

# Algonquin Students Flourish at Canada Blooms

By D. Underwood

**T**wo of Algonquin's floral design students came home award winners after competing in the 16th annual floral design competition at Canada Blooms in Toronto this past March. Valerie Baron and Kyungseok Oh were two of six Algonquin students who entered the college competition, which is sponsored by Ontario Flower Growers.

"Ontario Flower Growers is very pleased to be able to support the students and offer them avenues to enhance their careers in the industry," says Sheri Knowles of OFG. "Along with the design competition, we also host them annually at our facility so they can view the fresh flowers and potted plant auction; another element we offer to support the chain supply."

The theme of this year's competition was Urban Mosaic. Baron's design won first in the floral design competition. Students from Seneca, Conestoga, Mohawk, and Algonquin had two hours to construct their designs. Each student was given a surprise package of supplies, including 12 different types of flowers, a mosaic pot and silver ribbon.


Baron's unique design earned her first place.

"I broke the pot and made steps - then I made a path across the top with some of the other pieces," she says. "I also made birds' nests and arranged the tulips to look like a waterfall."

"I think the goal with the theme of 'Urban Mosaic' was to look for a more architectural, more modern style," says Lyn Whyte, coordinator of the one-year florist program. "Valerie's design captured it perfectly."

Baron also won the People's Choice award. "The people's choice decision and the judges don't usually match because they look for different things. This time they agreed," says Whyte.

Kyungseok Oh won honourable mention for her bridal design. Competitors in Oh's competition were given nine kinds of flowers, wire and ribbon to create a bridal bouquet.

"I just tried to make it look like what a student would like, not what the judges wanted," says Oh. "The other entries used a lot of techniques - I just used basic forms." 



Algonquin College floral design students Kyungseok Oh (left) and Valerie Baron (right) both won awards at the 16th Annual Intercollegiate Floral Design Competition at Canada Blooms in Toronto.