

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS DEMONSTRATE RESILIENCY TO HELP OTHERS

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Darlene Sutherland couldn't help but be struck by the intensity of the words she read on the page. Though there were more than 20 submissions to read for the annual scholarship honouring her son and his girlfriend, Sutherland had to take a break after each one.

It was the second time the families were awarding the Zach Sutherland and Kaya Firth Resiliency Scholarship, but that didn't make it any easier. While most scholarships recognize academic achievement, this scholarship recognizes "youth who have experienced significant loss or adversity and have shown resiliency despite these losses."

"For many of them, this is the first time they've actually written down where they were and how they got to where they are at now," Sutherland said. "They can feel a sense of

accomplishment. They deserve to give themselves the credit they deserve."

This year's recipients are Emily Turner, Alicia Marrows, Malcolm Fellows and Ruby Coles. Coles was awarded the Eion Campbell Resiliency Scholarship, honouring a friend of both families who died from leukemia just after his 21st birthday. The full bios of the scholarship recipients can be viewed at choose2beresilient.com.

It has been almost three years since Zach Sutherland and Kaya Firth died in a kayaking accident on the Credit River. Zach's mother said it was an incredibly difficult time and the healing process continues today.

"The loss of a loved one is incredibly traumatic. You do a lot of soul searching and you need the support of family and friends. There are days you don't know how you're going to get to the next day."

Sutherland said what struck her about the scholarship recipients was that despite what they had been through in their lives, they are now in a position of helping others.

"They all faced significant adversity but have found hope going forward to give hope to other youth."

That was the purpose of the scholarship, Sutherland said - turning a tragedy into something positive to help others.

She said the families have received tremendous support from the community in order to do so. Their golf tournament for this summer is already sold out and has a waiting list. Last July's event raised \$18,000 to support the scholarships.

For the second time, the families are hosting an event with one of Canada's top mediums, Mary-Anne Kennedy. Like the golf tournament, the Feb. 9 event at Eagle Ridge Golf Club is also sold out for a

second straight year.

A Nova Scotia company, Amos Pewter, has also created resiliency pendants, key rings, and pins with profits going to the scholarship. The Terra Cotta General Store sold \$2,000 worth in just over a month. The keepsakes are available through the website and will be for sale at the Terra Cotta General Store when it reopens in March.

Sutherland said there are plans to make the scholarship a registered charity.

Anyone wishing to submit an application for a 2019 scholarship can do so between Feb. 1 and May 15. For more information, go to <https://choose2beresilient.com/how-to-apply/>.



Zach Sutherland and Kaya Firth, both 21. The University of Guelph students died while kayaking on the Credit River near Terra Cotta in February 2016.

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NEWS

NORTH HALTON TWISTERS BACK IN THE RUNNING FOR GOOD DEEDS CUP

As Elizabeth Poole got older, the pain in her back got worse. Sure, a little discomfort could be expected with the demands of being a goalie, constantly getting up and down and occasionally getting knocked to the ice.

But this was more than that. "She would be in a significant amount of pain the next day," says her mom, Cary.

Elizabeth was diagnosed with scoliosis. At time, her only option in

Ontario was a spinal fusion that would require several surgeries to insert rods along her spine. But the Credit Valley Shrine Club offered another option. The Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia was offering a procedure called VBT (vertebral body tethering), which allows the patient to regain full mobility and flexibility. For an active girl like Elizabeth, who also plays field lacrosse, basketball, volleyball and floor hockey, it seemed like a better fit.

The Shriners sponsored Elizabeth, covering the cost of surgery, transportation, accommodations and food.

"It's a lot easier to play now," Elizabeth says. "I feel like I can play way better."

So if anyone can appreciate a good deed, it's the Twisters' netminder, and she is on the right team to repay some good deeds.

A year after being one of 10 finalists for the Chevrolet Good Deeds Cup, the Twisters are once again entering the national competition that rewards teams for their work in the community.

And the Twisters have been busy. The team collected toys for the Toys for Tots program, delivering them at a Mississauga Steelheads game. They visited seniors at Brookdale Place in Milton, bringing along

baked goods and cards for the residents.

"The seniors were very appreciative," said Twisters' coach Sean Jennings. "It brought a smile to their faces over Christmas."

They participated in the Mitten Marathon, collecting mittens for the Open Door Youth Centre. The team volunteered at the Georgetown Bread Basket sorting food. The Twisters raised money for the Shriners Children's Hospital. And they raised awareness for Kids Against Impaired Driving by encouraging other teams to film videos.

"I feel like we made a big impact on the community," Elizabeth says.

Now, if the Twisters win any money in the Good Deeds Cup, they will be donating it to the Shriners Children's Hospital.

"We were elated. It was so exciting

to have the chance to give back," said Cary. "It really means everything to us when you think about how Shriners changed her life for the better."

The Twisters have enjoyed a good season on the ice. They are 10-5-3 in Lower Lakes Female Hockey League play. They played in a three-day tournament in Detroit where they lost in double overtime in the semifinals.

But it's off the ice where they are having the biggest impact.

"I think it teaches the girls a lot, how small little deeds can help someone in a big way," said Cary. "Holding the door or just smiling at someone might be the nicest thing that happens for someone that day."

All the entries from across the country will be narrowed down to 10 finalists Jan. 26. From there, national voting will determine the top three.

COUNTDOWN TO THE RAIDERS NEXT HOME GAME

SAT NIGHT Sat Jan 26th, 2019 - 7:30pm
Georgetown Raiders vs. Aurora Tigers
 Games at Mold-Masters SportsPlex

WED NIGHT Wed Jan 30th, 2019 - 7:30pm
Georgetown Raiders vs. Brampton Admirals

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