

Executive Report  
The DREAM Program, Inc.  
Board Meeting  
January 22, 2004

In addition to this Executive Report, please pay close attention to Attachments A and D from the monitoring reports, which we will discuss in my session during “snack time.”

With the exception of some much-needed days off around the holidays, DREAM has been busy since the last board meeting. All three sections of the office—program, camp, and development—have been active.

All of the programs held culminating events at the end of their semesters. The events held were a trip to Boston, two trips to Killington, ice skating, roller skating, a Thanksgiving dinner, a talent show, and bowling. Several of the trips used DREAM’s bus, which made for a few long weekends for Mike. The programs have also begun to prepare for the upcoming semester, with the Champlain program recruiting more mentors, the St. Michael’s program already planning a retreat, and the Dartmouth programs having had their first program this past Friday. The UVM program is on track to undertake a high adventure program this summer, with their eyes still set on Alaska. They have put together a fundraising plan and have received encouraging news that the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation may be able to contribute significant funding, as several of the teenagers participate in VSAC programs.

The mentors have also been filling out evaluation surveys using a new online survey tool to which we are now subscribing. We have been encouraged by the success that we have had so far. The survey results that relate directly to Ends Policy can be found in Attachment G of this meeting’s monitoring reports.

The camp has also been active, with planning for Winter Adventure Camp well underway. Winter Adventure Camp will take place over the next several weekends as one program at a time has mentors and children up at the camp for an overnight camping session. DREAM received a grant from Casey Family Services, which has just moved into an office in Winooski, that we used to buy a large canvas tent, with the capacity for a woodstove, and other winter supplies such as snowshoes and sleeping bags. This past Friday, the entire staff spent the day at camp, hauling hay bales, bricks, a woodstove, and other equipment needed for Winter Adventure Camp. We spent the night at camp to see what the kids are in for and discovered that the new tent and sleeping bags work wonders.

DREAM also completed its general appeal and alumni appeal, exceeding goals in both cases (\$25,000 for the general appeal and \$9,000 for the alumni appeal). We also received \$12,000 from the Byrne Foundation and \$500 from Chittenden Bank, both for operating expenses. Since returning to the office in January, our Development Director, Jill, has been a grant-writing machine, pumping out four grants so far, with another three grants due at the beginning of February. The grants have largely focused on the camp and other summer activities, with a couple directed at general program expenses.

Another potentially exciting development is that VSAC has invited us to participate in a conversation about joining in on their federal GEAR UP grant application. The grant is for several million dollars over six years, and VSAC is nearly guaranteed to receive the grant. On January 31, we will meet with the VSAC grant writers to begin to discuss if it makes sense for us to be included in the grant. The GEAR UP program's focus is on preparing low-income students for college. It serves the same population as DREAM, and the fact that DREAM brings students to the college campus every week makes it a natural fit. VSAC is also looking to expand its outreach efforts, particularly in communities like the ones DREAM serves, which is a large part of the reason that they came to us.

The Executive Director recruitment process has also been an area of focus for the office, and I am looking forward to having a decision solidly in place so that everyone can look ahead with certainty.