



## YMCA of Oakville

### Youth Volunteers – AJ Has Energy to Help

My volunteer experience began once I chose the YMCA of Oakville as my Co-op placement within the Specialist High Skills Major Program for Health & Wellness at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. I was told that typically the Y accepts students within the Wellness Centre who are attending a related course at a College or University level. I was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to have the YMCA of Oakville as my Co-op placement.

The plan was to gain knowledge and experience on the Wellness floor because I have been looking forward to pursue the Kinesiology program within my university years. Little did I know, joining the volunteer team has opened new doors and exciting opportunities in my life.

Starting out as the new guy I was quiet, shy, and lacked the confidence to speak out to others. As a Volunteer/ Co-op student, I gained many skills and useful knowledge that has helped me and will further on help me in the long run.

I was put into programs that I did not plan on doing, but ended up loving my job.. The programs that I had taken part of were the; Get Started Clinics, Teen Conditioning Courses, Games N' Mazes, Gym Time, Games On, and Leader Corp programs. I worked with great people who made the Co-op experience fun and exciting. Every time I entered the YMCA doors, it felt like I entered in a whole different environment, an environment that puts away all the stress and worries that school and work has to offer. The atmosphere is friendly, joyful, and positive. You are always warmly welcomed by the smiling YMCA members and staff.

It feels like I hit the jackpot within my Co-op experience and that I have taken 100% of what I have learned on the field and applied it to my work. If it was not for my amazing co-workers and supervisors, I would not have the Co-op experience that I have today.

I would like to thank many people that has helped me through my Co-op semester and made it a wonderful and exciting time. My outstanding Co-op teacher that has really helped me overcome the busy semester, juggling day school, night school, and Co-op. Also my amazing supervisor, Tammy Smith, she has given me the opportunity to fulfill this Co-op experience and open new doors in my career. Tammy was kind, helpful, and the best supervisor you can ask for. What kind of supervisor gives you a surprise party with your fellow coworkers and then gets you cake? An amazing one, that's all I can say.

To everyone who is looking to volunteer to complete their community hours or just looking for a place to volunteer, or a place to perform Co-op and is interested in the Health and Wellness field, I would gladly recommend that you look into the YMCA of Oakville. The YMCA of Oakville is a warm welcoming environment with never ending smiles on the staff and member's faces, making volunteering a fun, and exciting work experience.