

Speech and Drama Alumni encourages others

Miriam Carr encourages everyone to find growth by leaving their comfort zone.

Miriam Carr completed her ASB Diploma in Teaching Speech and Drama in her final year at high school. She now is in her final year of a Bachelor of Communications at the University of Canterbury, with aspirations to work in consultancy and public relations. In her spare time, she has recently joined a small team of passionate individuals volunteering for a not-for-profit organisation called Neighbourhood. Together, they work to connect individuals through campaigns with the goal of creating long-lasting impact on Aotearoa, NZ.

Emma Carpenter reached out to her to ask her about her experience with Speech NZ, how she came to get started, what impact it has had on her life, and if she has any advice for others.

“When I was seven, I participated in a school play, and my mum thought that doing speech and drama would be beneficial to me.

I'm sure she had no idea how much of an impact it would have on me or how many incredible opportunities would arise as a result of going through the Speech NZ syllabus.

Del Costello, one of the production's organisers, ended up becoming my mentor though most of my Speech NZ journey! I finished my ASB diploma in teaching speech and drama in my final year of high school.”

What are some of the ways the programme has benefited you? What doors has it opened/what confidence has it given you?

“From sitting Grade One at the age of eight to completing my ASB diploma at the age of eighteen, the programme saw me through a tremendous amount of personal growth.

The programme challenged me over the years to learn to accept constructive criticism and to be confident when sharing my ideas with others. It influenced my decision to pursue a career in communications and has shaped who I am today.

Even after all these years, I still get a little nervous before I public speak but the knowledge and tools that I have developed through Speech NZ have given me the confidence to remain calm and be at my best when public speaking.

I find myself using these skills often whether that be presenting a campaign pitch at university or when I recently spoke at government house on behalf of gold recipients of the Duke of Edinburgh's award.

Aside from public speaking, I learnt a range of improvisation skills that have helped me to think on my feet during job interviews. I am about to start applying for graduate positions and have recently been attending various networking events for those in the communications industry. These events require me to introduce myself to industry professionals and my Speech NZ training always kicks in and helps me to feel more confident in myself.”



Miriam Carr

What advice would you have to others?

“To give it a go!

It's worth putting yourself outside of your comfort zone to grow yourself both professionally and personally.... even just one year of speech and drama could be life changing.

The people I have met, and the skills I have gained have proved to be invaluable. I will always be grateful to Speech New Zealand for playing such an important role in my life. It sounds cheesy, but without Speech NZ, I simply would not have the confidence or interpersonal skills that I have today.

Speech NZ has not only given me work related skills but has also allowed me to nurture a passion for the arts that has led me to many exciting opportunities.”

Congratulations on all your success Miriam – we could not be more thrilled with the role we have played in your developments!

If you have a success story you would like to share with us, or know of someone who does, please get in touch with the National Office at info@speechnz.co.nz or 04 498 9660

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