



The DREAM Program, Inc.
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July 14, 2006

Birchwood DREAM Update June 2006

June kicked off an amazing Summer of adventures for the children of Birchwood as summertime DREAM and Camp DREAM started up over the past four weeks. The additions made on the Beautification Day in April look amazing, and the flowers planted are in full bloom!

DREAM Summer Interns (affectionately called “D-Unit”) have been working in teams – a northern team consisting of five interns working with the Franklin Square, Elm Street, Franklin Street, Birchwood, and Highgate communities and a southern team of two interns working with the Forest Park, Armory Square, Northwoods, and Hollow Drive communities. Birchwood DREAM’s very own Nicole Walsh is ecstatic to be able to expand upon her connections with the community over the course of the summer.

D-Unitification (a.k.a. “orientation” for the interns) took place at Camp DREAM during the first week of June and the summer began the following week with introductory barbeques. DREAM staff and interns spent a day in Birchwood, going door-to-door introducing themselves to DREAM families, meeting new families, discussing the summer, and inviting families to come outside to a community BBQ. It was an amazing first two weeks.

During these first two weeks of orientation and introductions DREAM staff ran two sessions of diversity training for this year’s summer interns. The first of these sessions was designed to build a common vocabulary amongst DREAM’s summer staff – discuss past experiences with stereotyping, different manifestations of prejudice, and the intersection of class-ism, racism, and cultural relativity as it pertains to their work with DREAM communities.

For the second of these workshops, Hussein Liban, African Refugee Case Worker, spent lunchtime with DREAM staff and interns discussing the resettlement of African refugees in Chittenden County. The conversation was structured to address communication with parents, different disciplinary strategies, group building, and effective trip planning. Hussein helped contextualize a lot of the conversation, both historically and culturally.

The Summer Interns have been splitting the children of Birchwood into small groups based on age, interests, and/or activities, allowing them to work with the children in small clusters to build connections between children on a peer-to-peer level that will facilitate a growing sense of community. Wanting to involve as many kids as possible during activities, however, the interns have changed their approach and will be planning multiple activities that can be run simultaneously for different age groups—still building peer-to-peer connections, but getting as many kids as possible motivated by summer programming.



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Nicole and the Northern team have spent the summer so far running a series of science experiments and crazy water themed events. They began their summer programming with Summerpalooza in each of the northern communities for a day, complete with slip 'n slides, water balloon tosses, and more! These opening events successfully brought the community kids out in full force and set the tone for an enjoyable, relaxed summer. The following week the interns turned to building tin foil boats (seeing who can float the most paperclips) and painting activities, bringing the children down to a more focused, goal based level of programming. On her solo day with the Birchwood youth, Nicole embarked on the first of her series of mini-trips by bringing the younger girls to the ECHO Center where they explored the new Grossology exhibit for hours and spent quite some time enjoying the turtles, despite the power outage!

The last week of June saw the first DREAM trip of the summer! DREAMers from 5 DREAM communities met up to spend the day in Smuggler's Notch. 12 boys, ages 8 and 9, headed out to the mountainside for a day of hiking, bouldering, and games with friends from other DREAM communities. The hike up the notch was led by the children who worked as a group to navigate the trail successfully, even once it began raining! The summer interns were glad to offer a day of programming that maximized the potential for children to develop positive leadership skills and work on problem solving in a team setting.

To build off of these themes, DREAM has also joined forces with another summer intern, Justine Modica, a DREAM mentor from Dartmouth College. Justine will be organizing regular hiking, boating, and outdoors challenge trips for older DREAM youth throughout the summer. Justine will begin running outdoors programming in the first week of July and will continue until the end of the summer. A partnership with Dartmouth's community service program, the Tucker Foundation, made it possible for DREAM to embark into more in-depth and regular outdoors experiences with DREAMers.

The last week of June kicked off this season of Camp DREAM with a 5-day session of boys ages 10-11. Boys from Birchwood met up with DREAMers from the Elm Street, Franklin Square, Franklin Street, and Forest Park communities for a week of exploration, starting with Camp's newly completed main road. Despite the rainy weather the group took to Camp, designing campsite seals and flags, playing capture the flag, mountain biking, and exploring the woods in which most of these campers have now spent three consecutive summers!

We are also happy to share with you an overview of the past year! A physical copy of our Annual Report will be mailed to you shortly, but in the meantime, feel free to view it online:

Access DREAM's 2005 Annual Report from our website:

http://www.dreamprogram.org/documents/Annual_Reports/ Web/AnnualReport_2005.pdf



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Also remember, you can always look back at past monthly reports or other programs' reports by going to:

http://www.dreamprogram.org/documents/Local_Programs/Program_Reports/Monthly_Reports/_Web/.

And please, do not hesitate to contact us with questions or ideas!

Keep DREAMing!

Kristin Burdge

Programs Liaison

www.dreamprogram.org