

# FROM ME TO YOU

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 2015

Sunil Mattu's Newsletter

## MERRY CHRISTMAS: THE GIFT

Joyeux Noel; Frohliche Weihnachten; Eftihismena Christougenna; Selamat Hari; Natale Kurisumasu; Omedeto; Boas Festas; Cestitamo Bozic; Bade Din ki Mubarak!

There are many ways to say “Merry Christmas,” **Seasons Greetings,** or “Happy Holidays”. In whatever manner you and your family choose to commemorate this special time of the year, I extend from my family and staff to yours the very best. I hope for all of us this is a time of reflection and celebration, a joyful period when we count our blessings and look forward to the future with optimism.

Many cultures recognize this holiday period as a time of gift exchange. Gifts come in many different forms but our most important gift is our children. They are our special treasures. We are blessed by them. My three children mean the world to Rehana and I. But I am also

overjoyed every school day when I see your children not only working hard in their studies but also enjoying life in the special way that a child should.

Raising and educating children is not an easy task, particularly those with special educational needs. Your **children's teachers** constantly bestow on your child the gifts of understanding, compassion, healing, and knowledge.

**There is a sense of “magic”** in the air at Third Academy generated by these gifts. This was clearly evident at this **year's Christmas Concert.** I could see magic in the faces of our performers. Thank you everyone— students, staff, and parents – for making this celebration a night to remember.

The gift of Third Academy was established by Dr. S. Lal Mattu to fulfil an unmet need for children in our communities. Next year

will mark our 20th year helping children and families. Thousands of children and families have benefited from Dr. Mattu's **gift of the Third Academy.**

As long as we support each other in community, work together to ensure student success, and never give up on our children the gift that is Third Academy will continue serving Calgarians forever.

Blessings to everyone that is so fortunate to be part of the Third Academy family.

Sunil Mattu  
Executive Director



### Board of Directors

Jeevan Mangat, Chairman  
Catherine Chim, Treasurer  
David Beresford, Director  
Zeljko Puric, Director  
Rob Paterson, Director

### Founding Patron

Ed Whalen

### Honorary Patron

Nomi Whalen

### Patrons

Glenn Olson

Bearcat Murray

Omnath Channon

Ashid Bahl

### Ambassador at Large

Dr. S. Lal Mattu



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FROM ME TO YOU

## COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

When I think of communication, I am reminded of the Beatles' song "We Can Work It Out". You can listen to the song at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qyclqo\\_AV2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qyclqo_AV2M). I find the following lines particularly insightful:

**"Life is very short, and there's no time for fussing and fighting, my friend."**

Good communication enables us to find solutions.

I am pleased to see everyone **doing their best to "work things out" by communicating** effectively, either in person or by Agenda, Email, Text, or through our regular publications: *Third Academy Beacon*, *The Howler*, and *From Me to You*.

**Let's keep finding the 'solutions'. After all, our children are worth it.**

### Alberta Education

Busy times.

Numerous November month end submissions including our November 2015 Annual Education Results Report AERR and Three Year Education Plan 2015/16-2017/18. A copy is posted on [thirdacademy.ca](http://thirdacademy.ca).

The major driver for our November 2016 AERR is the provincial accountability pillars. At the end of January, all parents will be sent satisfaction surveys by Alberta Education. Students and staff will

fill their surveys online.

In January 2016, Third Academy will unveil a communication strategy aiming to highlight in particular three areas of improvement: Broad Program of Studies, Citizenship, and School Improvement.

Stay tuned, folks!



Sunil Mattu, Executive Director

LYRICS TO LIVE BY:

— #327 —

**"LIFE IS VERY SHORT,  
AND THERE'S NO TIME FOR FUSSING  
AND FIGHTING, MY FRIEND."**

THE BEATLES, WE CAN WORK IT OUT

FROM ME TO YOU

## COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

### Governance

#### As Third Academy's Executive

Director, I am pleased to introduce our new Board of Directors:

- Jeevan Mangat, Chair  
Jeevan has been a Director for the past 2 years. His good wife, Nina, and he successfully operated the Maharajah Restaurant for 10 years. Jeevan now works at Great West Life, in the Property Management Division.
- Catherine Chim, Treasurer  
Catherine has been working as an Accountant for over 10 years including 5 years at UFA and 2 years at BDO. She is currently working towards her CA designation. She has an interest in a Vietnamese TV production company and has volunteered over the years on many community organizations.
- David Beresford, Director  
David is a partner and founder at Pandell Technologies, a developer of software for the oil & gas sector. He was a finalist for Calgary Entrepreneur of the Year 2014. David's son has been attending Third Academy for the past 3 years.

- Zeljko Puric, Director  
Zeljko is a Psychologist. He has been providing services to Third Academy over the past 18 years. Zeljko was the first **Chair of Third Academy's Board** in 1997.
- Rob Paterson, Director  
Rob studied Engineering at the University of Ottawa. He spent most of his

career in the restaurant business, 10 years as a Kitchen Manager for the Keg group. Rob is President of JC Travel in Cochrane.

These good people have (1) the skills to govern our system and (2) most importantly the 'heart' for our children. I am excited to work, together, with the Board in the upcoming year.



FROM ME TO YOU

COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)

Human Resources

Our staff has performed exceptionally well over the past two months, particularly as we have had a number of staff down. Thank you, also, to the many parent volunteers for stepping in to assist when needed.

I am pleased to introduce Stan Rivers as a new addition to the teaching team. Stan has been teaching for more than 25 years. I am looking forward to see what he will bring in terms of Literacy/ Numeracy, Physical Literacy, and Expressive Arts.

We continue to look forward to **Mr. Daniel's and Mr. Smith's** return to duties in January. That will **reestablish "hands and feet" on the ground.**

Speech & Language and Occupational Therapy services will be brought on stream in the second week of January. I thank Renfrew Educational Services for assisting us to provide these programming supports for our students.

We are so happy that both Tara Kerr and Andrea Hasnain and their newborns boys are in good health. From our perspective, the **more kids the better...** we are teachers, after all!

*"Our staff has performed exceptionally well over the past two months, particularly as we have had a number of staff down."*



## COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)

### Programming

Effective instructional practices enable quality programming to accomplish student success. Our therapeutic model is very simple. Yet, when implemented effectively, it works.

As Dr. S. Lal Mattu had always said: if you heal the heart, the mind will follow. Third Academy is **different by design... that means** we get a different result for our children. How do we do this?

Of course the answer to this question is complex. I want to take a moment, though, to speak to the Personal Development component of our model.

Personal Development is about teaching students how to be **“emotionally healthy”**. There are many programming models out there to refer to:

Lions Quest [www.lionsquest.ca](http://www.lionsquest.ca)

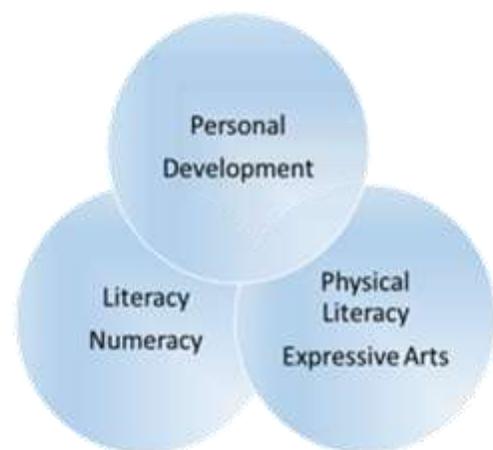
GO [www.premiergo.com](http://www.premiergo.com)

Developmental Assets [www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets](http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets)

to name a few.

Our teachers teach how to be emotionally healthy so that we are able to help a student change the way they Think and Feel about themselves. The result is that they Act differently. Acting differently includes both deportment and academic output.

Thank you for embracing Third Academy's **therapeutic model**.



## COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)

### Fund Development

Dr. S. Lal Mattu, Ambassador-at-**Large, continues “reaching out”** to the Calgary community and **sharing Third Academy’s story.**

The privilege of meeting so many groups and individuals has resulted in a very successful campaign of making hundreds of people aware of the Third Academy and what goes within its four walls.

Dr. Mattu has made several presentations: Business Networking Group, Sikh Business Professional Council, Healthy Lifestyle Foundation, Calgary North West Seniors, Radio FM 106.7. As well, he taken many individuals on tours through the Third Academy. Two groups called "Friends of the Third Academy" and "Business for Charity Network" have been established to assist us in developing relationships, awareness of what we do, and fundraising. Through his memberships with Calgary University Toastmasters and Fish Creek Rotary Clubs, Dr. Mattu further advances community awareness of Third Academy. Finally, Dr. Mattu regularly attends community functions to network with individuals and business owners including charitable organizations such as Sagar Foundation and Apex, agencies working specifically with poor

and marginalized children.

The first draft of our Fundraising Case Statement has now been developed.

The first draft of our Fundraising Plan has now been developed. All staff will have personalized business cards to **‘reach out’ upon our return in January 2016.**

I thank Brad Streuby for nominating **us for a “100 Men Who Give a Damn”** award [www.100mencalgary.com/](http://www.100mencalgary.com/).

At this time, I want to put into every-**one’s mind: we need to remember** that raising funds to support our program is a shared responsibility. That means it is happening at my level, in the classrooms, and also at the parent level as our Parent Advisory Committees (PACs) mobilize their fundraising arm with casinos, bingos, and raffles.

I want to than our PACs and Sabrina Isabelle, our Run Santa Run! 2015 Race Coordinator, for what was by all accounts a successful Run Santa Run! 2015 event. The donations are still coming in, but at this time we have raised \$4500. Thank you all for participating, volunteering, donating and spreading the work about this PAC event.

**I also ask everyone to “reach out” to their community. Share Third Academy’s story and tell how Third Academy has made a positive difference in your child’s life and, in turn, that of your family’s. Spread the word: [thir-dacademy.ca](http://thirdacademy.ca).**

FROM ME TO YOU

COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)



FROM ME TO YOU

COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)

Professional Development

Research shows that the most significant positive impact on student success is quality teaching. Third Academy is committed to school wide improvement, including quality teaching.

Parents, you should know that the staff are working on Wednesday **afternoons to 'get better' in terms** of how we support our students. This cycle of Professional Growth includes Professional Growth Plans, weekly Professional Development sessions, System Wide Professional Development days, and the Teacher/IA Evaluation **cycle. Yes, we are busy 'getting better' for your children!**

AISCA

Alberta Independent Schools and Colleges Association (AISCA) continues to advocate on our behalf at the highest levels of Government. I recently attended a Policy Development special meeting with 30 other school leaders from all across Southern Alberta.

I have also met with my local MLA, Cam Westhead, and introduced Third Academy to him. He was positive and said he would pass on my message to visit Third Academy to Education Minister David Eggen.

**I encourage you, as parents, to "reach out" to your local MLAs, whatever** political party they may belong to. The core message: Third Academy is a school for children with special education needs that is serving families in our communities by performing a public good, every day, in our classrooms.



FROM ME TO YOU

COMMUNICATING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS (CONTINUED)

In Summary

I hope you enjoyed this issue of *From Me To You* with a view of Third Academy from the perspective of my desk. Yes, it has been so very busy. And we are all ready for the **Holiday Break. We'll come back** rejuvenated. And we will be ready to take our students on the next episode of our *Third Warts ... and All* journey.

Until that time, blessings.

Sunil Mattu  
Executive Director



*FROM ME TO YOU*  
**SUNIL MATTU'S NEWSLETTER**

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Need More Information?  
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- Fully Accredited by Alberta Education
- Two schools serving students from Grades 1 through 12 at one central location
- A non-profit, charitable organization
- Doing whatever it takes to help your children succeed

*We believe that how a person thinks, affects how they feel, and hence how they act.*



We're on the web in full color: Visit us at:  
[thirdacademy.ca](http://thirdacademy.ca)

**“Third Academy gives hope... hope for kids, families, and our collective futures.”**

Dr. S. Lal. Mattu, Third Academy Ambassador-at-Large

**Success is a choice.**

**It's mine.**

**A child without education, is like a bird without wings.  
~Tibetan proverb**