



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# Success Story CeCe Afman

## Patsy Collins Adventure in Leadership Program

Until just a few years ago, CeCe Afman, now 13, faced the same hardships as other Ethiopian girls and women. In addition to health risks associated with lack of clean water and access to nutritious food, an orphaned girl like CeCe would likely not be able to attend school. However, CeCe's life took a dramatic turn in 2008 when she was adopted.

As a child in Ethiopia, CeCe was raised by her aunt and was later placed in an orphanage when her aunt could no longer care for her. From a young age, CeCe was very bright but unfortunately had little opportunity to shine, given her situation.

CeCe's life changed at the age of ten when she was adopted by a family in Washington State, giving her a chance to pursue her potential in a supportive environment where her basic needs could be met. With so many doors now open for her, she adopted a new attitude toward life.

"Being adopted changed my life," said CeCe Afman. "I have so many more opportunities in life that I never would have gotten if I hadn't been adopted. That is why I take advantage of all the activities that are offered to me."

With this new outlook on life, CeCe has jumped at every chance to have a successful future. In school, she participates in multiple programs. In sports alone, CeCe plays basketball, crew, lacrosse, and soccer. She also plays the violin in her schools orchestra. While she finds much enjoyment in all these activities, she says "my main goal is to get a 4.0." In order to achieve this, CeCe attends afterschool tutoring everyday, where she gets help with her schoolwork. CeCe is also a part of a leadership program called Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

Because of her hard work and participation with AVID and other extracurricular activities, CeCe was nominated by her principal and counselor to come to the Patsy Collins Adventure in Leadership program (PCAL) for two weeks. This is a high honor from the school and CeCe was the only student in her school to be considered.

With the tag line "Be yourself. Be a leader," PCAL prepares girls entering 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades to make the most of their talents and abilities. Stationed at Camp Orkila on the San Juan Islands in Washington, PCAL focuses on multi-cultural leadership, service and wellness. Through active leadership development workshops, service learning projects and team building exercises in a fun and supportive environment, PCAL girls will develop the self-confidence to lead, the spirit to give back to their communities, and the awareness to live a healthy and balanced life.



CeCe's time at PCAL has helped her develop important leadership skills. She interacts with all of her peers, has high energy and enthusiasm and is willing and excited to participate in any way that she can. She hopes to take these skills home with her and apply them to her everyday life. CeCe is undecided on what she would like to do for a career, but she knows she wants to be a leader.

"CeCe showed me her leadership potential from the moment she arrived at PCAL," said Jenni Conrad PCAL Program Director. "En route to Camp Orkila, she taught a dance move to her entire busload of campers and had everyone practicing it --including staff-- on the ferry! Her positivity, energy and enthusiasm impressed and inspired all our staff and participants. I know she'll go on to do amazing things in her future, and I'm happy to be a support on her leadership path. "

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Jenni Conrad  
jconrad@seattleyymca.org

Everyone is welcome. Financial assistance is available.  
The YMCA of Greater Seattle strengthens communities in King and south Snohomish counties through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.