

When I think about Sokol, I think about family. My family got me involved in Sokol and I am grateful for the opportunity to be involved in something that not only helps me develop a sound mind of community and culture, but also a sound body through physical fitness. I love being able to celebrate my heritage and know that there is a long line of relatives that have helped keep Sokol Milwaukee strong. It is also my "Sokol family" as we have grown together for many years as teammates, coaches and friends.

Sokol has given me the opportunity to celebrate my Czech heritage. I love learning how to bake traditional foods and have volunteered to help bake goods for fundraisers. Sokol Milwaukee has allowed me to be a participant and performer of the International Holiday Folk Fair held annually in Milwaukee. It is exciting to be part of an event that celebrates culture in so many ways and gives our community a chance to celebrate their heritage. It's exciting to see the "world" come together to share their dances, food, and crafts and to be part of the Czech group.

As a coach, getting to work with children of all ages is exciting. It allows me to interact with parents and children and helps me differentiate what I am teaching. The gymnasts that I coach at Sokol Milwaukee are excited to be part of our "family" and I love to see them get excited and jump in my arms when they master a skill. I love that they are excited to tell me about their lives and all their stories of the week between when I've seen them last. It helps me get to know them and develop class activities best suited for them. We have developed a relationship like a family because we meet every week all year. I love helping the little ones learn their new skills and seeing them develop over the year.

Sokol is family in so many ways. Not only do I have the opportunity to coach with my mom, aunt and cousins, but my great grandfather was also part of Sokol Milwaukee at one time. It allows us to celebrate our love of our heritage together. I have gained an extended family knowing the gymnasts, families, and other coaches and I call them my Sokol family. My Sokol Family, both American Sokol and Slovak Sokol has provided a strong foundation of culture, community service, and physical fitness in a unique and special way. They have provided me with the opportunity to grow "a sound mind in a sound body".

