

# Kim James



**I'm a  
champion!**



For high energy, life,  
learning, leadership,  
and community.

Plus, we're a Y.  
We're the heart of the community.

YMCA

## Kim James

When Kim first joined the Y as a member over twenty years ago, she never expected that going to a gym would lead her to becoming a fitness leader, mentor and inspiration to countless people.

### *Getting a warm welcome*

Kim and her husband Bryan moved to Prince George from Kamloops just before she had her first baby. Because she was at the Y so often, Kim quickly began to make friends within the organization. Sharon Pepper, another Y Champion, convinced her to get her Fitness Instructor certification. Kim eagerly took on the challenge, and has been an active Y volunteer since the fall of 1992.

### *An extended family*

Less than a year after receiving her certification, the James family was hit with some devastating news: Kim was diagnosed with breast cancer in the summer of 1993. Although the information was disheartening, Kim maintained a positive outlook and continued to teach throughout the course of her chemotherapy treatments. When she had to take a month of radiation treatments in Vancouver, Kim recalls: "I got a banner signed by all of my ladies [from the Y] offering caring words and support." This was especially touching to Kim, as the only family members she had in Prince George were her husband and two sons, Adam and Aaron. Fortunately, Kim completed her treatment in the winter of that same year, and has been cancer-free ever since.

### *"I'll stay involved with the Y for as long as I can"*

Kim loves the Y for many reasons. She taught Aerobics class for fifteen years, and is now an instructor for Rep Reebok and Senior Fit. Kim says that at the Y, especially in her seniors' classes, exercise is almost secondary to the fun, social environment members enjoy. "Everyone is welcome, and it truly is a family place," she explains. She is a major advocate for the Y, involving herself as much with the culture as possible. A self-proclaimed 'Y volunteer for life', Kim is involved in the training and mentoring of new fitness leaders, and has been a Board member in the past. Kim believes that "it's important to maintain a balance in your life," and that both fitness and personal growth play a major part in upholding that balance. It's clear that Kim has found a way to successfully integrate each of these components into her routine. Even if someone is not a member of the Y, she encourages all people to get active; to "just do *something*". For Kim, that something is being a dedicated —and beloved — member and volunteer at the Y.