

My name is Lila Lamphere and I am super excited to share with you my stories, and experiences as an avid skier and adventurer.

I am a 14 year old and compete with the Smugglers Notch Ski Club in the U16 level of ski racing. Since the cut off for ski racing does not match up well for my October birthday, I am currently one of the youngest in my level. I enjoy this challenge, because it can push me to keep up with kids and sometimes even young adults that are years older and much more experienced than me. But sometimes this challenge, added on to the pressure everyone feels in ski racing messes with my head.

My mindset is often my biggest competition and opponent when I am racing. In the past I have suffered from stress, anxiety, and many panic attacks. But my family, friends, coaches, and community has helped me to overcome these difficulties over the years, and I strive to enforce positive thoughts to myself and people around me.

One of my favorite adventures I have had was last year on a powder day. Race training had ended early that day, and I was looking forward to freeskiing in the powder with my family. We had just gotten off the lift, and hiked a couple minutes up to a backcountry trail we had heard was good from friends. I remember following my dad down the snow filled woods trail going at what felt like mach ten. The trail started to get narrower and it steepened out but I kept on zooming down the trail with a smile on my face. Then suddenly, thinking about how freeskiing may be more fun than racing, I ran smack into a tree branch. But at the end of the day, that scar was definitely worth the powder turns.

My biggest accomplishment would not be getting top ten in a race, or winning a really hard lacrosse game even though I am proud of those things. My biggest accomplishments would probably be the times when I have proved myself wrong, and persisted through. A time that sticks out for me was at one of my last races of the season. That season was really rough for me because I was struggling with my determination and confidence in myself. I had skied cautiously, gotten disqualified, or fallen at every race that season. And going into that certain race I had felt exactly the same. That I was not good enough. But then, as I stepped into the gate, instead of letting my nerves spill over the top like usual, I took a minute to think. I thought of how lucky I was to have friends and family cheering and encouraging me that very second from the gate, I thought of how privileged I am to be able to compete in these races, and lastly I thought of how much the sport of skiing in general has impacted my life in so many amazingly good ways. And then I smiled, took a deep breath in, and pushed off from the gate completing my best race run ever. Even though it was not enough to win a medal, my biggest accomplishment that day, and maybe ever was overcoming myself.

I am so incredibly thankful to have amazing mentors in my life. My parents are always my biggest cheerleaders (and chauffeurs) . My coaches encourage me to enjoy what I do while learning important skills. And lastly, my friends pick me up when I'm feeling low, and always manage to make me laugh.

Ryan's core principles really resonate a lot with me because from 5th to 6th grade there was a poster with his values listed next to where I sat in science and math. His words have stuck with me since then. His principles make me feel like I can make an impact on the world and my community.

This scholarship would mean a lot to me because it gets pretty expensive to buy up to 4 pairs of high quality race skis a year plus equipment and protective gear. Also as the competition grows

race registration can cost 100s of dollars. I know my parents will continue to support me for whatever makes me happy, but this sport gets really expensive.

Lastly, I am looking forward to the uncertainty and excitement of my next years, whether it's continuing racing at higher levels, freeskiing all over the world, or maybe even just living in the moment, soaking in the sun, and being happy.

Thank you so much for reading this and I hope you consider me for the Flyin Ryan Scholarship.