



Talented teens edged out

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Richmond teenagers Corryn Ginter and Jessica Madrid-Aviles made it into the final and semifinal respectively of the Top Teen of Canada competition.

The pair was plucked from thousands of young hopefuls coast to coast to be part of a 30-strong event held in Langley last weekend.

Ginter, 18, of Bridgeport, was selected for the final after the public speaking, showcase and on-stage interview stages of the contest.

She actually won first place and a \$500 scholarship in the public speaking and was only edged out right at the death, by the eventual winner, Vernon's Megan Price, before picking up the bronze medal.

"I was genuinely shocked to get that far," said Ginter, who graduated from Cambie secondary this year.

"There really were so many great girls there. The girl that won really deserved it.

"But when I got third I was ecstatic and so proud of myself."

To get to the final five, Ginter, who does mission work around the world, had to give a public address about her mission work in Mexico, where she helped build houses and daycares for children in need.

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But it was her showcase that the audience and fellow contestants may recall most.

"I showed off some of my clothing designs, including a Richmond themed costume," Ginter said.

"It came complete with a fisherman's theme, to give it a Steveston feel."

In the semifinal, each of the 12 remaining teenagers had three personal pictures shown behind them on stage.

"We had to explain to the judges what was happening in each picture," she said.

"I had a picture of me playing the lead in the school play, a grad picture and a baby picture."

In the final itself later on Saturday night, Ginter had 30 seconds to one minute to describe to the judges what makes Canada so great.

What now for Ginter? She intends to keep going for another year of mission work then come back to help run next year's Top Teen competition, which this year raised \$20,000 for children's charity Cops for Cancer.

"I'll keep doing more voluntary work I think in the community and I want to keep raising money for Cops for Cancer," she said.

Madrid-Alivez, 16, of East Richmond, got as far as the semi-final where she was among 12 remaining teenagers.

The youngster has now set her sights on a bigger target next year, after the competition organizer, Darren Storsley, suggested she go for the Miss B.C. title as well as the Top Teen crown.

"(Darren) also said she should really get in touch with a modeling agency as she was so confident on stage," Jessica's mother, Teresa Madrid-Alivez, said.

"A lot of the parents were surprised she didn't get to the final.

"But I think she didn't talk enough about her charity and community work."

Jessica, however, did enough to get the last 12, reciting her poems and showcasing her paintings en route.

"One of the paintings was auctioned off for Cops for Cancer, so she was very happy with that," Teresa Madrid-Alivez said.

"I was shocked at how confident she was on stage. I'm definitely proud of her, she's such a great kid."

Prior to the Top Teen competition, Jessica raised \$500 for Cops for Cancer, thanks to a charity car wash at David Nair's Motortrent Autoaroup in Richmond.
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