

## **Immaculata High student recognized for life-saving actions**

*By Joanne MacDonald*

**Fri, Jan 21, 2005**

When 16-year-old Patrick Thivierge realized a friend was choking on a sandwich one day during lunch, he didn't panic.

Instead the Gr. 11 student at Immaculata High School drew on his first aid training and ended up saving the youth's life.

For this lifesaving effort last October and his other volunteer activities, Thivierge is one of 151 youths across Ontario who've been nominated for a 2004 Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

The awards are presented annually to recognize the outstanding achievements of young people, aged six to 17 years, in local communities.

The nominees may be youths involved in worthwhile community service, youths who've performed acts of heroism or bravery, or special young people who are contributing while living with a physical or psychological limitation.

The Junior Citizen awards are coordinated by the Ontario Community Newspapers Association and its 270 member newspapers, as well as the corporate sponsor Tembec Paper Group, and many other patrons.

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario supports the program, with the Lieutenant Governor presenting the award to 12 recipients at the OCNA's annual convention in April.

Thivierge said Oct. 14, 2004 was "basically a normal day in the cafeteria" at Immaculata High. But while he was sitting talking with some friends at lunch he suddenly felt a tapping on his shoulder.

"Because I help with the mentally handicapped class, one of the guys that I help with sits with me at lunch. He tapped me on the shoulder and I could tell he was choking on a sandwich," recalled Thivierge. "Then he stopped coughing so I got him up right away and did the Heimlich Maneuver. I yelled at a friend to get a teacher and did the Heimlich Maneuver maybe four times. The sandwich just came flying out before the teacher got there."

Thivierge said he learned how to do the life-saving procedure, which can save victims of choking or possible drowning, when he attended a leadership camp at Ottawa University in the summer between Grade 8 and Grade 9.

"There I learned first aid and CPR and I took it again in Gr. 9 gym," he said, adding he also recertified his CPR and other first aid training as recently as the summer of 2004 because he was seeking work as a camp counsellor.

The school incident at which he saved his schoolmate's life "went kind of fast. It only took about two minutes at the most. The teacher said, 'Thank you. It's a good thing you were certified,' " said Thivierge.

"It was the first time I've had to use my training but I didn't panic. I knew the job had to be done and I would worry about it later."

Thivierge has been recognized by the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation of Canada for his efforts. The foundation strives to educate Canadians about emergency medical preparedness training and cardiovascular disease prevention information.

In addition to his summer work as a volunteer and now paid camp counsellor, Thivierge also volunteers during his lunch hour each Thursday by helping out special students with a weight training program at Immaculata.

His volunteer duties give him a "good work place experience" but it also "makes me feel good, helping others, without me getting any profit out of it. I especially like doing it in the field of weightlifting."

Thivierge, who hopes to become either a paramedic or a respiratory therapist after graduation, weightlifts himself about three or four times a week.

He had no idea he was going to be nominated for an Ontario Junior Citizen Award but thinks it's "great."

"It feels good," said Thivierge. "I just try my hardest."