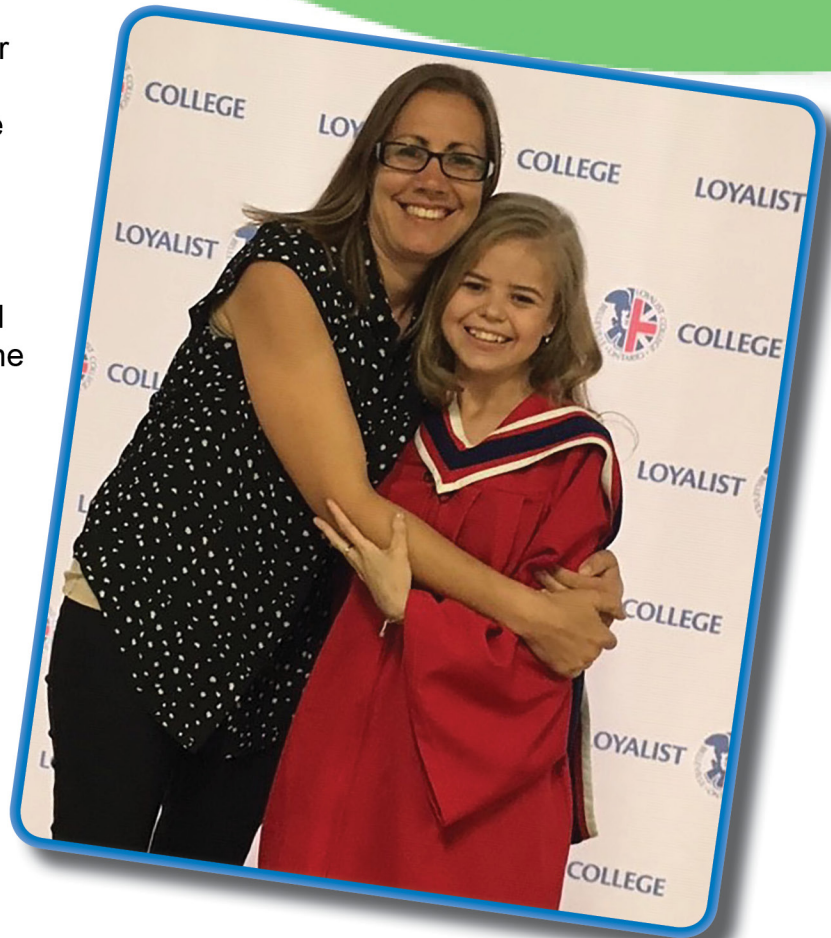


Five Counties helped put award-winning woman on the road to success

Long before Sarah Marshall won awards for her community work and medals at the Canadian Transplant Games, she prepared to take on the world with the help of Five Counties Children's Centre.

For anyone who doesn't know this Cobourg celebrity, Sarah was born with a rare congenital disease that enlarges the bladder and affects the function of the intestines.

On Aug. 7, 1997, at age five months, she became the world's youngest multi-organ transplant recipient with a new liver, bowel, stomach and pancreas at the London's Children's Hospital. Her name is still listed in the Guinness World Records 22 years later. Sarah spent the first 10 months of her life in the hospital, then had long hospital visits up to age five. This delayed the connection between her brain and her movements, which meant she did not walk until age three, her mother Cindy says.



Five Counties' therapists started working with her when she started school and stayed with her until Sarah started college.

"Sarah was very small for her age and had very weak fine motor skills," Cindy says. "Occupational therapy was very helpful from assisting with classroom setup of desk and chairs to foot blocks, computers and voice technology. This made home life easier while educating and assisting her teachers."

"Without Five Counties, she certainly would not be where she is today," she adds.

Sarah, now 22, won the Outstanding Youth Award at the Town of Cobourg 2015 Civic Awards. In 2016, she captured silver medals in running long jump and ball throw, plus a bronze in the 100-metre dash at the Canadian Transplant Games.

Her mother credits occupational therapist Keri Haukioja with supporting Sarah, especially during the transitions into high school and college.

"Keri gave Sarah the confidence and support she needed to assist in becoming the amazing young lady she is today," Cindy says.