

# GEORGETOWN WOMAN REPRESENTING GTA IN PROGRESSIVE PAGEANT

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A Georgetown youth is competing against others from across the country for a scholarship in the National Canadian Pageant.

Michayla Del Guidice has already earned the title of Miss Greater Toronto Area and will represent the GTA during the event that's running from July 2 to 6 in Toronto.

But this isn't your average pageant. There won't be any over-the-top make-up or contests that compare women solely based on their appearances.

"One of the reasons I joined is because it's an all-natural pageant," said the 22-year-old. "You wear very minimal makeup, and no hair extensions or false eyelashes. It's very

much about how you carry yourself on stage and what you've done in the community."

The National Canadian Pageant system also places an emphasis on community service, which Del Guidice has embraced, giving hundreds of hours of her time to various causes in the local community.

The girls and women competing all have a platform, with Del Guidice choosing to focus on disabilities and mental illness inclusivity.

The topics are near and dear to the Georgetown woman's heart as she overcame a communication disability when she was younger, and she also lives with borderline personality disorder.

"I want to make it known that individuals with disabilities can go on

to post-secondary and be successful, and also get a career, no matter what their diagnosis is," she said. "My purpose is to take down that stigma. I'm a prime example."

Del Guidice has already earned a social service diploma and is now studying at the University of Guelph, where she's going for an honours Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in psychology and minor in family and child studies.

She serves as a peer helper to support those with acute disabilities as they transition into university life and also does motivational speaking about her experiences living with a disability and mental illness.

During the pageant, Del Guidice will compete in 20 events that showcase her various talents, in-

cluding singing in American sign language, meaning she will be lip syncing while simultaneously signing the words - something she chose to do for one of her social media followers who's non-verbal.

"With the National Canadian Pageant, you're judged on what you do and how much you're impacting the community," she explained. "You get to see who people really are, instead of just focusing on what they look like."

If Del Guidice wins in her age division, she will go on to become a national titleholder, earn a scholarship and become eligible to represent Canada at the international pageant, which would be held in the United States at the end of her reign.

For more information visit [www.nationalcanadianpageant.ca](http://www.nationalcanadianpageant.ca).



Michayla Del Guidice photo Georgetown's Michayla Del Guidice will represent the Greater Toronto Area during the all-natural National Canadian Pageant.

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