasting influence — extends beyond policies and laws, beyond making money or being published in a peer-reviewed journal. Often the people who have the most impact are those who work not because they expect money or fame, but because they are passionate about creating change. Somaly Mam is one such individual. Born into an extreme poverty in Cambodia, Somaly Mam had to endure an extremely difficult childhood..." [Read more](#)



A&E essay contest winner meets his Hero!



Humbled and inspired

School honours soldier, student who won A&E essay contest

WATCH THE VIDEO

[etn.com/essay](#)

inspires others

The said it's still difficult to come to terms with the fact his life inspires others, but he's particularly proud that it's someone like Pallett who takes it through it easy to relate to

Charles Pallett, a Grade 7 student at Fisher Park Public School, sits next to Cpl. Jody Mitic Sunday during a ceremony honouring Pallett for winning an A&E essay contest. His submission was about Mitic, whom he met for the first time Sunday.

"I was told that someone won a contest (by) writing about me," Mitic said. "That I was invited here to meet with Charles and present him the cheque. It's an honour for me."

"Small moments"

"That's got me writing, sometimes I won't, but that's what wins and loses and that's the (by day) Cheryl, never

because I play a lot of sports and sometimes there are moments when you feel like giving up just in frustration (though) it was something that inspires me to work harder and be better and not give up"

Mitic stopped on a landmine while on night patrol with three other soldiers in January 2002. He admitted he isn't always upbeat, but he does try to stay positive as often as possible.

Mitic's story

"When I did read his essay, I thought, 'Wow, this guy is amazing.'"

with: japhthumedia

Imagine writing an essay about a Canadian soldier, Corporal Jody Mitic, who lost both of his legs when he stepped on a landmine while serving his country in Afghanistan. You enter that essay into a contest and then not only do you win the contest but you meet the soldier in person!

That's exactly what happened to Grade 7 student Charles Pallett. On the day he and his school were to receive the prize money, Cpl. Mitic arrived at Fisher Park P.S. in Ottawa to help A&E at the presentation ceremony. "I was told that someone won a contest by writing about me," Mitic said, "It's an honour for me ... I'm humbled." Pallett, 13, said that Mitic's story "inspires me to work harder and be better and not give up". Read [Ottawa Sun](#) article, [here](#). View related [Video](#).

Website of the week

BioClassroom and  CLASSROOM

Canadian Classroom

A&E Canadian Classroom offers a commercial free and copyright cleared block of programming designed for classroom use. A&E Classroom airs Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 9:30am NT/ 8 to 9am AT/ 6 to 7am CT/ 5 to 6 am MT and 4 to 5am PT.

Twice each year, **A&E** develops support materials to help you incorporate A&E Classroom into your history, literature, performing arts, science and social studies curricula. The **A&E Classroom Calendar** provides six months of scheduling information and program descriptions. **A&E Study Guides** include classroom activities and discussion questions for select programs. Additional Study Guides are available online. For more information about A&E Canadian Classroom, go to www.biography.com/class/canadianclassroom/index.html.

A&E Classroom and the support materials have been developed as a classroom resource for Canadian educators to use **free of charge**. For additional information, please call 1-800-722-6146.

A schedule of upcoming program air-dates is available in A&E Classroom's "**Idea Book for Educators**". This free resource guide is printed twice a year and offers educators a six month programming calendar, program descriptions, and lesson plans to accompany some of the programs. To order your copy of "The Idea Book for Educators" [click here](#).



Bring
Great
Ideas
Into
Your
Classroom!

Related Article — The Story of Master Corporal Jody Mitic

[Soldier On: How a Landmine Gave Jody Mitic a New Life](#) -- Morgan Stanfield, *The O&P EDGE*, February, 09, 2010

Master Cpl. Jody Mitic's future came to him in a farmer's field, on an earthen embankment beside a narrow path in the heart of Afghanistan's Arghandab Valley. At 4 a.m., it had already been a rough day. The Canadian master sniper and his men had just returned from a three-week stint with the American Green Berets, and they needed a break. Mitic was carrying a 30 lb. radio with his pack, and the fact that his rifle's silencer kept coming loose in the dark wasn't helping matters. Worse, his boss had decided to come along with the usually three-person team, and they had missed taking a scheduled break because someone had mistakenly looked to the boss, instead of Mitic, the patrol leader, when asking whether to move on. At six-foot, four-inches and 215 pounds, Mitic was a professional soldier in every sense of the term. He was used to doing his job right. He had joined the Militia, the Canadian version of the National Guard, at 17, and then spent years working his way up through a regular Army that was suffering through a national ambivalence about whether Canada should have military forces at all ... In the fall of 2001, Mitic qualified as a sniper and then as a master sniper, who could lead a team. Around the same time, the Canadian military began experiencing a rejuvenation in leadership, one that would bring the modern equipment that Mitic and his crew would be using in the farmer's field that morning six years later. [To read the entire article, click here.](#)

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