

Kirkland: My Destination, My Home

In May of 1926, the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce implemented the slogan "Kirkland, The Gateway to Seattle". Through the years, the official town slogan has stayed the same and I think it's time for a change. I believe this motto does not accurately describe the special town I was born and raised in. Kirkland is not a merely a means to an end, but an end in and of itself. Kirkland is the destination that brings adventure, kindness, and color to not only my life, but to everyone's who has the privilege living here. My experience growing up in Kirkland has been a great one full of memories and people I could never forget.

I step onto one of the rocks sitting in the dark blue and green water right next to the Marina and suddenly I'm five again. My aunt had just taken my sister and I to get ice cream at the Coffee and Cone. I jump from rock to rock until I am the furthest away from shore I can be without touching the mellow waves. The cool wind flows through my curly locks of hair as I look out watching boats dock as the sun starts to set. This is where I gained my sense of adventure. To this day, I never walk past those stationary rocks without thinking of the times I had courageously leaped from what seemed like boulder to boulder. This rush of excitement is now something I strive to feel, allowing me to jump out of my comfort zone and experience the world like it's meant to be experienced.

Along with the environment, the people of Kirkland have shaped me into the woman I am today. I have been blessed with family and friends who have supported me since the day I was born. I grew up in a family of four- my younger sister, mom, dad, and me. I grew up in a happy home where we spent, and still spend, time with each other playing games, going on outings, and eating dinner together every night. My parents worked hard to teach me proper morals and manners throughout my childhood. One they had constantly emphasized was to always be kind. I have taken this virtue and applied it to not only how I treat my family, but my friends, peers, and even strangers. I work hard on this to set a good example for my younger sister who has always looked up to me. Thanks to my family, I was able to excel in school, sports, and anything else I set my mind to. I am determined to repay them by spreading kindness in every aspect of my life, just as they raised me to do.

The Washington weather is typically known to be rainy, unpleasant, and cold. Some people may find this to be true, however, I find Kirkland to be one of the most beautiful places I have ever experienced. I have come to love taking walks in the morning and feeling the light mist fall upon my face and the soft blue dimming the sky. Aside from just being beautiful, Kirkland is vibrant. The bright orange sun sets while I sit on the grass at the Marina park. I eat a purple macaroon from Lady Yum as I watch a little boy fly a green kite as high as he can. I hear laughter shriek through the air as a red speedboat flies' children off a large, yellow innertube. A blue hummingbird glides from pink flower to the next pink flower in search of the sweetest golden nectar. If you look closely, Kirkland is full of the liveliest colors in the world. I have

learned to pay attention to find a beauty in everything and in the process, fell in love with the little town that taught me to.

Growing up in Kirkland taught me adventure, kindness, and to find beauty in the little things. I find myself to be extremely fortunate for the opportunity to grow up in this town. I will always remember the memories, lessons, and joy Kirkland granted me as I begin the next chapter of my life. Kirkland is not just a destination, but the place I will always call home.