

## TESTIMONIAL

I remember the first day I ever heard about the Beyond Borders program. I was in the caf at Centennial and saw Oksana sitting alone at one of the tables. I approached her and asked what she was doing, to which she replied with “writing my application for Beyond Borders”. At the time I didn’t really know what it was. One of my old co-workers did it when she was in grade 12 and I was in grade 9, but I was still unsure what the program was. I went home that night and did some research and looked at the website and educated myself on what the program was. At the time, I was barely passing/failing math and was feeling very bad about myself in terms of school. I have always been a straight A student (other than math) and felt as though I wanted to just give up in grade 11. Yes I would goof off sometimes and skip class, but it wasn’t because I lost sight of how important a good education is, it was because I lost faith in myself. I hated myself for a long period of time last year, and my relationship with my mom suffered a lot because of how I was doing in school.

I decided that Beyond Borders would be a good thing for me. I had only heard positive things about it and figured it would be a cool way for me to spend one of my last semesters of high school. However when I approached my guidance counselor to talk about it, they questioned my choice. I remember them saying “you do know that’s a business specific program, right?” To which I responded with I know, but the skills I will learn can be applied to anything I want to do in my life. After that meeting I applied and thankfully got an interview.

The interview was very scary for me. I poured my heart out into my application and didn’t know how effectively I would be able to present myself and my skills in person to the people who would be teaching me for the first 5 months of grade 12. The interview was easy, I was just way to nervous. I left thinking that I completely bombed the thing and feared the embarrassment and sadness of not getting in, but surely enough a few weeks later I got my acceptance in the mail and I can easily say that it was the best thing that had ever happened to me (school wise) in my entire life.

Mr. Parsons, you have changed my life and so many others with this program. Your dedication to us shows through how you teach and how you treat us as individuals. This program has allowed me to grow from who I was in eleventh grade, to an individual in grade 12 who is proud of herself and is confident in her abilities. It is because of you that I can now speak to an audience and not be completely scared. It is because of you that I have been able to better myself through experiential learning and grow into a mature adult, capable of anything, and it is because of you I now have 46 best friends that I can call my family. You have no idea how much of an impact Beyond Borders has had on me and the amount of happiness and light it has brought into my life. I am so thankful for you, this program, the teachers, and my peers for making this semester the best I’ve ever had. I wish I could thank you every day for accepting me into this program, I am so lucky and so grateful to be a part of it and I hope it continues to be offered to students until the day you retire.

You are an amazing individual and I hope you are proud of not only us, but yourself. I hope you can recognize how much we truly love this program and appreciate everything you have done for us and I hope we all made you proud this semester.

*Sincerely,*

*Chloe Campbell*

