

# Banner year

*St. Anne artist has work on display in front of Queen's Park*



*Emma McConnell holds the original copy of her painting, which has been used to create a banner currently on display in Toronto.*

(Windsor, Ontario, June 29, 2017) – When Emma McConnell celebrates Canada Day this weekend, she'll have the satisfaction of knowing a piece of her art celebrating the diversity of Ontario was considered important enough to hang prominently in front of the provincial legislature.

*Ontario Discovered* is the name of the Grade 9 student's water colour on canvas piece that was selected to be printed on a banner that will hang on a street light stanchion in front of Queen's Park for the rest of the year.

Inspired by the increasing diversity of the province, the piece has a hockey arena with the iconic Tim Horton's sign as its focal point, but also includes representations of the parliament building

in Ottawa, the CN Tower, and the Royal Ontario Museum. In front of the arena is a road sign which includes the names of two or more countries from every continent in the world.

“It’s supposed to represent the fact that people can come to Canada from all over the world to experience all of these things,” said McConnell, who will go in to Grade 10 at St. Anne Catholic High School in September.

A hockey player who calls The Detroit Red Wings her favourite team, McConnell painted the piece over two days in early January. She submitted it to a contest being held by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The theme was “What do you love about Ontario?” In mid-January she found out that her painting was one of the 10 pieces selected to be made in to a banner and hung in front of Queen’s Park.

Earlier this year her family travelled to Toronto to be acknowledged in the legislature and to see the banner in person. It was a proud moment for her mother Karen.

“We were in awe,” she said. “To look up that walkway to see her art hanging in front of that beautiful historic building .... I don’t think most artists get that kind of recognition in their lifetime, let alone while they’re still in high school.”

A multi-media artist who has also created pieces from metal and plaster, McConnell takes private lessons from Alicia Ristic at the Art Galia studio in Tecumseh. Although she’s still uncertain about what she plans to do later in life, she has toyed with the idea of trying to become an animator some day, and plans to continue following her artistic muse.

“No matter what she does in life, the fact that she’s capable in this area will open so many doors on the creative side,” said her mother, who noted that Emma was recognized by the Town of Lakeshore for her artistic accomplishment at its council meeting earlier this week.

