## Camp fYrefly Ontario – Video Transcript

Chris: What I've learned most being here is kind of how to take pride in myself and how to be more comfortable in my own skin which was weird because I came here and I felt pretty, pretty darn comfortable but I saw so many amazing things like that we did a really cool swim and so many people were so like positive with their body it was absolutely amazing. I don't think that I

would have done that before any surgeries but I was like and it just made me love myself and everyone here so much more.

Connor: To be here and to try and capture any part of this camp and to put it into a classroom where I have students that are walking in and feeling that they can be themselves and don't have to put up walls. The one thing about

this camp is that a lot of those barriers just fall away.

Blair: One of the things that Camp fYrefly from what I have a witnessed so far is, really good at is providing a really intentionally designed experience.

Anya: For youth leaders and for other volunteers this is first of all for many of us at the camp we never had right, so for them to come in and share some of their learning that they've already had from maybe a few more years at the community to model that confidence, to model that sense of: I care less of what people think about me now, that is really, really different people to see and it builds their, their resiliency overall.

Keidis: Coming here I see everyone who the same with me both completely different stories I had no idea even existed and it just it changed me as a person because I'm seeing this being like I'm coming from this area, I'm being like I know I’m coming from a good upbringing, and you know my parents accepted me, you know, have a great like family and friendship and stuff like that and then I come here and it's like “yeah I don't know my parents and so yeah this happened in here” and I'm like how do I even like begin to put myself in that person's shoes and yet they can come here with a bigger smile on the face and be themselves it's so inspirational and amazing and just gives me so much hope and life and I love it so much.

Amanda: I didn't feel all the time that I was accepted or I was included and I had a very hard time finding people like me especially in a small town and I think this is a great camp for that to show these people these campers that they're not alone and they're loved and they're accepted and there are people just like them.

Ziysah: I hope they walk away with images and stories and faces of people that will come to them in difficult moments and inspire them to, to do the right thing for themselves and their communities.

Jessica: I think my biggest hope is that they even if they're going back to a community they still, it's still an uncomfortably situation, they know that there are people out there that are, that love and support them.

Jasper: The moment I come out as trans to them or the moment that they find other campers that are trans or queer, it's this immediate connection of oh my god I'm not alone you've gone through this too which is just which was one of the biggest impacts for me.

Beth: And so I think it's really important to be like an advocate in a place where a lot of the time there's barriers put up and it's something really close to my heart and I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else.

Pip: Camping for me wasn't an affirming experience growing up and I had a lot of anxiety even coming to Camp fYrefly for the first time, but being here has been really affirming and positive sort of place to learn the skills required for resilience and for really growing into healthy and strong not just youth but adults, this is a really great place to get that grounding.

Sage: I think other campers should come to fYrefly because it's, it's life-changing like to find a place so like out of the ordinarily comforting and the community and like everybody here is so accepting and loving of every

single person like, every single person is unique and they're made to feel that way.

Melissa: I think it's really important for medical professionals especially to be visible within the community somebody who identifies as a great person I think it's very very important to have that platform to make people feel safe going to medical professionals.

Raven: I don't just mean an area like this like in the space where it's like so open it and like caring and positive and people here are so patient and just kind, endlessly actually like know like extent like just it's look peaceful here and just pull that positive energy knows that I'm good

I was looking for.

Andre: So these youth have an opportunity to come to camp, deal with the difficult issues around stressors and risk-taking in a supportive environment with caring professionals, teachers, nurses, social workers, counselors, and others and then to really put an emphasis on, on making them agents, so they think about where are the supports and how do I build the supports and then how do I know that I'm doing that or what are the indicators of thriving. So a lot of these youth not only want to be agents in their own lives they want to advocate for other and it all starts with problem solving for themselves making their own lives better.