

Good morning Mr. Stitch, Head of School, Mr. Toomer, Head of Secondary, Mrs. Dilletta Dean of Middle School, Mr. Wilson, Director of Athletics, students and parents.....

I'm Ali Mittens, I am in year 12 and I am very pleased to have been chosen as St Andrew's Head Girl.....my name is Mikhail Bethell, I am 16 years old, also in year 12 and am St Andrew's head Boy

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to be able to speak to you at this morning's awards ceremony for the 2013-2014 academic year.

In fact, it doesn't seem so long ago that we were in Middle School ourselves !!

Lets remember what this school is all about;

To provide a world class education, nurturing lifelong learners and empowering internationally minded individuals

To provide a high quality international education for our community of national and international learners in a safe, welcoming and respectful environment

To develop intellectual curiosity, a commitment to personal excellence and the ability to succeed in a changing world

To inspire positive action and promote a global vision

So, does anyone know what that was we just shared?

(SAS vision and Mission Statement)

Yes that is correct; the statements are the St Andrew's Vision and Mission statement and you might be wondering why we shared it with you this morning?

We've shared the mission statement with you all because it is what we, as a community of learners, aspire to become through our learning experiences here at St Andrew's and believe it or not it really is happening right now each and every day that you come to school.

Mikhail - I've had a lot of memorable experiences in middle school both good and bad but they have all contributed to who I am today. There was one experience that took place in this very hall. All through

middle school I tried my hardest to complete my homework on time and receive high marks on tests. In year 9 I started off great and was able to maintain it throughout the trimesters. I was positive that this year was the year I would finally be on principle list, well so I thought. As the year came to an end I celebrated with my family something I BELIEVED I achieved. When I returned to school and was called to award ceremony practice my name was called to sit in the honour roll row, and in my head I thought, “this couldn’t be, I am certain I made principle’s list!” But to my surprise I missed it by 0.01, and I’m pretty sure Mrs. Dillette remembers the amount of time I spent in her room trying so hard to bump my GPA from a 3.69 to that 3.7 I so desperately needed but after hours and hours I eventually gave up and accepted the fact that it wasn’t going to happen. Even though it was a major disappointment I’m now realizing that it had in fact made me more than ever motivated to work harder in my classes to make sure something like this would never happen again, even though it happened every other year. The point is that it helped me to stay focused in class and work harder not only academically but athletically as well. So for everyone in the audience who didn’t make honour roll or came a bit short of principle’s list don’t hang your head, use it as motivation to work harder and don’t give up. Make sure next year to put 110% in every assignment you hand in so you know that at least you’ve tried your best.

Ali-

Our school inspires positive action and promotes a Global vision by producing Internationally minded individuals. One of the biggest ways in which I've been exposed to the global community is through school sponsored activities

In Y10, for instance, through the encouragement of Mr Toomer and others, I was able to spend the third trimester in a school in Spain and I'm sure many of you have had international experiences yourself.

But, you don't actually have to go to overseas to experience the global community. We have many clubs that help bring the world into our school yard. We all know how important classwork and academics are, but it is only now, starting to think about university that I realise just how fortunate I was to have participated in some of these clubs and extra –curricular activities .

CAS is a vital part of our school life and St Andrews is rightly proud of our activities and clubs which support global charities and the local community. I focused on Operation Smile. -a global charity which provides surgeries for children with facial deformities. Our club however also impacts our local community by supporting Princess Margaret Hospital and the Ranfurly home by raising funds and spending time with the children. But through participation in clubs like Op Smile we're also exposed to the global community and world issues at large. In November I am so excited to be travelling to Vietnam on a medical mission where over 100 children's lives will be transformed by this charity's work

These –experiences just wouldn't have happened if not for the encouragement and guidance of St Andrews school which recognises that activities like this , outside the classroom are so important in helping shape the global citizen we can and should become.

Mikhail - A major part of my life is track and field; in fact I started track and field when Mr. Wilson

encouraged me to join the school track team in grade 7. Surprisingly I was able to come back with two gold and silver, a great accomplishment for a person who had discovered the sport that year. My talent on the track did not go unnoticed and a coach picked me up the very next day. As an athlete you are taught the four D's, dedication, discipline, determination, and desire. Over the years not only have I been able to apply this to my training sessions but also to my schoolwork. It took me a while however to balance both my academics and athletics to a point where I was able to excel at both without them interfering with each other but I had to make a lot of sacrifices, for examples, missing out on parties or discussions because I was making sure I got my homework done and attend training sessions. But track and field has made me more disciplined and motivated to succeed in anything that I put my mind to. I run the 400-meter hurdles and it has taught me a lot about life. Just like a 400m hurdle race life can be long and hard but every now and then you have obstacles like hurdles that you must overcome, there may be times where we stumble and fall but in order to finish and succeed you have to get back up and keep moving forward. In this experience I was being a risk taker in grade 7, I took up a sport I knew very little of and over the years been able to accomplish so much athletically and academically. I want you all to be risk takers like I was in grade 7, do something new, challenge yourself, it doesn't have to do with sports just get involved.

Ali - St Andrews also helps in promoting a global vision by exposing us to different aspects of our community and our impact on our changing world. In year 8, for instance, we, like you, went on the Week Without Walls trip to the Island School in Eleuthera. We didn't just learn about sustainability, we actually lived it . Despite being just a few miles from here, it was so different- from the food to the classes -even the night sky. You could see a million stars, more than I had ever seen before, and there was a shooting star flying past every five minutes. Truthfully we didn't get much sleep as we were staying in a bike shed with creaky army cots, but we learnt so much. It was a truly incredible experience and it was great fun. The opportunities like the Island School allow you to see a different side of this country, and understand the world we live in and how it is our responsibility to look after it

So, in closing today we would like all the students here today to know that you should just do it; set yourself challenging goals, join a club, push the boundaries of your comfort zone.

And then, with a little bit of fun, and a lot of hard work, as well as the continued support of your parents and the school, you will be able to achieve your goals.