

## 12 years on the soccer pitch lands Amy Rowe with scholarship to Louisiana



**By Jeff Doner**

Yet another one of Aurora's young soccer players is heading off to the United States on a scholarship.

After years of hard work on the many soccer pitches scattered throughout York Region, Amy Rowe has signed on to play Division 1 soccer in the NCAA at the University of Louisiana at Munroe.

"It was really exciting, obviously, but it was kind of nerve-racking at the same time that I just decided my future for the next four years," said the Grade 12 Aurora High School student. "That was a little bit scary at 17, but it was also kind of a relief that everything that I had worked for had finally paid off."

Rowe started playing soccer when she was just five years old and has stuck with it since, developing a passion for the game that would take her to the next step.

She played house league soccer until she was about 10, which was when she first tried out to play on the rep team at Glen Shields in Vaughan.

Glen Shields was her soccer home for three years until heading back to Aurora to play with the Aurora Youth Soccer Club for two years.

Since then, she has returned to play with Glen Shields for the past three years to sharpen her skills before heading south of the border.

"At Glen Shields, our coaches are really involved in getting us to the States. That was a goal for our team, to get as many girls as possible on scholarships," Rowe said.

"We did tons of tournaments in the States and got into recruiting, so we really pushed for it in Grades 10 and 11. Contacting coaches, we took SAT courses, just to get our team name out there and have coaches watch us. It was a lot of work and still is a lot of work."

The soccer is just one part of the hard work that is ahead of her. She will also be studying biology at school, with a goal of getting into pharmacology.

However, she quickly added that all the sacrifice and hard work is worth it.

‘It’s definitely hard, but eventually I came to the point where what I really want is to play soccer and I wanted to play soccer in university, so it was worth giving up some of the social times,’ she said. ‘It’s all about multi-tasking and trying to find a balance between friends, school and soccer.’

When it came down to making a decision about her next step, Rowe said ULM just popped out at her.

The school itself is of a medium size, located in the suburbs and the Warhawks have a Canadian coach ‘all things she was looking for.

‘The campus at University of Louisiana had a really nice feel,’ she said. ‘The coach is also from Canada, so we had that connection as well, which made it a little more comforting even though it’s 20 hours away. He knew where I was coming from.’

She will be leaving for school in July to get a jump on training and, in the meantime, she has a few things still to take care of at home that she’s looking forward to.

‘I’m looking forward to prom with my friends and graduation,’ she said. ‘Then we always do Relay for Life. Those are the three big things that I’m looking forward to before I leave.’

It was her fourth year participating in Relay for Life, which took place in Aurora last week to benefit the Canadian Cancer Society. As for her future, she has been sure not to map things out too much, but hopes that she lands a career in either the pharmaceutical industry or as a professional soccer player.

‘I’m just taking it one step at a time and just focusing on my first year of university and playing in the NCAA and then as I get maybe into second, third and fourth year university,’ she said confidently. ‘That’s when I would start to think more about what happens after I graduate.’