

The Governor General's Caring Canadian Award



Kalliana King

Cowichan Bay, British Columbia

In April 2009, Kalliana King, aged eight, came home from school and asked her mother if she could shave her head to raise funds for Muscular Dystrophy. This was the beginning of an extraordinary achievement. To get the ball rolling, Kalli, as her friends and family call her, wrote the following letter: "Hi, I'm Kalli King. I'm eight years old and I would like to cut off all my hair for Muscular Dystrophy because my friend Adam Sohye has MD and he is in a wheelchair. So I am going to raise money for all of those kids who have MD. I hope I raise a lot of money for those kids in need."



Kalli was as good as her word, going to family, friends, teachers and classmates to raise money. A month before having her head shaved, she dyed her hair bright pink. "In June 2009, head shaving day arrived, done at a Fundraising Ball Tournament in Mesachie Lake," says her friend Glynis Eve. "This is where her friend Adam grew up. Just before having her head shaved, her fundraising total was announced. The crowd went wild as it was announced that Kalliana had raised \$14,600. There wasn't a dry eye in the house as everyone stood and clapped for her. Adam was there at her side. To the surprise of Kalli, Adam also dyed his hair pink and shaved his head. It was a touching moment."

In November 2010, Kalli was honoured with two awards from the Muscular Dystrophy Association. She received the Mary Wickham Volunteer of the Year Award as well as the National Award *Courage to Inspire* for Muscular Dystrophy. Six months later, she was honoured at Government House in Victoria as the youngest-ever recipient of the British Columbia Achievement Award.

The words of Kalli's friends and teachers speak for themselves. "In a short time, this young girl has achieved and understands more

than some adults will in a lifetime. For these reasons and so many more, she deserves to be recognized," says Glynis Eve. "She's our future and if she can get more young people to give of themselves like she has, we'll be in good hands."

"The world needs to be aware of people like Kalli so they can realize that it is in all of us to do great things."

Anne Newman, teacher

School principal David Dougan adds, "At the age of ten, she has already done more for others than the majority of adults will do in their lifetimes. She is a fine role model for the rest of the students in our school." But perhaps it's best summed up by her teacher Anne Newman, who says, "The world needs to be aware of people like Kalli so they can realize that it is in all of us to do great things. What a role model for young and old alike!"



The Caring Canadian Award was presented to Kalliana King on April 17, 2012, at Rideau Hall. Sgt Ronald Duchesne 2012 © Rideau Hall