



The DREAM Program, Inc.  
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February 15th, 2007

## Elm Street DREAM Update January 2007

Greetings from DREAM! Here is a summary of the exciting events and developments that occurred during January. Mentors got back on campus in mid-January and were able to start up DREAM for the spring semester towards the end of the month, much to the delight of some very antsy Elm Street DREAMers who were anxious to be done with winter break!

Highlights from this month include:

- More High Adventure planning, and
- The First Friday of the Spring Semester!

**Fridays:** The core of DREAM happens every Friday when DREAM mentors meet with their partners in group and one-on-one settings. The meetings occur on college campuses, onsite at the children's homes, and at spaces around the community. This month, Friday program included:

- The first Friday back, with one-on-one time for everyone! The energy as everyone milled around the cars during pickup time at Elm Street was contagious, and started the semester off with a sense of excitement.

**LABs/Parental Involvement:** Parents, mentors, and other community members frequently connect to learn more about each other, build trust, discuss ideas and issues, and build stronger lines of communication. This month:

- Mentors continued to touch base with families through door-to-door flyering!

**Fundraisers:** Fundraisers are an important component of the program. They help build ownership amongst the children in the running of the program, and also provide a fun forum to build leadership and organizational skills. This month:

- Northwoods/Hollow Drive mentors took tickets for a local film festival bringing a couple hundred dollars in to DREAM in exchange for a few hours' work.
- Talk of new fundraisers in the upcoming months has been underway, but no decisions or dates have been set yet.

**Trips/High Adventures:** Perhaps the most exciting components of DREAM are its end of semester trips and summer adventure programs. Children, mentors, parents, and staff look forward to these where the DREAM bus comes out of hibernation and the full group has new experiences together. This month,

- A High Adventure reunion is still on people's minds, and everyone is checking their calendars for a good date to reminisce, share the many photos, and dream bigger for the future...



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**Capacity Building:** The mentors are constantly working on bringing new children into the program and improving the program. Such initiatives this month have included:

- Welcoming the new mentors to shadow a Friday at both the Armory Square and Northwoods/Hollow Drive Programs at Dartmouth, allowing them to choose the Program that best fits their interests and skill sets.
- Co-chairs are working to involve more of Northwoods' and Hollow Drive's children in the program by communicating more with new families in the communities and several new kids are thinking of joining.

**Mentor Training:** The DREAM Central Office is in close communication with the mentors as to their individual and group needs. The Office continues to develop training modules to fit the mentors' needs, and encourages them to go on retreats and have other bonding events – it is important for the children and mentors to have a tight and energized mentor group. This month, training activities included:

- A mandatory training session run by veteran Dartmouth mentors for all new mentors to discuss DREAM's Mentor Boundaries, Rules and Guidelines as well as Child Abuse policies and participate in some role playing activities to help positively direct their future interactions with mentees.
- Group mentor activities post DREAM time to guide the mentor group to being more cohesive and better able to model positive peer interactions.

**Alumni Involvement:** DREAM prides itself on its dedicated alumni network (graduated mentors). This network leverages its growing financial and knowledge resources for the program and children. This month, the alumni network:

- Blasted past their \$7,000 appeal goal, and the total is still rising! Check their webpage for the most up-to-date numbers: <http://www.dreamprogram.org/alumni/alumniappeal.htm>.

**Camp Specific:** DREAM's beautiful 50 acre camp is a resource for everyone involved in the program. It is equipped to run program and overnights all seasons, in addition to residential camp in the summer. Activities at camp this month included:

- Winter Adventure Camp, safari themed! Three mentors and ten kids (everyone ten and up was invited) went on a morning excursion visioning the future of Camp, and displayed a ton of comfortability eating new foods and local vegetables. The older boys (Camp veterans of several years now) exhibited a significant sense of ownership of the Camp property and built one of the largest campfires Camp has seen complete with roasted apples on a stick—a huge healthy hit! The crew was also lucky enough to hear the camp legend thanks to a surprise visit from former Camp Director Jesse Foote and DREAM founders Mike Foote and Jon Potter. It was one seriously memorable weekend, complete with 'rose and thorns' from everyone led by the mentors before departing.



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- This year's new staff were a huge hit with these Camp DREAM veteran campers! At the same time Camp Staff is writing grants and contacting personal connections to match a grant from the Stryker Foundation that should create an endowment to fund WAC in the years to come.

#### Other:

- D-Unit (summer interns): DREAM Inc. has been holding interviews for this summer's D-Unit Interns for all of DREAM's communities, including Armory Square. Hiring decisions will be made by the second week of February and we will be excited to announce this summer's intern team and begin plans for the upcoming summertime of DREAMing—application numbers are higher than ever before, with at least one applicant for each community!
- Annual Appeal: The Annual Appeal blew past it's \$45,000 goal thanks to Daniel's hard work and the many gifts, new and increased, that matched a donation from an alumni mentor's family foundation. You can check out the continuing progress on the website here: [http://www.dreamprogram.org/support/appeal\\_inc.htm](http://www.dreamprogram.org/support/appeal_inc.htm).
- DREAM Expansion: Work on the expansion of the DREAM Central Office continues with a search for office space in one or two locations in the Chittenden County area large enough to fit around twenty staff! Job descriptions and orientation and training plans are also in the works. Descriptions will be posted and advertised Starting March 12<sup>th</sup>, and the job titles will be released on the website in early March.
- New Program(s)! at Middlebury and a teen center: The initial stages of research into beginning a Local Program with Middlebury are underway, as well as investigation into a new idea of starting a program with a Chittenden County teen center as the mentors. Any interested Middlebury students or information about communities in the area that could benefit from a DREAM Program should be directed our way!

Have a happy new year! And please, do not hesitate to contact us with questions or ideas. Past monthly reports can always be accessed at:

[http://www.dreamprogram.org/documents/Local\\_Programs/Program\\_Reports/Monthly\\_Reports/Web/](http://www.dreamprogram.org/documents/Local_Programs/Program_Reports/Monthly_Reports/Web/)

Keep DREAMing!

Kristin Burdge  
Programs Director/A\*VISTA