



Speaker motivates BG students to 'dream big'

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Vera Greene is a senior at Bishop Guertin High School.

"You can always do more than you think you . . ."

"Can!" responded an enthusiastic Bishop Guertin High School audience as their eyes stayed glued to the lively orator, Ed Gerety, a motivational speaker who travels around the country spreading his message of "dreaming big" for all who will listen.

School assemblies are by no means something most students usually look forward to; typically, the common perception is, "Hey, if it gets us out of class, then I'm all for it. I don't really need to listen."

Needless to say, going into Gerety's assembly, many of us were once again guilty of this conventional mindset. Many of our opinions, however, changed once we sat down and started listening to the inspirational rhetoric being spoken.

"When he started with the story about some first-graders, I was like, 'Oh, man, another guy coming to BG to tell us to be nice to everyone else,' " senior Anthony Ferlan said. "The thing about him, though, was that he engaged us because we could easily relate to the things he was saying."

"Dream big, Bishop Guertin. Surround yourself with positive people and positive things. Make a positive impact." Gerety's words rung in our ears, and although we had heard this straightforward message of "being the change you want to see" time and time again, on this occasion, it seemed to strike close with many.

"He really knew how to connect to people our age," senior Matt Connolly said. "Whether it was through the 'power claps' and a big 'hoo-ah' or talking about the cute kindergarteners, he knew what he was doing. His messages were simple and easy for everyone to understand."

Junior Erin Donovan reflected, "It's nothing we haven't already heard before, but through his examples and his engagement with the audience, he was able to get his messages across and managed to touch a lot of kids in the gym that day."

After the assembly, a couple dozen students met with Gerety for a leadership workshop, expanding on what the school had just heard.

Senior Whitney Rogers mulled over his presentation: "He radiated emotion and passion that made me want to listen and hear what he had to say."

She went on to say, "This was probably one of the best assemblies BG has had. It went by so quickly because Ed engaged me into his presentation and I had a great time."

"I feel that normally our assemblies are quiet with little laughter, and that gets boring after a while. It was nice to listen to someone who wasn't telling us, 'Drugs, alcohol and sex are bad,' but rather, encouraging us to set goals and

'go farther than we think we can.' "

Ferlan agreed: "I guess the message I got out of (his presentation) was to treat everyone with respect, because you really don't know the kind of stuff that is going on in their lives."

Although Gerety's lessons may be familiar and uncomplicated, there is a timeless and universal aspect to his words that have the power to inspire an individual, a student body or even the world.