

Community

ACE represents at TEDx

By Erin Knutson
THE OBSERVER

The air was charged as three eager and slightly nervous candidates from ACE stood outside of theatre 1 at Cottonwood 4 Cinemas in Chilliwack last Thursday, waiting to go inside, and begin their journey as TEDx speakers.

Leslie Johnson, Emma Potts, and Frances Oliver all had one thing in common — they had guts and lots of them as they finished up some last minute preparation before heading into the theatre to compete against a myriad of other skilled competitors.

Some of the

competitors were much older while others had had prior experience with TEDx; regardless, the girls walked in, heads held high, nerves steeled and one thing was for certain, there was no turning back for the trio.

"As far as I'm concerned they've already achieved what they came here for just by showing up," said Principal Sandy Balascak.

The girls all had one thing to say, and it was simply that they would do the best they could, and that they were excited the big day had finally arrived.

The topics varied and each girl held her own

while speaking with great passion, clarity, and intelligence on their chosen subject matter.

The speeches were heartfelt and the subject matter personal and at times heart-wrenching as the girls spoke eloquently on mature material that adults could easily stumble over.

Somehow, these brave girls have pushed on and triumphed through their struggles. During their brief four minutes on stage, these three extraordinary girls were able to educate, move, and inspire the audience as well as their peers.

"All three of our students were passionate and spoke

about topics that were personal and very hard for them to talk about. It was not easy for the kids to get up on stage at all, much less to discuss such topics, and do so in the mix with other speakers who were older and had public speaking experience. We could not be more proud of all of them," said Balascak.

Two of the students will be continuing on to the actual TEDx event on Apr. 8



Erin Knutson/The Observer

ACE students Leslie Johnson, Frances Oliver, and Emma Potts prepare to go in for TEDxChilliwack at Cottonwood 4 Cinemas in Chilliwack on Thursday, Feb. 16.

Pacific Salmon coming to Agassiz classroom

The Pacific Salmon Foundation has announced that Agassiz Christian School is one of 31 schools across the province that received grants to purchase Pacific salmon incubators as part of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Salmonids in the Classroom curriculum.

"The Salmonids in the Classroom program is a perfect fit with the education pillar of our Community Salmon Program," said Dr. Brian Riddell, president and CEO of the Pacific Salmon Foundation. "By bringing incubators into classrooms to raise young salmon, students get hands on experience and education related to the lifecycle of Pacific salmon and the need for conservation across British Columbia."

The Foundation's Community Salmon Program focuses on habitat stewardship, Pacific salmon enhancement and watershed education.

Overall, more than \$134,000 was awarded to 56 projects as part of the Community Salmon Program's most recent funding round. Total value of those projects — which are located in 25 communities across B.C. — is estimated to be over \$980,000.



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