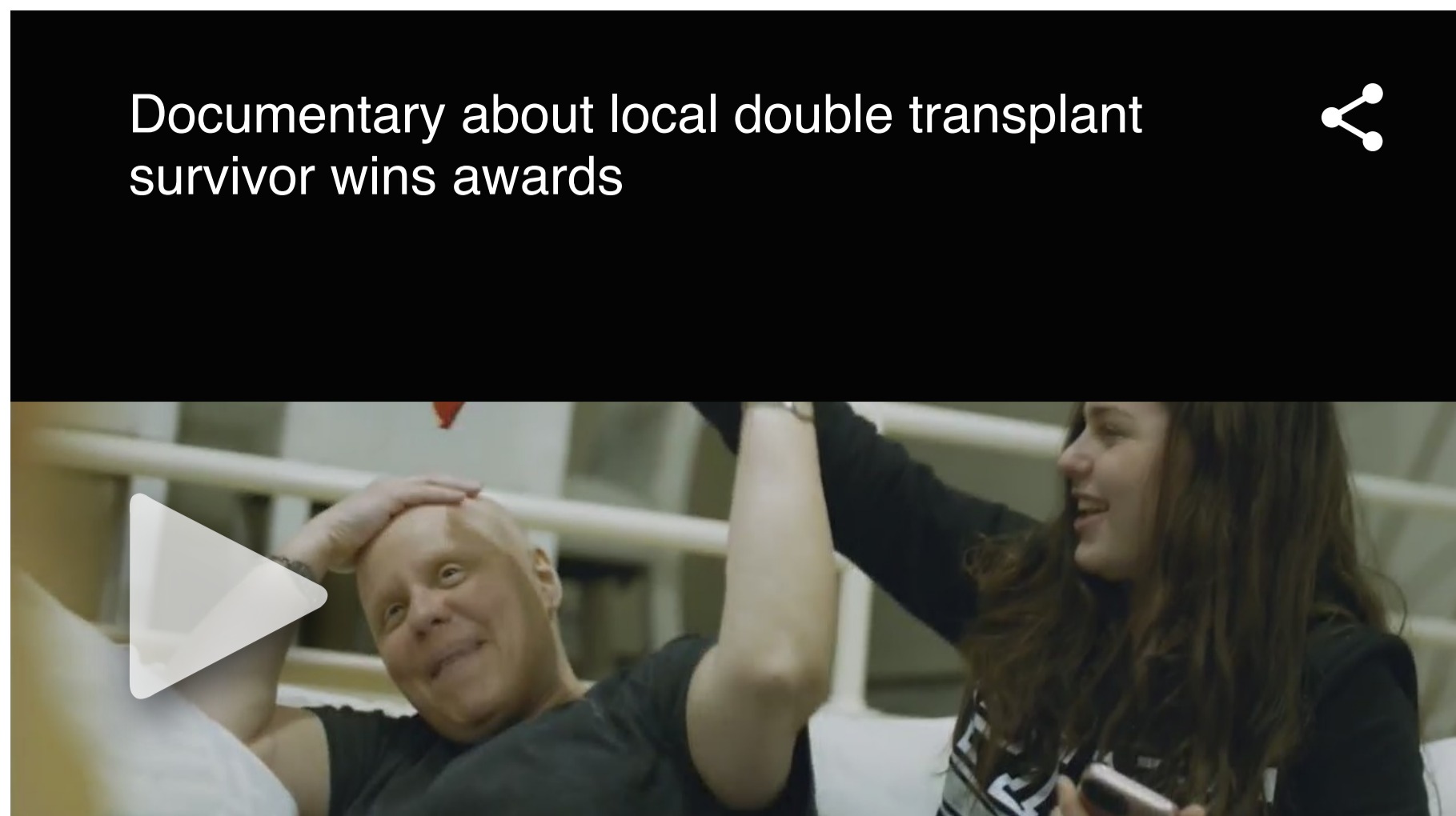


## Documentary about local double transplant survivor wins awards



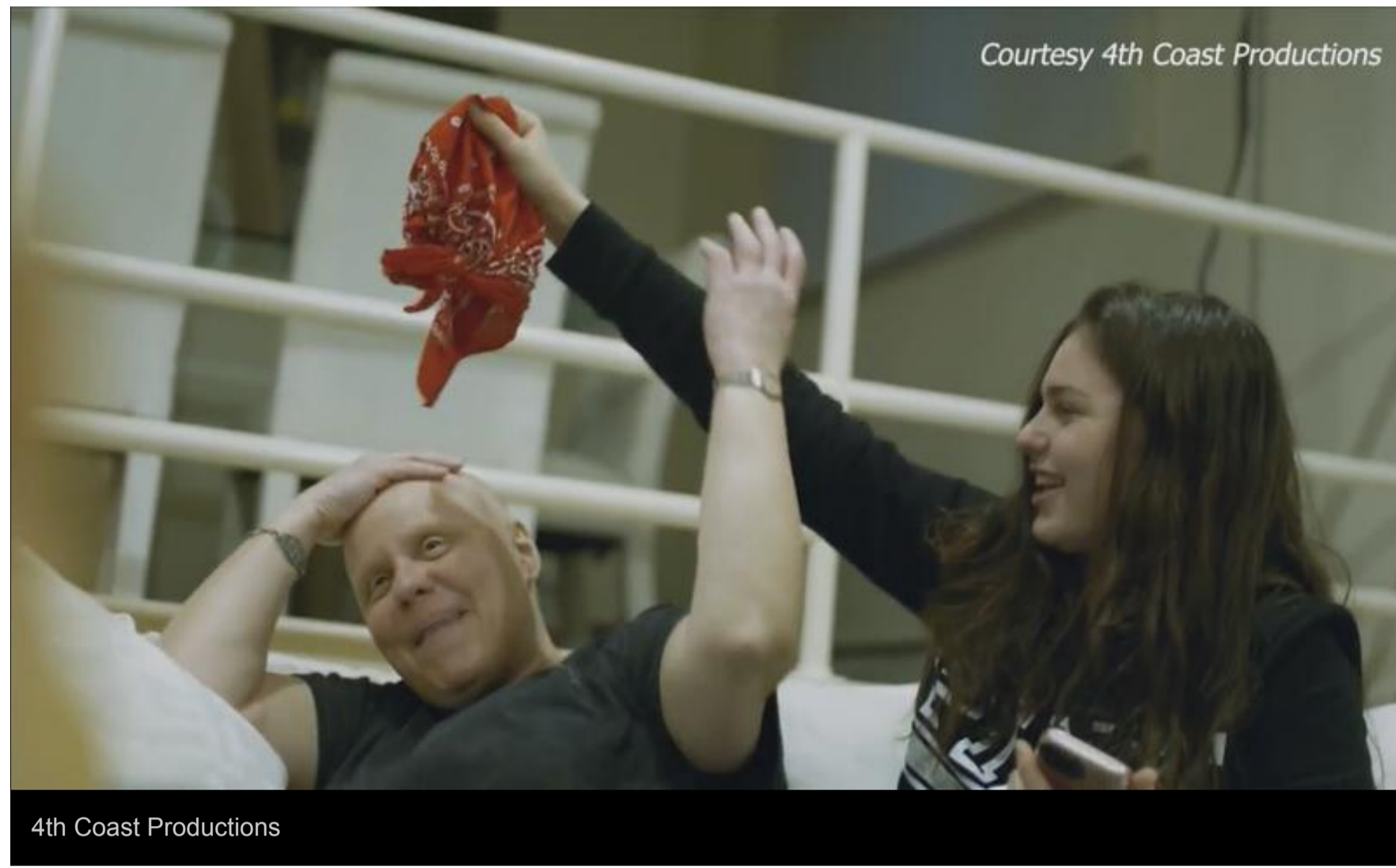
**Jennifer Ly**  
Created: August 11, 2021 06:37 PM

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (WHEC) — Sometimes in life, we all deserve a second chance. Two local filmmakers from Pittsford are winning awards for a documentary they filmed about a woman who is a double transplant survivor.

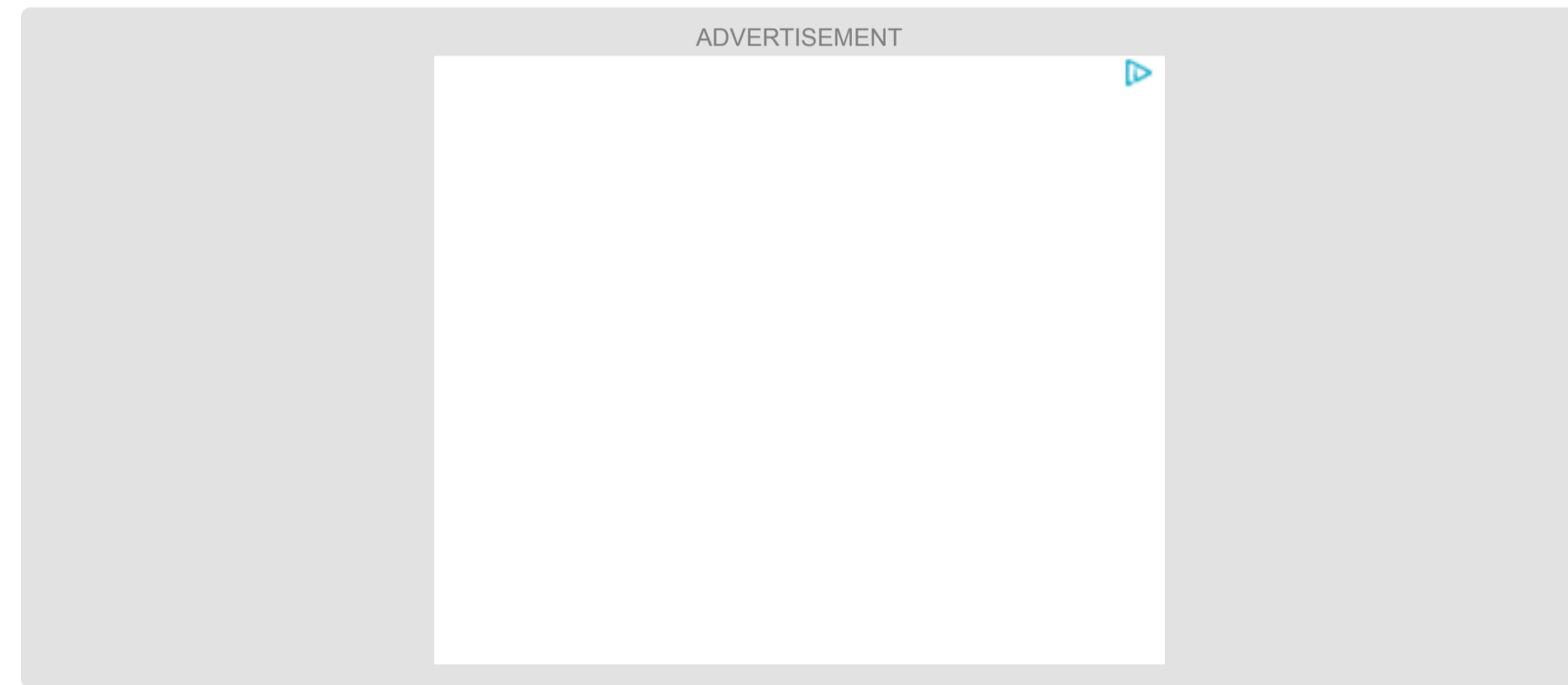
Tara Notrica is a survivor of mast cell disease and underwent both a stem cell transplant in 2015 and a bone marrow transplant in 2018.

Today, she is recuperating and still fighting for her second chance. In the weeks leading up to her 2018 transplant, film crews followed her family for weeks to capture the journey.

"Honestly it was a pretty incredible experience," Notrica said.



"Second Chance" tells Notrica's story about resilience.



"It was very emotional to see this family go through such a hard time, and I think that now a lot of people can more relate to the day-to-day struggles people can have with health and viruses and rare disease," said Brian Gerlach, co-director and co-editor of Second Chance.

Gerlach works for 4th Coast Productions, the company that produced the documentary.

Second Chance highlights how music, which was written by the mother-daughter duo for the documentary, can have healing powers while also raising awareness about rare diseases, such as hematological/immunological disease.

"The purpose of this is to provide strength, hope, courage and resilience for people that might be going through similar circumstances," Notrica said.

Notrica's bone marrow transplant was in 2018 but for months after, her weakened immune system and recovery ironically foreshadowed the world we recently experienced.

"She was in quarantine. She was in quarantine way before the world was in quarantine, so she was locked down like you had to wear masks, suits and plastic gloves. You had to sanitize just to be around her," Gerlach said, referring to filming on set.

"What was interesting is I was very skeptical to go to a lot of places, and people didn't really understand that. Now, during COVID, people get it; they're like, 'I understand why you didn't want to go to that public place,'" Notrica said.

The mast double transplant survivor hopes this documentary will help teach others empathy.

"People really have a different perspective, and now I think a better understanding about what transplant patients really go through," she said.

The creators say they hope it leaves a message.

"Making this documentary was so important to us because we really wanted to get a family message out there about the strength of family and what can happen when people stick together during hard times. I think that's very relatable now because of COVID," Gerlach said.

Second Chance has been accepted into 30 film festivals worldwide and has won over 15 awards. Just yesterday, the documentary's original song "Second Chance" won "Best Song" at the Long Island International Film Expo. You can virtually watch the documentary by purchasing online tickets [here](#).

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