

What Makes West Auckland Great – By Nadia Jurasovic from Waitakere College

Born and raised in West Auckland, I have grown to have so much love for this place. All my grandparents immigrated here from Croatia, and set themselves up for a better life. West Auckland was known as the land of opportunities, and I think it still is. This place has always been home to my family, and it will continue to be. West Auckland has great community values and I have always felt a great sense of belonging to this tight knit group.

I admire the way the West Aucklanders can come together in times of need to support each other. This was evident during the recent floods when many people were badly affected by one of the worst weather events New Zealand has ever experienced. It warms my heart to see that people within this community from all walks of life can help and support each other in times of need. Everyone knows everyone, and accepts each other for who they are. It makes me proud to live in a community that does such things for each other and I feel like I am a part of something bigger than just myself. The diversity of our communities is another aspect of West Auckland that makes me proud. We all come from such different backgrounds, yet we can still come together as one unit despite our differences.

My school, Waitakere College, is a great example. An incredibly diverse school, Waitakere College has many different cultural groups that are all celebrated by everyone in the school. We come together to hold either cultural days or cultural weeks throughout the year to show our appreciation for each other. Personally this makes me feel a sense of belonging, not only in my school, but in West Auckland as a whole, and I think that many would say they feel the same way. I am grateful for everything West Auckland has been and will continue to be for me, and I wish to keep on growing in this place that is so special to me. This is why West Auckland is great.