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Sydney Tuff stars in an anti-bullying short film, called "Confidence" (above) and is an avid volunteer, having won three medals (right). See story, this page. (Photos contributed)

'Confidence'

Local youth volunteer performs in short film about bullying

BY JENNIFER OWENSBY EMINGER
Lifestyles Editor

Sydney Tuff, a local student with a passion for volunteering, hopes to help break the cycle of bullying through the short film, "Confidence," in which she plays the lead character named Confidence.

Tuff, who is homeschooled at the 9th and 10th grade level, explained that she has taken acting and art classes in the past, and shared that for the short film, "Confidence," it was her father, a producer in Atlanta, Ga., that introduced the idea to her.

She explained that she took a small acting class when she was about nine-years-old, putting on a show for her parents, and went to Morehead Elementary School in the fourth grade, an art-based school, where she took violin, dance, and acting and put on shows for each art area.

"When my dad mentioned the idea for the mov-

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Movie

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ie, I was a bit nervous," she admitted as she shared that the point behind making the film was not only to bring more awareness to bullying, but also to enter the film into a film festival. Tuff noted that they won a Hermes Award and won a bronze medal in the short film division. "We got to throw around a lot of ideas about how we wanted to do it."

Tuff explained that they chose the theme of bullying because it is an important topic, especially for people her age.

"One of our goals was to be able to send it around to different schools," she said. "It's important to

make people more aware of what's going on because kids could be getting bullied and their parents don't know about it. If you do see someone being bullied, it's best to tell someone than to let it happen."

Tuff noted that it took them about two days to shoot the film, which was shot at Freedom Middle School in Atlanta, Ga. She added that they also shot a commercial to share at the school, which included a public service announcement, for the schools anti-bullying campaign.

"It was also played in a theater and at the Kingdom Wood Film Festival in Atlanta," she said.

Along with Tuff, the film featured a small cast including her older sister, Jordan, who played one

of the bullies, Tuff's step mother played her mother in the film and her father played the character in the car, who drove her "sister" to school, along with several other characters.

"I think my sister enjoyed playing her roll," she laughed. "She had to shove me into a locker and we had to shoot that scene over and over again. It was hard not to laugh."

In the short film, one of Confidence's bullies is shown being bullied on the way to school.

"It just shows that people aren't always mean for no reason," she said, noting that the movie touches not only on physical bullying, but also cyber bullying.

Along with being in the short film, "Confidence," Tuff said she gets to do a lot

of behind the scenes photography with her dad and shared that this past summer, she had the opportunity to help film a commercial for Cedric Brown Designs as well as a short film, called "The Wonderful Struggle of Natalie McCloud," which is not yet available.

Along with volunteering her time through acting and working behind the scenes, Tuff also enjoys volunteering in other ways, both here in the Triad and in Atlanta.

"My sister plays basketball here at Forest Trail Academy and I record a lot of their games; and one of the (homeschool coops) that I attended, Central Triad Home Educators, last year, I helped clean off floors with them through Habitat for Humanity," she said. "In Atlanta, I do a lot of behind the scenes movie production; I worked two 12-hour shifts filming 'The Wonderful Struggle of Natalie McCloud,' and I would sometimes film some of the church services for The Way, The Truth, and The Life Christian Center in Decatur, Ga."

In total, Tuff has completed 100 volunteer hours. For her volunteer service, she received a signed letter from the President of the United States, and was presented with bronze, silver and gold medals.

Tuff noted that she gets her inspiration to volunteer from her father, who does a lot of volunteering as a way to give back to his community.

Sydney is available to do talks about the film, bullying, and her passion for vol-

unteering. To learn more about Sydney, visit www.sydneytuff.com. To learn more about or watch the movie, "Confidence," visit www.confidencefilm.com.



CONFIDENCE
"Lead Actress"



Kernersville's Sydney Tuff performed as the lead actress in the short film, "Confidence," which won a Hermes Award during the Kingdom Wood Film Festival in Atlanta. (Photo contributed)

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