

Outstanding Youth Leader

Maria Ovcharenko | Марія Овчаренко



Maria has made significant contributions to her community as a Scoutmaster and lead organizer for the girls' troop in Plast Ukrainian Youth Organization (Plast Edmonton). Her remarkable initiatives have had a profound impact on the Ukrainian refugee youth, helping them integrate into the Edmonton Ukrainian community, instilling Plast values, and fostering a sense of belonging. Maria's efforts in organizing a three-day mini-camp during the COVID-19 restrictions provided invaluable outdoor experiences and skills to the girls' patrol,

ensuring their readiness for future camping endeavors. Her leadership also extended to planning and coordinating the Plast Ski Trip to Jasper and co-organizing a Western Canada region summer Plast scouting camp, bringing together youth from multiple provinces and enriching their scouting experiences.

Moreover, Maria demonstrated her dedication to nurturing future leaders by leading the girls' international leadership preparatory boot camp, and contributing to leadership and personal development for 25 girls. Her creative redesign of the troop flag and her role in organizing a community carolling fundraising initiative showcased her commitment to boosting morale and unity within the troop and engaging youth in Ukrainian traditions. Beyond Plast, Maria's involvement in emceeing community events, her logistics committee work for UFest Edmonton's Ukrainian Festival, and her participation in various other organizations underline her well-rounded leadership and community engagement. Her innovative approach to online carolling during the COVID-19 pandemic further highlights her ability to adapt and bring joy to her community, showcasing her as a dedicated and innovative leader.

Andrei Kisel | Андрій Кісіль

Andrei has been a dedicated contributor to the Edmonton Ukrainian community, volunteering with UFest and actively addressing logistical and safety concerns, earning recognition from the executive committee. He also lent his voice to the Ruta vocal group and participated in the youth drama group Dzherelo, fostering Ukrainian culture and heritage. As a member of the Ukrainian Students' Society at the University of Alberta, Andrei served as the volunteer coordinator, organizing events and implementing efficient volunteer tracking systems.

His extensive involvement with Plast began as a junior councillor, and he has since taken on roles like camp director, demonstrating adaptability and innovation. Andrei's latest initiative involves introducing online project tracking for volunteers, showcasing his commitment to improving community organization and accountability. His leadership exemplifies the spirit of personal growth within the scouting movement, motivating young volunteers to be progressive contributors to the Ukrainian community.

