

# Becca's beauty shines

by Julia Le

Oakville Beaver Staff

If you took the time to know Becca Cala, you would see just how beautiful she truly is.

That was the basis behind *Beauty Behind Becca*, a mini-documentary filmed by two Oakville Trafalgar High School Grade 12 students who recently won Change the View, a province-wide, anti-stigma video contest sponsored by Children's Mental Health Ontario during Children's Mental Health Week in May.

The two-minute video by Natasha Boshoff and Suaad Issa has reached more than 225,000 hits on YouTube.com.

It was chosen from 140 video submissions received by Children's Mental Health Ontario.

Both teenagers say they're humbled by the recognition.

They credit their Communications Technology teacher Guy D'Alesio for encouraging them to enter the film, which was created for his class and entered into the contest that challenged youths to show how society can take the stigma out of kids' mental health issues like stress, depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), bullying and psychosis.

Boshoff, 18, said the project allowed her and Issa to learn more about the mental

health issues young people face and reflect on perception versus reality.

She admits to the *Oakville Beaver* when she first met Cala earlier in high school, she herself had passed some judgment.

However, by doing this documentary, she said, she hoped to capture what makes Cala special in her own way and share it with others.

"I had changed my opinion about her so much, maybe others could change their opinion about her as well if they just knew who she was," she explained.

"It's so easy to make a first judgment, but when you just know who someone is, they can completely blow your mind."

In the video, Cala describes how not many people knew how to help her while growing up because they didn't know what kind of mental health issues she faced.

She was in and out of shelters before being diagnosed with ADHD, Tourette syndrome and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

The video also highlights Cala's passion for playing the violin, something she's been doing for 10 years.

Boshoff, who did most of the camera work, describes how watching Cala be open, honest and "in her element" was truly a captivating experience.

She said working on the documentary has

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From left, Christine Pelletier, Canadian Mental Health Ontario (CMHO), Mary-Anne Leahy, CMHO Youth Action Committee, Sarah Cannon, Parents for Children's Mental Health, video creators Natasha Boshoff and Suaad Issa, Becca Cala, Oakville Trafalgar High School teacher Guy D'Alesio and Deputy Minister of Child and Youth Services Alexander Bezzina. | photo by Paula Boshoff

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