

Shirley Temple (Member)



An enthusiastic member at NYSC, Shirley is an 84 year old woman who has stopped celebrating birthdays after 82. She is energetic with a great sense of humor, social charm, and distaste towards being seen as “old”. At 60 years of age, she learned about NYSC through a neighbour. Soon after, she signed up for Tai Chi and French classes, and has been active at the Centre ever since. As she approaches her 24th anniversary of becoming a NYSC member, she has acquired a breadth of experience in the many types of programs the Centre offers. She has formed lasting friendships with fellow participants and staff. A widow of 13 years, Shirley lives alone with no close family connections, but is not lonely or despondent. She attends classes at the Centre twice a week - sometimes more during special occasions (such as anniversary dinners). The Centre feels like a home away from home to her, and the people are like her family. She has even claimed a younger Centre volunteer as her adopted daughter.

A few of her favourite NYSC programs include folk dancing, tai chi, international belly dancing, and Spanish language classes. Attending programs regularly has enabled her to gain a multitude of skills and remain invigorated towards living, learning, and the new experiences that are still awaiting her. She travels to other countries often, sometimes with friends she has met through the Centre. She is fluent in French, and currently working on Spanish with the help of the Centre’s classes.

Shirley is computer-savvy. She enjoys browsing the web regularly and playing computer games such as spider solitaire. Among other things, the internet helps her stay up to date with her favourite sport

teams and their scores. She sometimes purchases event tickets online, but is reluctant to purchase goods online for fear that she will not be able to stay home during business hours in order to receive deliveries. She does not own a tablet or smartphone, and uses her phone only to text - rarely to call and never to access the internet. While others are glued to their phones in the subway, she prefers to read books. She has a Facebook account, but seldom uses it, describing it as “foolish”.

As a long-term member, Shirley is intimately familiar with the frustrations and inefficiencies in the current system for program and membership registration. The NYSC has enriched her life immensely, and she is passionate about expanding the Centre’s accessibility and outreach to others in the community. An online registration system would allow prospective participants such as herself to be notified of upcoming programs in the convenience and comfort of their homes. It would also minimize long, uncomfortable lineups on the first few days of program registrations, making the task more convenient and accessible to both registrants and volunteer registrars.