

The new year of 2016 has brought with it many new and exciting opportunities for me. However, none of these is comparable with RYLA. Initially, six days with forty-eight young leaders, whom I had never met, seemed like a very scary prospect. All these doubts and fears immediately disappeared within an hour of my arrival at RYLA. This experience was full of countless highlights, which included the likes of life long friendships, intelligent conversations, high ropes activities, listening to inspirational community leaders, leadership training, formal dinner, etc.

Personally, I found the public speaking exercises with Kathryn Dalziel and Andrew Gunn, most helpful and significant. My fear of speaking to large crowds or in unfamiliar settings has haunted me throughout my life. With great advice from Kathryn and Andrew, as well as the support of fellow RYLA participants, I was very much at ease during this activity. When it was my turn to deliver a speech, I was able to overcome my usual sense of discomfort and clearly able to communicate my message to the room. The depth of knowledge and enhanced confidence that I gained from that day is aiding me in my current job, where I am presenting to schools, universities, and special interest groups.

RYLA to me was an unforgettable experience, not just an important event. To really know about it, one must do it!

Manas Pande