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Harrow student earns \$80,000 Schulic



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EST



One email in Venice sounds like a movie title, but in reality it was a life-altering digital communication that informed Harrow's Sandra Smeltzer she was being recognized as one of Canada's elite Grade 12 students.

Smeltzer had earned one of the 50 coveted Schulich Leader Scholarships given out annually across Canada. Her award is worth \$80,000 over four years.

Smeltzer is the first female student and only the second student (Lucas Palmer, Walkerville 2013) ever from Essex County to receive the scholarship.

"It still feels unbelievable, especially being from such a small town," said Smeltzer, who was in Venice, Italy, on a school trip during the March Break when she got the email.

"I had to read it over a couple times.

"It was very emotional. There were some tears."

How does one celebrate such news with friends in Venice?

There would be no impulsive dives into the Grand Canal, rather it was typically low key for Smeltzer.

"Just being in Venice is celebration enough," Smeltzer said.

Smeltzer, who carries a 97 per cent average at Harrow District High School, will study engineering at Queen's University this fall.

"I've always liked math, combined with the sciences," Smeltzer said. "I like making those connections with the real world with those subjects."

Philanthropist Seymour Schulich established the \$100-million scholarship fund in 2012.

The scholarships are aimed at promoting student interest in studying STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering or math).

To be eligible, students must demonstrate at least two of the following: academic excellence, outstanding community, business or entrepreneurial leadership and financial need.

"Sandra had the unique combination of excellence and so many different abilities," said Harrow teacher Steve Johnson, who nominated her for the scholarship.

"She has athletic and academic excellence combined with being so involved in the community."

In addition to her standout work in the classroom, Smeltzer was a high school all-star selection in softball (pitcher) and basketball (guard). She also competed in cross-country, volleyball, badminton and school skating.

In the community, Smeltzer taught skating for Skate Harrow and did volunteer work.

"Being busy keeps me from getting bored," said Smeltzer, who is the daughter of Tim and Liisa Smeltzer.

"I think it (sports) is a stress reliever (from academics)."

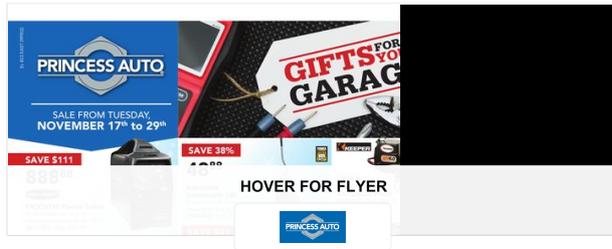
Smeltzer admitted the most difficult aspect of the scholarship process was having to write a 600-word essay after she learned she'd been nominated.

For the quiet and shy Smeltzer, singing her own praises and telling the world why she deserved a scholarship was an uncomfortable exercise.

"I talked about being well rounded and the experience and opportunities that opens up," Smeltzer said.

"You develop relationships with people and learn new skills you'll need in the future. I like trying new things."

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WEATHER

Windsor, ON

LIGHT SNOW

0°C

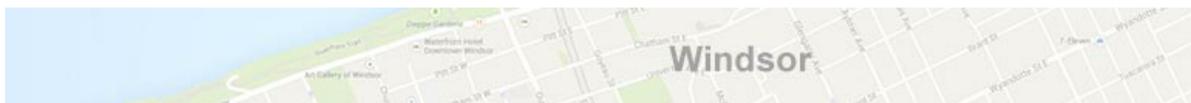
CURRENTLY

-5°C

FEELS LIKE

A weather widget for Windsor, ON. It features a cloud with snowflakes icon and the text 'LIGHT SNOW'. The current temperature is 0°C, and the 'FEELS LIKE' temperature is -5°C. A gear icon is in the bottom right corner.

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