

MDHS English student receives top grades in standardized exam

By Julie Slack
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Every decade or so, English high school teachers come across a student whose writing skills soar above expectations. For Milton District High School (MDHS) teacher Andrea Gleeson, that student was Lindsay MacMillan. Lindsay, who has entered her first year at the University of Ottawa, was recognized by her

graduating high school with a plaque recently.

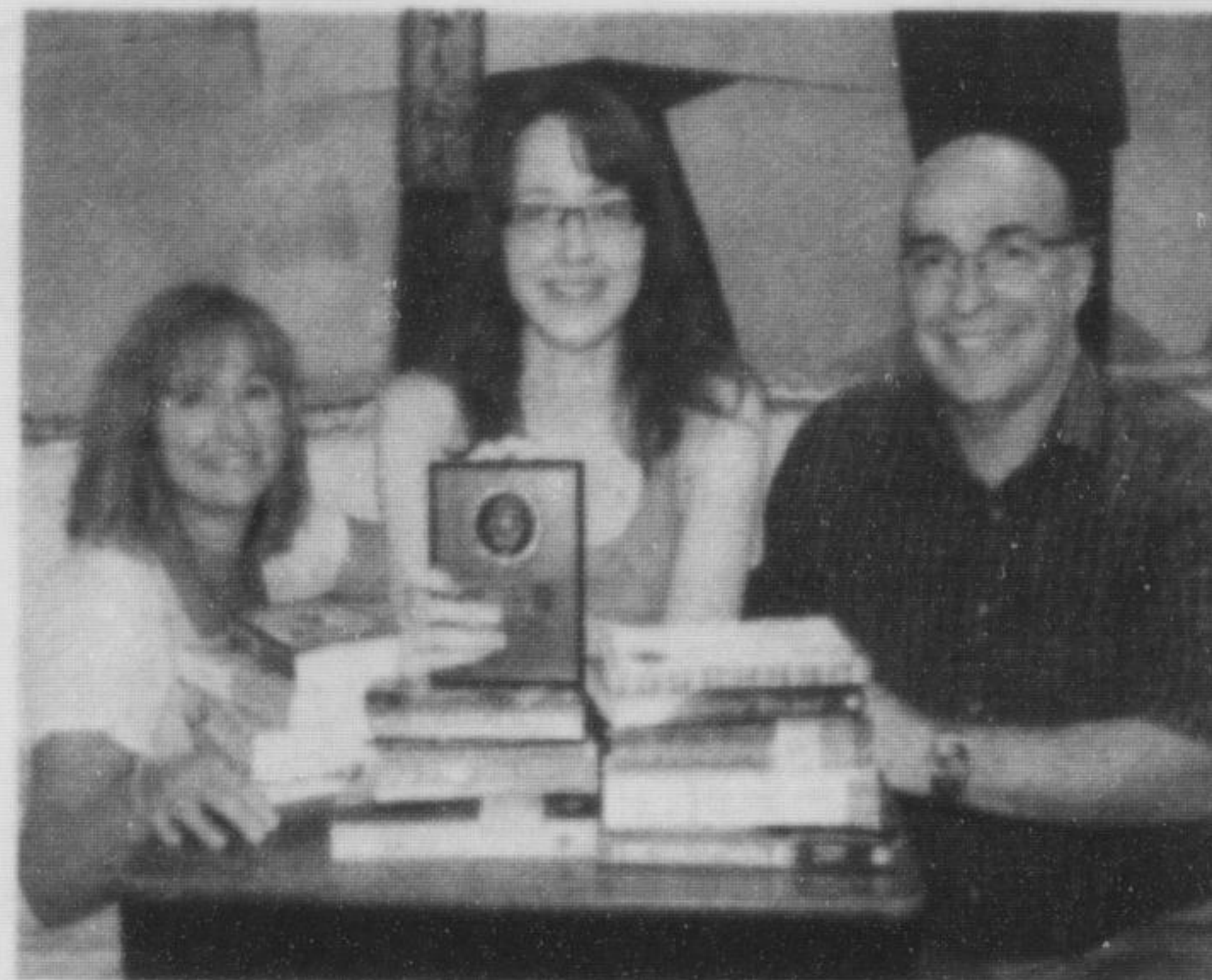
Presented by Principal Kevin Caughlin, the award recognized Lindsay's high-ranking scores on a standardized Advanced Placement University exam on English Literature and Composition that she wrote in June.

Gleeson said Lindsay got the highest possible mark on the exam. Of some 500,000 students who write the exam worldwide, only seven per cent get a five — the highest score, she said.

"This is an incredible achievement by this very talented student," she said.

The exam, part of a course offered at certain schools, including MDHS, allows students in certain Grade 12 courses to study in an Advanced Placement stream and pass a standardized exam. They can then use that high school credit as a university credit.

For Lindsay, it means she's got one credit en route to graduating with a Bachelor of Social Science degree. After that, the 18-year-old plans to head into law school, where she'd like to become a human rights lawyer. She'd also like to become bilingual.



Milton District High School graduate Lindsay MacMillan received recognition for achieving top marks on a standardized Advanced Placement University exam she wrote in the spring. Recently, principal Kevin Caughlin and Lindsay's Writers Craft teacher Andrea Gleeson presented her with a plaque before she left to begin university studies in Ottawa.
Julie Slack / Canadian Champion

"She's gifted beyond words," said Gleeson, adding she doesn't gush about all her students. "I read her first piece (in a Grade 12 Writers Craft course this past semester) and I was amazed.

"She can write effortlessly in her own voice,"

she said. "As a writing teacher, you maybe get one or two students like this...I read her piece and the writing was flawless — there wasn't a thing I would change about it."

Needless to say, every written submission that followed fell into the same category. Lindsay devotes herself to school, graduating with a 91 per cent average, which earned her a \$3,000 scholarship from the University of Ottawa.

She worked part-time as a cashier at No Frills in Milton throughout high school, and managed to complete her homework and study after school, at lunch and on weekends before her shifts began.

An avid and prolific reader, Lindsay said her ultimate goal is to publish a novel. She said her love of reading started as a youngster when she started reading Harry Potter books. From there, it grew to include favourite authors such as Neil Gaiman and Margaret Atwood.

Humbled and appearing embarrassed by the high praise and award, Lindsay said she really likes to learn and just naturally does well in school.

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