

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to submit a nomination for Rayen Havioyak from Kugluktuk, Nunavut. Rayen is fifteen years old. I had the great privilege of teaching Rayen when I was in Kugluktuk and have since kept touch with him through his new foster parents. I think he is an excellent candidate for an Upinnaqtuq Award.

Rayen has always been a bright student with a sweet disposition. He has had to overcome a great deal of adversity in his short life. In my time in Kugluktuk, Rayen and I had a lot of conversations about what he wanted his life to look like and the changes he hoped to enact with regards to his future path in education and his community.

At the start of the 2020-21 school year, Rayen continued those reflections and could tell he wasn't being his best self. He decided to start making positive changes and advocating for himself. This involved reaching out to community members he knew could have a positive impact on his life and relying on the support of his teachers to help him make the necessary changes.

Rayen has completely changed his attitude towards school. Since entering high school, he knew he was having difficulties and wasn't enjoying school. He resolved this year to start going every day again and his grades have gone up as much as 15% in some classes! All his teachers have been impressed by his new attitude and agree that he has made marked improvement.

His school attendance at the beginning of the year was very poor, but he became a perfect attender for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. Rayen takes part in many after school activities (particularly sports including basketball, table tennis, soccer, and floor hockey) and is a wonderful leader in all these groups. He often chooses to support those that are not the best athletes and helps them achieve success. He is a role model for younger students in the gym as well. When playing goalie, he will let younger students get goals so that they feel successful and in basketball makes a point of setting other players up for good shots. This is perfectly in line with the sweet and caring disposition. He is patient and kind with these younger students, always proving himself to be a wonderful role model.

His school year started off with a lot of conflict, but rather than be discouraged by that, he made a huge effort to use proper conflict resolution. He has become a lot better at talking about what is happening, expressing his feelings, and both asking for and accepting help from others. Now when a problem arises, he can consistently handle it very calmly and responsibly.

I wholeheartedly recommend Rayen for an Upinnaqtuq Award. Please do not hesitate to ask me if you have any further questions.

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