

Outstanding Youth of the Year ~ Allyson Nemeth & Jessica Flash



Allyson Nemeth and Jessica Flash started the Cooking for Cancer Club at the age of 10, when the two classmates decided at a sleepover to make a difference in the world. Since then, a simple concept has impacted many, fueled a long lasting friendship, and given hope to those in need. The girls set out to raise money for Carly's Club of Roswell Park and pediatric cancer research by organizing bake sales. Their goal was simply to raise \$1,000 in their first year.

That night at the sleepover, they made and sold baked goods to the neighbors. From there, they rallied their fellow classmates and friends to participate. They organized teams and developed a neighborhood rotation to sell their baked goods, realizing they could make more money if they sold to different locations. Together with the help of their friends, these girls baked and sold baked goods to raise money for children with cancer – no short feat dragging their wagon full of baked goods door to door, in the snow, throughout winter.

They also made dog treats for donations, participated in the school's craft show and wellness events and created awareness at school by hosting meetings, making posters, and inspiring other students to participate in the club. They also developed a business plan to participate in KidBiz, a local business fair where children learn how to use business skills to make and sell products.

The second year the girls set a goal of \$2,000. To do this, they settled on hosting a Pasta Sauce Off at the LaSalle Yacht Club. They continued to work on the bake sales door to door and current school venues, while they prepared for the event. They went to area businesses, friends and family and personally asked for donations and attendance to the event. Word spread around our community and they were featured on Ch.7 Eyewitness News, The Grand Island Dispatch and The Niagara Gazette along with shared social media posts. At school they inspired their new principal to allow them to promote the event at school, and on the schools website and Facebook page, as well as at church. They made announcements at school weekly about the event, sent home flyers, made posters, gave speeches, and developed a brand for the event. They smashed their goal by raising \$5,000.

The event continues to grow under their leadership. Last year, there were 14 sauces to try, over 95 baskets and 12 high end baskets worth over \$150.00 each, 50/50, grand prize, and flip the plate game. Their efforts raised \$7,000.

Allyson and Jessica are freshmen at Cardinal O'Hara High School. They have recently been honored by receiving The One Buffalo Community Award on April 2 from the Pegula's and Sabres Organization. To date they have raised close to \$29,000 for Carly's Club of Roswell Park and are preparing for their 4th Annual Carly's Club of Roswell Park's Pasta Sauce Off.