

Josie Kearney named 2018 Citizen of the Year



By Brock Weir

Josie Kearney has been named Aurora's 2018 Citizen of the Year.

The Grade 12 student at Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School received Aurora's highest honour at Monday night's Community Recognition Awards ceremony held at Town Hall.

Ms. Kearney, who is the youngest person to receive the award since its inception nearly 50 years ago, was recognized for her tireless work not only within the Williams community, but in the world around her.

"Her list of accomplishments is truly inspiring," said Mayor Geoff Dawe who did the honours, recognizing the honouree for her kindness, positive spirit and commitment to make a difference.

A leading Peer Mentor within her school, Ms. Kearney was lauded for the difference she makes in the lives of her fellow students as soon as they walk through their Dunning Avenue doors.

"As a mentor to her peers, she helps ensure that Grade 9 students successfully transition to high school," said Mayor Dawe. "She encourages fellow members of the Peer Mentoring group to think carefully about the impact they will have locally and globally. She consistently goes above and beyond with everything she does."

One such initiative is a pre-Christmas social she hosted at her home for members of the Peer Mentoring group. Each member was encouraged to bring a donation for a family in need and, as a result, she was able to purchase much-needed grocery cards for the selected family.

Her efforts to raise both money and awareness for the Terry Fox Foundation were also highlighted, crediting her energy and enthusiasm for the cause helping to raise over \$6,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation.

Perhaps the Aurora community at large is most familiar with her dedication to Something for Sarah, Williams' annual cheek swabbing event which collects samples from students and teachers for the National Bone Marrow registry.

"As a result of her efforts more than 200 names have been added to the bone marrow registry, each hopeful they may be able to save a life one day," said Mayor Dawe. "She has also been a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Foundation, helping to educate

her school community about the cause.

?For someone so young [she] has made a tremendous impact on the world around her and no one who knows her has any doubt that about the incredible future that lies ahead of her. We're proud to say the future of someone who changed the world began right here in Aurora.?

For more on Josie Kearney and recipients of the 2018 Community Recognition Awards, please see the May 31 edition of The Auroran.