



# JONATHAN MCDADE



**BIC 2015 LEAVER**

**AUTHOR OF  
'THE TIMEBENDER'**

**FINAL YEAR STUDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER  
BSC BIOLOGY**

## **MY TIME AT BLACKWATER**

Somewhat surprisingly, Blackwater was my second choice for High School but I'm glad that I ended up getting into Blackwater as I think that the staff were some of the most lovely and inspiring individuals I have ever met. The ability to build rapport with the teachers allows for a more enhanced learning experience, something which I think was so instrumental in my own success. I cannot recall any instances outside of Blackwater where I've had staff take such interest in ensuring I get the best grades possible. They all go above and beyond and would be there whenever we needed them.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- Triple Distinction Star in Applied Science (SERC)
- Qualified Youth Worker
- Achieved the Dean's List 2 years in a row (UU)
- Premier Scientific Prize for Biology (UU)
- Took part in the Biodiversity Project, Tutoring in Schools (TIS)
- Participated in the PASS initiative
- Edge Excel award
- Diploma in Professional Practice (DPP)
- In my Final year of BSc Biology (University of Ulster)

## **WHERE AM I NOW?**

I plan to take a year out as I've been learning non-stop from 4 years of age until now. During that year out, I may finally resume my novel writing. But the main goal for that year is to spend time with my daughter, Amaya. At this time of writing, she is nine months old and is what keeps me going, always driving me to push myself and get the most out of my degree. The saying is, children grow up so fast and as a father, truer words have never been spoken.

For those still considering their options for High School, I encourage you to give Blackwater a chance. The staff helped guide me through tough times for both my brother and me, including a tragic bereavement period, and their commitment to providing exceptional learning and boosting their students to great heights is just beyond unreal. I will never forget my time at Blackwater. I really mean it; Mrs Ward has that effect .