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# To infinity and beyond!

## QECVI guest speaker is, literally, out of this world

By Jennifer Roberts Kingston This Week  
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It's not every day that an astronaut walks into your high school, but that's exactly what happened at QECVI recently, when Andrew (Drew) Feustel dropped by to talk to students about a career that is out of this world.

"We thought this would be a really good opportunity for the students at the school to see what their possibilities are for the future," explained teacher Robb Laird, who is Feustel's brother-in-law. "There are opportunities out there and they can achieve their dreams if they really work hard and aim for lofty goals."

Feustel, a NASA Mission Specialist, spent over an hour talking to students about two of his recent missions to space, where students listened to his often humorous stories and watched videos of his time at the Hubble Space Telescope and the International Space Station.

"I'm an astronaut now but I had no idea when I was in high school where I would end up and what I would end up doing, but I can tell you that I had lofty goals because I always thought and dreamed of working in space," Feustel told the crowd of youngsters.

"What I would say to all of you is that if you have a goal in your life, you may not know the path or how you're exactly going to get there, but keep it in your mind. Always have it there and do the things that are good for you; because if you're good at those things, you'll rise to the top and be able to achieve great things."



Grade 12 student Tashaun Costa shakes the hand of astronaut Drew Feustel after listening to Feustel's inspiring lecture on his experience as a NASA mission specialist.

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His inspiring lecture, which was accompanied by a slide show and two videos, entertained and enlightened students about his fascinating career, which includes two space flights: 2009's STS-125, the last servicing and repair mission to the Hubble Space Telescope, and 2011's STS-134, the second last shuttle flight ever and final flight of the Space Shuttle Endeavour, a mission to deliver and install the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (AMS) instruments and supply the International Space Station.

Feustel started his path to becoming an astronaut in the mid 1980s when he attended Purdue University and received both a BS in Solid Earth Sciences and a MS in Geophysics. In 1991, he made the move to Kingston where he lived for six years, attending Queen's University, and upon receiving his PhD., Feustel worked as a Geophysicist for the Engineering Seismology Group.

Heading off to Houston, Texas, where he currently resides and works, Feustel was selected as a NASA candidate in 2000 and after two years, began his training as a mission specialist. At NASA, Feustel has performed six separate space walks, which include over 42 hours of time spent walking in space.

The talk concluded with a question period, where students asked everything from 'do things taste different in space?' ("yes, most of the food tastes like the bottom of my boot"), and 'do astronauts still drink Tang?' ("yes, believe it or not, we still drink Tang in space"), to 'how do you use the bathroom in space?' ("very, very carefully!").

Grade 9 student Trisha Bauder summed up the entire experience in three words.

"It was cool!"

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