

NEWS RELEASE



Touchmark at Coffee Creek

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2009

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Touchmark experience captures national spotlight for Edmond North senior

EDMOND, Okla. — Many things about Maggie Cannon are not typical of an 18-year-old. For instance, some of her good friends are 90 years old.

Instead of clocking in at the mall, she works for Touchmark at Coffee Creek. And rather than spend Spring Break hanging out at the beach, she was soaking up advice on how best to become a journalist.

The Edmond North senior is a long-serving reporter for the school newspaper *Ruff Draft* and works part time in Dining Services at Touchmark at Coffee Creek, an active adult community in Edmond.

A story she wrote for her school newspaper about this experience focused the national spotlight on her as one of two 2009 Free Spirit Scholars participating in the Al Neuharth Free Spirit Scholarship and Journalism Conference Program.

“It’s rare that you find 90-year-olds and 18-year-olds who are actual friends,” Cannon says. “There is a group of us that work there, and we are all really good friends with the people who live at Touchmark.”

Her news feature describes the bonds between the Touchmark residents and high-schoolers.

The mutual respect between Cannon and resident Evelyn Clark is evident. Clark is one of the residents Cannon featured in her winning portfolio, and Cannon says of her friend, “She’s really ‘with it,’ and that’s how I want to be.” And of the award-winner, Clark beams: “I think she’s going to make it, as long as she keeps trying.”

Caregiving is something that comes naturally to Cannon, whose grandfather has lived with her family her entire life.

Cannon was chosen from among hundreds of students across the nation who were competing for scholarships and the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. as a Free Spirit Scholar. She said the body of work she submitted was mostly humor-based feature stories and contributed to the ‘free spirit’ aspect of the competition.

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“I like the hands-on approach to reporting, and I think the kinds of stories I wrote and the way I reported them helped with the ‘free spirit,’ part of the process,” says Cannon, who adds that she likes to write about people and things no one else writes about.

Cannon was selected from the entire group to receive one of two \$10,000 college scholarships during her trip.

“I was really surprised, because I thought regular people don’t win things like this,” she says. “It seems like you read about well-known people winning national awards.”

Jamie Ham, executive director of Touchmark at Coffee Creek, is proud of Cannon’s accomplishments and not surprised that she and the other students have developed strong ties with residents.

“All of us at Touchmark congratulate Maggie on her achievement,” says Ham. “She is well-deserving of this honor. Her stories capture the appeal of Touchmark’s vibrant lifestyle for some of Edmond’s finest residents.”

More than 130 people live at Touchmark, and nearly everyone gathered Mar. 26 for a “town hall” meeting to congratulate their 18-year-old friend and sign an oversize card for her.

Cannon plans to use her scholarship to attend the University of Oklahoma in the fall to major in — what else — journalism.

Touchmark, located in Edmond at 2801 Shortgrass Road, is part of the Coffee Creek 638-acre planned residential development, which includes a golf course, recreational centers and walking and biking trails for Coffee Creek homeowners. Touchmark at Coffee Creek offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options. For more information, contact Touchmark at (405) 340-1975 or visit TouchmarkEdmond.com.

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