

National pageant set for Aug. 27-30 Miss Teen Halton's message focuses on self-esteem for youths

BRENNA MOORE
Special to The IFP



CHELSEY BOUCHEY

Don't be fooled by her crown and sash because there's nothing flaky about what this girl stands for.

Chelsey Bouchey was named Miss Teen Halton in the summer of 2005. Along with the honour of being crowned Miss Teen Halton, Bouchey is eligible to compete in the Niagara Falls Miss Teen Canada Scholarship Competition next weekend.

"I feel scared and nervous about the competition, but most of all I'm excited," said Bouchey.

Put all judgments aside because this isn't an ordinary beauty pageant. Canada Pageants are not beauty-based and don't have a swimsuit competition. Instead, the largest portion of contestants' scores is based on the personal interview.

Canada Pageants place an emphasis on intelligence, personality, style and culture. The competition aims to promote today's woman and her dedication to community, family, career and education. Canada Pageants Corporation believes that the crown empowers women with a voice to be heard and to make a difference.

As Miss Teen Halton, Bouchey's platform revolves around issues of self-esteem. Her platform incorporates concerns of self-image, peer pressure and bullying. She has made appearances in elementary schools across the Halton Hills area to demonstrate the importance of self-worth.

"I believe if students have interests in extra-curricular activities, it will help them develop a sense of self-esteem and confidence and help them to stand out and stand up for what they believe in," said Bouchey.

Bouchey says that being a 16-year-old puts her in a position to be aware of the bullying and peer pressure that youths face.

Bouchey has shown her devotion to the Halton Hills community and its youth in a variety of ways. During the March Break she volunteered time at Play Junction where she worked with children creating arts and crafts.

Bouchey has also played various roles in Georgetown Little Theatre productions and is an active member of the drama club at Georgetown District High School. She even donates her lunch hours to assist with Grade 9 drama classes.

If Bouchey wins the title of Miss Teen Canada Scholarship, she will be awarded a scholarship in her chosen field. Once she graduates from high school, she plans to work towards her dream of becoming a drama teacher.

Bouchey also has other plans for the national title.

"Holding the national title means I would continue my platform across Canada," she said. "I would continue to speak in elementary schools. I would hope to reach young children in hopes that they would believe in themselves and try new things and explore new interests."

The national pageant will take place in Niagara Falls at the Hilton Niagara, August 27-30. Winners receive a cash prize, academic scholarship, and an entrance scholarship to the prestigious Actors Model & Talent Convention valued at \$3,000 where they will meet agents, casting directors, and scouts from around the world. Winners will become Goodwill Ambassadors to World Vision through child sponsorship as well as have the opportunity to travel to the Dominican Republic on a mission trip.

Ted Brown



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