



**Alissa Porumbel, Central – TC, Toronto**

**Category: Young Caregiver**

**Submitted by Palliative Care Coordinator Anne Healey from our Toronto Central geography**

Alessia was an outstanding caregiver for her mother, Nela, who passed away from cancer in May 2023. During her mother’s illness, Alessia made it a priority to be by Nela’s side, even choosing to attend school online.

While many grade ten students were worried about weekend plans, Alessia’s only priority was her mother’s care and comfort. In speaking with Alessia she shared, “my mother was my best friend. When we immigrated to Canada from Romania I didn’t have many friends but I had my mom.”



Alessia’s favourite memories were just being together, whether it was going for walks, cooking and baking or introducing each other to new music. Alessia shared, “she was more than just a parent, she was everything to me. She loved life and that was a beautiful thing to see. I just try to be more like her.”

As a very close family, Nela’s husband, son, daughter-in-law, and mother provided ongoing support. However, Alessia was there around the clock making sure her mother was comfortable and had what she needed. Alessia was always there, by her mother’s side to help ensure her medications were administered and that she was well looked after. She always wanted to be the first to get the news of any changes in her mother’s condition or needs. Even at such a young age she showed great empathy and maturity beyond her years.

Now, 16, looking back Alessia says she has no regrets - "I didn't want to miss a moment with my mom."

Alessia's unconditional love, dedication and compassion really shines through in the exemplary care she provided to her mother. It's also clear just how devoted they were to each other. What a truly inspiring story. Thank you for sharing your memories with us, Alessia. And thank you Anne for recognizing Alessia, truly an outstanding and courageous Young Caregiver.