

Kira Syro

Grade 6 Calgary Flames Alumni Youth Leadership Program

My name is Kira Syro and I'm a program participant. I participate right now in the Grade 6 Alumni Youth Leadership Program.

I started with swimming lessons and summer camps, and I worked my way up to being in the grade six program. And then, right now I've currently been in the leadership programme for two years. So, I play badminton and I've previously done rock climbing and intramurals. I have volunteered at so many great places that I've enjoyed so much and I feel such a rewarding feeling just volunteering and giving back to my community.

We meet every Monday and we each have a day, and it's really important because we work on our public speaking skills and learn how to be a leader. And we also work with the Grade 6 Program, so when they have their monthly events, we volunteer there and we get to coach them and it's really fun.

It was just an amazing experience because I actually gained confidence in myself to try out for these sports and become such an athletic person, which is kind of how I'm known at school as just the athletic one. And then I learned how to play a bunch of sports and a bunch of new sports were introduced into my life. I also had a lot of fun with like all the people at the Y like we started making inside jokes and learning more about each other there.

Like I said, there's a lot of friends here that I have. The YMCA is such a special place because there's so many amazing people here, from all the staff and volunteers to my friends that I've been friends with for a long time now.

I didn't have much confidence in myself. I thought I had no athletic abilities before coming to the Y and then I came here and everybody supported me like the youth and then the leaders and the staff all supported me and made sure that I knew how good I was at the sports. I ultimately gained a confidence in myself to try out for sports. And it's led me down this amazing path with sports. I've been on six teams in the last two years. I played with my school community and club.

I think the YMCA is amazing place for youth to come because there's so many great people who can support you, their challenges and mental challenges and all that. And it's a great place to build your skills and learn a little bit about sports and their history.

Right now. I really want, in my future and my really near future, hopefully, I really want to be a camp counsellor and an official YMCA volunteer. And the YMCA has impacted that so much from amazing opportunities at volunteering at different places. And in my far future I want to become a teacher which has impact, which has gotten impacted by the Y because I've learned what it, how to public speak in front of kids and how kids, what different kids like and how to adapt to them and how they like different things. And they're all not one person.

For me personally, the YMCA has sparked my athletic potential and my, my speaking abilities. 'Cause as a kid I was a very quiet kid. I would only talk to my friends and I was just kind of scared of my teachers, but like, not because they weren't nice people, but 'cause I was just scared of talking. And then when I

came to the Y I learned how to like, speak with other people more and it was just awesome to form deeper connections with other people. And I love how those connections have guided me towards my friendships today and who I know today.

At the Y I also think it sparked my athletic ability because before this, before the program, I was just not confident in my athletic abilities. Like I just did not believe in myself with the confidence in my athletic abilities. But after the program, I learned how important sports are and how sporty I was and how many sports I could try and how many sports I could challenge myself in. And I really learned how to challenge myself and how to reach new heights in sports.