Local girl with cerebral palsy encourages others to look past disability

By Eamonn Maher emaher@theifp.ca

On those dark, dreary fall days when she s not feeling her best, Jadine Baldwin likes to dial up some tunes from the Columbus, Ohio duo named Twenty One Pilots in order to get that motor running.

The 16-year-old has had cerebral palsy since birth but forges on, taking regular Grade 11 classes at Georgetown District High School. And the pity is on those who view her differently because of her disability.

I love listening to Twenty One Pilots, she said. They re Christian and I m a Christian, but I also love them because they don t sugarcoat anything. They just tell you how life is. Not everyone is going to be nice to you. We ve just got to take it and not let it hurt you.

Baldwin, a Georgetown native, recently made a visit to the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital for a seminar to see which colleges or universities might be best suited for the straight-A student and aspiring poet.

I love English. That's my favourite subject and we re studying Shakespeare now. I m lov-

Fri Dec 23 - LIVE DJ

ing it because we haven t done it before and I m really doing well, so that works for me.

The Stewarttown Middle School graduate has been to Holland Bloorview on a number of occasions for treatment and has had five surgeries as a result of CP, including a spinal procedure, muscle-lengthening of her legs and

putting her hip back in its socket.

She feels her experiences can be an inspiration to other young people.

(The operations) just made me a stronger and more well-rounded person because I got to see things that nobody else gets to see, she said.

You should accept people for who they are. I didn t ask to be in a wheelchair, so I ve accepted it and the rest of the world should too.

With mom Khadine at her side, Jadine mentions another guiding light in her life the poetry of Brampton resident Rupy Kaur.

I want to be just like Rupy, beams Jadine, who is looking forward to spending Christmas with her three younger brothers and sister.

I love all of her poetry. It s so real and raw and amazing. Shes kind of a feminist, so I guess that inspires me a lot because she talks to girls a lot about how to be good people.













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