

**Boston Board meeting
19 September 2004
Executive Report**

Summer

For mentoring programs everywhere, the summer is a time when the staff can kick back and take a break before the rush of recruiting, screening, training, and the rest hits with the start of school in the fall. Not so for DREAM. With the presence of the camp and the summer interns, the summer is as busy as any other time of the year.

Camp

The first year of camp was a fantastic experience for DREAM. Four groups of eight to twelve children came to the camp for three days of tent camp, outdoor experiences, and fun. Two volunteers, one a registered nurse, came to Vermont to help run the camp for the summer. We also had the support of numerous other volunteers including Bree and Alecia, who we all know from having previously applied for the Assistant Director position. Jesse, Mike, and Elana filled out the remainder of the camp staff.

The other component of camp operations this summer was the development of the property. With the help of two AmeriCorps*NCCC crews who lived at the camp for a combined total of nine weeks, we built trails, tent platforms, a storage shed, a campfire bowl, and generally made the property more suitable as a camp facility in a variety of inexpensive and non-permit-requiring ways.

At the same time, the permit process marched on, primarily with the Town of Fletcher's Development Review Board. In June, the review board closed the meeting to new information and had sixty days to make its decision. August came around, and the chair of the board called to inform us that our permit application had been denied by a vote of three to two. Jesse and I sat down with the chair, and Jesse had a phone conversation with one of the other members of the board. Essentially, the decision came down to concern about the waterfront, and the application was rejected outright instead of having conditions placed on it largely because they ran out of time in their deliberations. Of the five board members, one was solidly against the application, one was solidly for the application, and three were undecided. The board is open to receiving a re-application from us. If we can suggest conditions that meet the boards needs, we have a good chance of approval. We are attending the board meeting at the end of this month to get a better sense from the entire board of what conditions would meet their needs and plan to reapply at the following meeting in September.

Interns

This summer, we had five interns and an intern coordinator working at program sites around the state. The interns each had positive experiences and did great work with the children. The intern coordinator is an important position that we plan to use in the future. We were also largely successful in our efforts to network and support the interns more effectively than we did last summer.

Office

To meet the needs of our growing staff, we needed a bigger office, so we made it bigger! The Winooski Housing Authority generously paid for the expansion into what had been the boy's bathroom. The renovations displaced us for a few weeks, but we are set up now and it looks great. The extra space makes a huge difference.

The Coming Year

Staff

As of mid-August, DREAM has four new AmeriCorps*VISTA members. Jen Lazar and Chad Butt are serving as Program Directors, helping Mike to initiate and support the mentoring program. Jillian York is serving as our Development Director, working with me to raise money. David Anderson is serving as Co-Camp Director and will take over for Jesse when he leaves in January. They are all a wonderful presence in the office and have been doing a great job so far.

Programs

We are in the process of starting two new programs. The first is a program that has been a while coming between students at Castleton State College and children living at Forest Park in Rutland. The other will work with Champlain College students and children living in Birchwood Mobile Home Park in Milton. The Champlain College program has a lot of momentum of momentum already. The Castleton State program is a little slower to get started, but there is more pressure on us to get it started this semester, since we received grant funding to start the program last year.

2004 Budget

I also wanted to give a rough sketch of changes to the budget for 2004. The previous projections that I provided the board showed \$210,000 in revenue and \$180,000 in expenses, for a \$30,000 surplus for the year. My current projections show \$185,000 in revenue and \$160,000 in expense, for a \$25,000 surplus.

The changes in revenue result from not receiving any funding from the Vermont State Housing Authority (projected at \$8,000), not receiving funding from the Chittenden Housing Corporation (projected at \$15,000), and not spending all of the money from the Health and Human Services grant (about \$5,000 unspent). The changes in expenses result from not hiring an Assistant Director, having made high-end estimates on all expenses, and not spending all of the money from the Health and Human Services grant.

2005 Budget

The largest section of each year's expense budget is personnel, so the 2005 budget will be largely in flux until we know when we will be hiring for which positions. That said, I have put together some preliminary numbers and here is a rough sketch of what we are looking at for 2005.

As a high-end estimate, I assumed that we would hire the Executive Director in March at \$40,000, a new Program Director in June at \$35,000 and a Development Director in September at \$35,000. I also assumed that Mike and I would work through until June on a full-time basis and to September on a part-time basis. Based on these assumptions, DREAM will have around \$235,000 in expenses in 2005.

As a low-end estimate, I assumed that we would hire the Executive Director in June at \$35,000, a new Program Director in September at \$30,000, and a new Development Director in September at \$30,000. I maintained the same assumption for Mike and I. Based on these assumptions, DREAM will have \$210,000 in expenses in 2005.

On the revenue side, almost all of our funding sources carry over from 2004. The key differences are that we lose the \$47,000 Health and Human Services grant, but we will have new revenue in support of the Milton program and the Chittenden Housing Corporation should come through for \$15,000. The result is that we have anticipated funding streams at this point that remain level at around \$185,000.

This level of revenue leaves us with a \$50,000 shortfall in the expensive scenario and a \$25,000 shortfall in the cheap scenario. The majority of our funding is covered through anticipated revenues, but Jill and I must work to identify additional funding sources.