

STUDENT WITH NERVE CONDITION FINDS NEW PATH AT ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

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COLIN ARTHURS EARNS PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP FROM YORK UNIVERSITY

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Colin Arthurs was only in Grade 10 when his dreams took a sudden turn.

Four years ago, he was a music major in the regional program at Cawthra Park Secondary School in Mississauga, but he was forced to stop playing the saxophone after suffering a nerve condition.

"Losing that ability to play kind of felt like losing a part of myself," said Arthurs, who began losing feeling in his hands

and feet before the condition progressed to his arms and legs. "It was hard to come back from for me, but life moves on and other interests presented themselves."

Since he had to spend a lot of time at the Hospital for Sick Children, Arthurs had to take on a lighter workload at school, but found his calling as a student at Peel Alternative School South.

He was able to continue his artistic pursuits through another avenue, photography. To improve his motor function, he took up painting and model making, which eventually led to his interest in photography and fine art.

While working at his own pace at Peel Alternative School, he started earning grades in the high 90s which was a shock to him at first.

"I had never been that sort of student," he said. "I was always around 75, 80ish. That gave me a bit of confidence in school."

Now at the age of 20, Arthurs is about to graduate from Peel Alternative School. His marks have helped him earn a York University President's Scholarship worth more than \$21,000. He'll begin studying in the bachelor of fine arts, visual arts studio program in the fall.

Arthurs realizes many students may face adversity at some point in their lives, but believes it's never too late for them to bounce back.

"It may seem bad now, but things will get better if you give it time," he said. "If you're willing, you can come back from anything. Having a good support network is a big part of it as well."



Bryon Johnson/Torstar

Colin Arthurs, who has recovered from nerve damage several years ago to graduate from Peel Alternative School. As part of his final credit at Peel Alternative School South, he has unveiled an art show consisting of his photographs on display at the HJA Brown Education Centre from June 17-27.