

Future finance leader honoured with Chamber's Business Scholarship

Isabelle DiPasquale dedicated her high school career not only to academics, but giving back to the Cardinal Carter Catholic High School community.

Now, as she looks towards her post-secondary education with an eye to developing a career in finance, DiPasquale is doing so with an extra boost of confidence from the local business community after she was awarded the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Business Scholarship, sponsored by Lenard Lind Realty.

She explored scholarship and grant opportunities to help end her high school career on the highest of notes, and said the program offered by the Chamber struck a chord because ?it's really amazing how they like to support young people.?

?I decided to apply on my own without telling anyone, and I just did it because honestly I didn't think I would get it, but I wanted to do it right,? she tells The Auroran. ?It's a great opportunity to give back to your community and to be supported by such an amazing organization that's willing to do this for young students.?

DiPasquale says she's always had a passion for business and sought opportunities to flex these muscles during her time at Cardinal Carter. She became involved with the DECA business competition before too long, dividing her extra-curricular time between this, being a part of her school's Leadership Committee, and writing for her school newspaper as well.

Giving back didn't get put onto the backburner when summer came around. Last summer, she balanced volunteer commitments at Toronto's SickKids Hospital with an internship at a business here in Aurora.

?Business is what I wanted to do because it gave me so many different opportunities to give back and to lead a group of people, and it just provides so many opportunities,? she says. ?I'm really hoping to become involved in the business community in the future in the same way it has supported me now.?

The next step towards that future goal is attending Western University in the fall, looking towards the Ivey School of Business.

?What stood out to me the most [with Western] is their case study method,? she says. ?When I was involved in DECA, it's a business competition that is case study-based. I learned so much from that way of learning and I'm more of a hands-on learner in that sort of way. I thought that Ivey at Western is very, very similar in the way they teach small class sizes and case study-based learning and teaching. This is how I feel I will learn the best in my university studies.?

She might not be ?100 per cent decided? on her career path following university, she says she's interested in the entrepreneurial and leadership side of things, with a particular focus in finance.

?I am really looking to make a difference and contribute to the community as a whole in whatever capacity that might be,? she says. ?I'm not exactly sure what it may be yet, but I am really excited to see what ends up happening.?

?Personally,? she continues, ?when I first started high school, I never imagined I'd be here, so I would say to [students getting ready to enter high school this fall] to not be afraid to put yourself out there and go for opportunities. When I first started high school, I was a very shy, quiet girl, and I would never imagine I'm in the situation I am now and the reason why that occurred was because a teacher of mine pushed me to go up for the leadership program at my school. I became a leader in my Grade 10 year, which is very unlikely for students because it usually happens in Grade 11 and 12. After that experience, I completely came out of my shell, I made lots of connections through my community, and not even just in my school [but] in my community, I was able to meet and talk and build so many great connections.

?Don't be afraid to put yourself out there to try to go for opportunities that you may not think you get, because you never know

who's watching, or you never know what's going to come out of it.?

By Brock Weir