

■ EDUCATION

Strive for success

Rotary scholarship program

A scholarship program introduced by the Rotary Club of Summerside provides local high school students facing challenges outside the classroom – be it personal tragedy, health related issues or other unfortunate circumstances – the opportunity for a \$1,000 scholarship to further their education.

Chair of Vocational Services, Heather Matheson, said the program is called “STRIVE” (Students Taking A Renewed Interest in the Value of Education) and was introduced to reward behavioral and scholastic improvement for students at Three Oaks Senior High School.

Many scholarships are designed to award those with top scholastic marks.

“Our Rotary Club’s STRIVE Scholarship Program is aimed at something a bit different,” explained Matheson. “The students we focus on for this program are those who may be struggling in life due to medical reasons or perhaps they have faced significant personal or family issues.”

Each year Rotary provides five students with a \$1,000 scholarship. “Students may consistently be a 70’s student, 80’s or higher. However, the main focus of this scholarship program is on the



students’ commitment to STRIVE to maintain or improve their marks allowing them to further their education despite the obstacles they face.”

Matheson added: “We have little comprehension of the types of obstacles that some students face on a daily basis. We have met students through this program that deal with issues that most of us would not imagine at

first glance.”

The idea for the STRIVE Scholarship program was brought to life by long term Rotarian Vance Bridges. “Vance heard about this program through fellow Rotarian and son, Doug Bridges. This program was taking place in other areas and Vance felt this was a good fit for our Rotary Club, and for local students,” said Matheson.

The Rotary Strive committee – composed of eight men and women with a variety of business backgrounds – meet with students once a month, from January to June.

“Through this process, committee members become mentors for the students and offer advice or direction on such things as career opportunities, interview skills, resume building,

tips on writing a good cover letter, and public speaking.”

“We hope to provide a mentorship program to students in a comfortable environment that will allow them to ask questions on continuing education or career planning. And, we also hope that students will gain a better understanding of the Rotary and the importance of volunteering,” said Matheson.