

LEARNING TO LEAD

How volunteering helped Samantha gain confidence - and change her community in large and small ways. ♦

"When I first came to Canada, I was super shy. I could not leave the house at all. My English wasn't very good, and Canada was just completely different from Uganda. I remember our first Christmas here - it was the first time I saw snow. The weather was so cold! I was used to living on the equator, where it's 30 C or 40 C every day.



"VOLUNTEERING HAS BUILT A LOT OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR ME AS A YOUNG WOMAN"

My mom was in Canada with us for a while. Then she went back to Uganda and it was just me and my sisters. My dad was here too, but he was usually working, so I had to be responsible for my sisters. That was quite hard. But we would do United Way programs. There was a story time program at the library, which I loved. I also played sports - I went to all of the programs.

Now I volunteer. I often think, 'Where would I be without United Way?' And honestly, I probably wouldn't be as involved in my community as I am. I don't think I would be going out there and doing random acts of kindness, like writing little notes that can make someone's day, or telling people, 'Hey, I love your smile,' or 'I like your style.' I feel like volunteering has given me a lot of confidence and built leadership skills for me as a young woman.

When I first started volunteering, we would go feed people who were homeless. It was nice to give back. Helping my community has more meaning for me now. Sometimes I walk around my neighbourhood, and if I see someone in need, I buy them food. When I see a person who is homeless, I get them a cup of coffee and say, 'This is for you.'

Volunteering has helped me become a better person. The more I volunteer, the more lives I want to change and the more people I want to impact.

It's always nice to help. I feel better being involved in these programs. I've gained so much." -Samantha



United Way
Saskatoon & Area

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