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## Twins, pal top scholars' list

*Eugene Correia* in Toronto

For Debprata and Dolly Ghatak, joy came in a double dose when their twins, Ratkim and Nilava, secured the top two places in the Ontario District School Board scholars' list.

The twins themselves were happier because their schoolmate and friend Siddharaj Chudasama shared the second spot with Nilava. In fact, Ratkim also tied for the top spot with Jessie Ding, with 99.3 per cent.

Speaking for the trio, Ratkim said that they are thrilled though still recovering from the shock. Only 0.1 per cent separated Ratkim from Nilava and Siddharaj, who scored 99.2 per cent.

If you are willing to split hairs, Ratkim is the older twin, having been born six minutes earlier. They are 19. They and Siddharaj, 18, will get together again at York University, having decided to pursue physics as a major subject and mathematics as a minor one. They received scholarships from many universities but opted for York.

All three have decided to become doctors, the twins hoping to end their academic career as neurosurgeons while Siddharaj isn't yet sure which area he wants to specialize in.

Just a week or so before the results, all three shared the same condominium complex at Dixon-Kipling area, now popularly known as "Little Somalia" but known in the 1970s as "Little India". Indian families still constitute a fair chunk of the population. The Ghataks have moved into a new detached house just a few minutes' walk from their previous residence.



Siddharaj Chudasama

They decided on going to York University partly because their dad had studied there and partly because Siddharaj opted for it too. Siddharaj himself had opted for York perhaps because his older sister is studying biology there. The twins' older brother Rajiv, is doing biology too, but at the University of Toronto. The twins say they also believe York University has high-calibre teachers at the undergraduate level.

"We have been A-Plus students throughout at the junior and high school levels. We don't put in a lot of hours at studies except before exams when we devote at least 10 hours a day," said Ratkim. None of



Ratkim and Nilava Ghatak

them are interested in sports or computers though.

The twins are all praise for their parents, Debprata and Dolly.

"Our parents inspired us. They've been strict with us," said Ratkim. His father is a financial planner and mother, an office manager.

The twins were born in Canada but lived in Calcutta from they were two till they were nine.

"We wanted them to learn the Bengali culture. It's important to teach them our traditions and other things when they are young," Dolly said, who hopes they will now do well at the university level too.

Second of four children of Gujarati parents, Jay and Janavi, Siddharaj, who was born in Canada, says that though his parents helped, it was Shri Mataji Nirmal Devi's sahaja yoga meditation that made the biggest difference.

"It helped me focus my attention on my studies and achieve my goal. I started to improve in my studies after I started to meditate," he said.

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