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Triton grad brings Hollywood to school

Actress directs film with anti-bullying theme

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Lisa Regina held a megaphone and shouted directions to hundreds of students at Runnemede's Triton Regional High School Friday.

"OK. I need you guys to listen up!" yelled the actress-screenwriter, who plans to include her school in an upcoming feature film. "This is a serious scene, so I need you to really focus here."

The film, "Shooters Nail," tells a story of bullying, wheelchair basketball and forgiveness. By using her alma mater as the backdrop, Regina hopes to inspire potential actors there. Triton students will be used throughout the film.

About 200 of them took part Friday morning in a scene where they walked out of the school and chanted an anti-bullying message.

Junior class President Derek Cano said the experience was "good for Triton."

Jose Fontanez called it an honor to have Regina film at the school.

"I'm grateful she decided to come here because she could have filmed in New York or L.A.," noted Fontanez, the senior class president. "It makes a good name for Triton."

Triton Principal Melissa Sheppard said Regina's passion for fighting bullying was one reason they opened the school to filming.

"Lisa's vision is our vision, and that is no tolerance (for bullying)."

"Bullying is such a widespread social issue," observed Regina, who also directs the film. "It's a topic that can't be discussed enough."

The actress, who splits her time between New York City and Barrington, has appeared in "The Sopranos," "All My Children" and national commercial campaigns for Kmart and Macy's, among other productions.

She enlisted local filmmaker Michael Lucas to shoot Friday's promo. The Paulsboro native has completed a number of indie films and is finishing work on a documentary about wrestling in the borough.

"I love to work with people who have a passion about what they are doing," Lucas noted. "I meet people who like to talk about projects, but when it comes time to do something, they have a million excuses."

“It was the total opposite with Lisa.”

Filming for “Shooters Nail” is expected to begin in the South Jersey-Philadelphia area in August. Regina said the movie will feature new and household names, including actor Eric Roberts — brother of Julia — in a leading role.

“The cast we have cares so much about this project,” said the director, who will also appear in the movie.

“This is going to be a special film and I can’t wait to get started next year.”