

A Lesson in Resiliency - Meet Evelyn, the 2023 Race4Chase Sportsmanship Award recipient from Westport Weston Family YMCA

What does resiliency look like as an 8-year-old? At the Westport Weston Family YMCA, it looks like Evelyn Sullivan.

WESTPORT, CT, UNITED STATES, March 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Evelyn was a leading participant in the 2023 Race4Chase (R4C) triathlon training program at the Westport Weston Family YMCA (WWFY). Sponsored by the CMAK Foundation, R4C honors Chase Michael Anthony Kowalski, who tragically lost his life in Sandy Hook. He loved the sport of triathlon and won the first youth triathlon he ever attempted. This youth triathlon summer training program focuses on providing kids with a safe, healthy, non-competitive environment to discover the sport. Head Coach Robin Myers worked diligently at R4C in 2023 with a group of 18 kids to strengthen their skills in swimming, biking, and running; while enjoying team building, learning about nutrition, and building a healthy lifestyle.

A member of the WWFY Water Rats Swim Team, Evelyn originally planned to attend Camp Mahackeno. When she heard about the R4C program, Evelyn was drawn to the idea of increasing her swimming skills and overall athletic performance. She didn't know much about the program, but she was excited to compete in her first triathlon.

Evelyn quickly became a leading force in the program. One of the youngest competitors, Coach Robin dubbed her the "Pocket Rocket" because she packed a ton of power into her performance. She put her heart and soul into training, earning the Chase Michael Anthony Kowalski Sportsmanship Award for her compassionate attitude and respect for teammates. In addition, she and her mother, Sarah, raised over \$700 dollars for the CMAK Foundation. On August 5, 2023, she headed to the Triathlon Finale in Southington, CT; the energy was palpable for the much-anticipated day, but unforeseen circumstances intervened. By the time Evelyn



Race 4 Chase at the Westport Weston Family YMCA

arrived at the Opening Ceremony, she was registering a fever of over 103F. She felt dreadful. After weeks of dedication and preparation, she was laid low by forces beyond her control. Evelyn was devastated and wanted to compete but after persistent parental persuasion she knew she had to listen to her body. She headed home, not in defeat but in resignation.

But the Pocket Rocket was not resigned for long. There was Race4Chase Triathlon in Newport, Rhode Island the following week. A few calls to CMAK later and Evelyn was heading to Newport to compete on her own – and arrived at a race cancelled due to rain. But the Newport competitors refused to back down. Evelyn and the other participants completed an unofficial triathlon on their own. Evelyn's mother said that "the whole day highlighted what community means as well as finishing something you set out to accomplish irrespective of all the obstacles that life can throw at you."

Through guidance from Coach Myers the R4C team mantra was "never back down, never give up". Clearly, Evelyn took that to heart. So, what does resiliency look like? It looks like Evelyn, a true competitor at age 8!

The Race4Chase program will return to the Westport Weston Family YMCA this summer and is offered at no cost to

participants. It runs from June 24-August 2, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM. To register or learn more, visit westporty.org/r4c. To further support this program, please consider a donation to the Camp Mahackeno Scholarship Fund by visiting westporty.org/give and designating "Race4Chase" in the comment box.



Race 4 Chase at the Westport Weston Family YMCA



Race 4 Chase at the Westport Weston Family YMCA

About Westport Weston Family YMCA
The Westport Weston Family YMCA is a cause-driven organization that strives to be a welcoming and supportive environment for all. Our purpose is to strengthen the foundations of the community through our actions and programs. We believe that to bring about meaningful change in individuals and communities, we must be focused and accountable. At the YMCA, we measure the success of our cause by how well we engage communities in our three areas of focus: Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility.



Race 4 Chase at the Westport Weston Family YMCA 4.

About the CMAK Foundation

The Kowalski family wanted to capture Chase's competitive spirit and vitality in creating a charity in his honor with a focus on health and wellness for children and their families. CMAK (Chase Michael Anthony Kowalski) Sandy Hook Memorial Foundation has pursued programs and initiatives that encourage personal improvement, healthy lifestyles and strong family and communities. Learn more at cmakfoundation.org.

Haley Behm

Westport Weston Family YMCA

2032268982 ext.

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/694238336>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.