

The DREAM Program, Inc.

Executive Director's Report; January 2006

Camp is gearing up for Winter Adventure Camp. There have been several work days to get the property ready and this past weekend (Jan 7 and 8) over 20 DREAM staff, mentors and supporters descended upon the property. Completed were the A-frames for the snow shelters, the tents were set-up and all of the necessary equipment was hauled to the central camp site. Starting at the end of January and continuing through March, Winter Adventure Camp or WAC, will occur each weekend. We have also had success with using the camp truck donated to DREAM by the Winooski Housing Authority to keep our camp road plowed.

Tuft's "DREAM" program; I would like to continue to move forward in talking with Sonja about supporting her mentoring program at Tuft's. What I propose is that we offer as much support as possible (forms, training modules, online resources, and basic organizational assistance) without overreaching what DREAM staff can do for a program in Boston. The program would be an affiliation and we will create a Memorandum of Understanding as to the roles and responsibilities of the office and Tuft's. The name of DREAM and the gear would not be offered at this point. Camp and other DREAM property would also be made available (possible rent?) to Tuft's for retreats, transportation, etc. Sonja will be in Vermont throughout January and I hope to sit down with her to move forward with this idea.

After some initial research and discussion with Staff I would like to recommend that we take the extra \$50,000 that is currently in our bank account and use it to purchase a 6 month CD from Chittenden Bank. The current CD sale is 4.5%. This will allow DREAM to see some interest from our investment (\$2,250 annualized) and to also take advantage of the fact that interest rates are expected to rise over the next year. In July, when the term of the CD is over we can then choose to purchase another CD at a higher rate of return or look to place the money in a longer-term investment. The purpose of the money should be to act as seed money for Camp's eventual Capital Campaign that is likely to occur in 2007 as we look to raise the funds necessary to construct the dining hall and other facilities at Camp.

The entire DREAM staff had a wonderful week off between Christmas and New Years Day. Everyone was able to travel home for the holidays and come back refreshed from some much needed time off. As for myself I spent much of the time off renovating the spare room in our house into a nursery for the child Vicki and I are expecting in May. We also discovered that we are expecting a little girl!

Over the past month we have also been very active in making new contacts and creating new partnerships with various organizations. To start we have met again with VSAC and not only have we discussed how we will utilize the funding they have already promised, but we are working together on another grant that will utilize technology to help our children improve their school performance. This is a new

project the Champlain Mentors are excited about developing and getting off the ground.

DREAM is also beginning collaboration with the Northern New England Tradeswomen (NNETW). During the Camp sessions of 2006 one of the weeks will be an all-girls week that will concentrate on team building, skill building, and a construction project. NNETW will consult with us to create this program and to help us secure a tradeswomen who is skilled in carpentry and in teaching young women. We are very excited about this project and this new partnership. Other meetings that we have had over the past month include a meeting with Curtland Fields and Anne Dinnse from the Turrell Fund and a sit down with Nancy Menard and Peigi Huesby from the Department of Health to discuss our program and where we may be able to collaborate in the future.

Finally, the 2005 Annual Appeal has drawn to a close, though we are still receiving some donations. The outcome...

WE DID IT! Not only did we hit the internal goal of \$20,000 we went over the Annual Appeal goal of \$25,000. In fact we are closing in on \$26,000. Daniel Shearer and everyone on staff worked very hard to make this happen, and deserve a huge thank you for their perseverance and dedication to DREAM.

Speaking of Staff, over the past three weeks I have had the opportunity to sit down individually with each staff member to check-in with them about their current challenges, work load, and future goals. I am very excited to report that everyone is enjoying their work and feeling that they are accomplishing their objectives for the year. Some concerns have been raised regarding workloads and the opportunity to do projects outside of their specific job descriptions. Over the next months some shifting will occur so that individuals will have more free time to tackle new projects that they were excited about working on in coming to DREAM.