

Adventures

Inspiring Leadership & Confidence Through Outdoor Adventure

Annual Social Justice Seminar a Success



Milton Reynolds and students construct blue bird boxes for a habitat project.

What do students from Washington, D.C., Jackson Hole and Ethete, Wyoming have in common? As it turns out, they discovered we all have a lot in common. In August, City Kids Wilderness Project members joined with local teens and Wyoming Indian High School (WIHS) students for friendship, outdoor adventures and an exploration of civic responsibility. City Kids hosted a five-day, multi-faceted seminar in conjunction with the international organization, Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO).

FHAO is dedicated to the intellectual, moral and ethical development of young people; goals that City Kids has long embraced. Focusing on the consequences of racism, anti-Semitism, and violence, Facing History instructors encourage children to think critically about these issues. And what's more, to consider how each citizen, of any generation or nation, can make social and moral choices that will better our world.

Each day started with a delicious breakfast and included horseback riding, educational games and discussions led by Facing History instructor, Milton Reynolds. Although everyone's differences were pronounced at the beginning of the seminar, by the fifth day it

was the similarities of all human kind that became most apparent. Jen Spencer, City Kids instructor remarked, "It was great to see all of these teenagers, from such different walks of life, drawing conclusions about wrongs done in history and how to collectively learn from these events."

"We think the neatest part was the video about DNA and people's race. We were amazed how close the DNA was between people who looked very different from each other. The students in the video thought their DNA would be most like those of their race, but that wasn't true. This showed how much we all have in common and how little difference there is between us all," said John Redman and Garen Sankey of WIHS.

The seminar curriculum—entitled *Be the Change: Upstanders for Human Rights*—profiled the stories of five extraordinary men and women who have made a positive difference in the world. An "upstander" is someone who does not simply stand by in the face of injustice, but understands that each one of us can make a difference. The group delved into the influences, inspirations and motivations that led the five upstanders to take action on behalf of others.

"This year's camp was a great success," says Colleen Whalen, WIHS teacher. "It was a wonderful opportunity to put Facing History concepts in action with students from other places. Students gained experience in the outdoors while sharing their culture and learning about other cultures. We feel lucky to be included in this educational experience in the beautiful Jackson Hole area."

Intermingling fun, education and personal responsibility through programs such as Facing History and Ourselves, City Kids continues to promote social action, tolerance and an understanding of diversity. Educational programs such as this give teens a chance to appreciate human diversity and the never ending opportunities to promote good—all in an interactive format surrounded by an inspiring setting.

Thank you 2007 supporters!

- **92% of all donations directly support youth programs.**
- **78% of donations to City Kids are made by individuals.**
- **1% of our income comes from government sources.**
- **All of our programs are offered free of charge to deserving youth.**





Leadership Experience Team ready to attack the Snake River white water- "Big Kahuna".

“Camp is a very safe environment. It allows students to be kids. It frees them of their tight barriers created by *what’s cool* in the city.”



Lindsay and Dwight sharing some fun.

Welcome Our New Director

City Kids is thrilled to introduce our new Director of Outdoor Services: Lindsay Fallon. Lindsay is a graduate of Colorado College where she earned a B.S. in Biology. She has extensive outdoor skills and a passion for uniting youth with enriching life experiences. Lindsay completed two summers with City Kids and is excited about her new full time position creating after school and weekend programs for City Kids in Washington, D.C.

Q: Lindsay, what aspect of your position with City Kids are you most excited about?

A: I am really excited about being close to the kids. I will get to see them on a regular basis and together we will explore the urban green spaces and the surrounding rural beauty of greater Washington, D.C.

Q: What are your first-year goals for the program?

A: A personal goal is to get to know the kids better. To do this we have scheduled more weekend day trips and informal gatherings. I also want to work closely with our partners to increase the number of applicants to City Kids.

Q: From your observations of the D.C. environment, what do you feel is the most valuable opportunity that City Kids offers to underserved youth?

A: A connection with nature and time away from negative social pressures and danger filled streets.

Q: What do you think the children themselves value most about their City Kids experience?

A: The kids value many experiences at City Kids, but I think the top two are getting out of the city and partaking in adventure activities they have no access to otherwise. They also create strong friendships that would not occur without City Kids.

Q: What is our relationship with D.C. Preparatory Academy and how has it grown?

A: D.C. Prep is one of our partner organizations in D.C., in other words, this is a school we work closely with to recruit new kids and keep our older kids coming back. I am fortunate this year to have my office in one of their buildings. It is terrific being part of the school environment and around children all day. As an added bonus I am teaching an enrichment program at D.C. Prep called *City Kids Club* during a three-hour time block on Friday afternoons. I am working with younger students. I hope to spark an interest in the outdoors. We have explored nature at the zoo, the Anacostia River, and Rock Creek Park. Later in the year we will plant trees, help rehabilitate a marsh and we will be removing invasive plants. The students have really been inspired to improve their local habitats.

Q: What impact does the summer experience out west have on kids from D.C.?

A: The dramatic landscape of Jackson Hole has an immense impact on students. Our outdoor adventures allow students to grow outside of the classroom. They learn about themselves and how to deal with challenging situations, which helps them gain confidence. Camp is a very safe environment. It allows students to be kids. It frees them of their tight barriers created by *what’s cool* in the city. Not only do the outdoor adventures change students forever, being in Wyoming exposes kids to another way of life.

Q: Lindsay, I know you love to fly fish. What are some of your other favorite outdoor activities and what positives do you think they bring to our program?

A: My three passions are skiing, hiking and any water sport. With the vast amount of waterways in the D.C. area, water sports are a very accessible activity. Kayaking, canoeing or rafting are always fun and create a love for water. Whether alone in a boat or with a partner, these sports make teens communicate and collaborate to reach a common goal. Hiking is also a wonderful activity for all ages and abilities. There is beautiful countryside in Maryland and Virginia and I hope to integrate hiking into the school year events. Skiing is the toughest to implement, but snowshoeing is simple and gets kids outside and active. That’s a positive.

Leadership Lessons from History

City Kids' Job Training Program (JTP) kicked off the autumn season with a weekend leadership seminar conducted by volunteer, Tim Quinn, at Gettysburg National Park. Quinn is the Deputy Director for Management and Chief of Staff at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C. The seminar developed by Quinn explored the historic events of the Battle of Gettysburg in context with the leadership traits demonstrated on the battlefield. For example, students developed personal vision statements, delved into discussions of courage and compassion, and examined the outcomes of decisions that employed collaboration, flexibility, and innovation.

The Battle of Gettysburg was a turning point in our nation's history. Our teen leaders are at a turning point in their lives as they transition into adulthood. As mentors to their younger counterparts, it is crucial for them to understand the power of leadership, to learn to harness that power and to utilize their strengths to affect positive change. Quinn staged each of the six skill sets at a different battle site. At each site students analyzed an outcome in relation to a leadership skill. Lively discussions were followed by contemplative self-reflection.

The group's first stop was the site of President Lincoln's delivery of the Gettysburg Address. Sitting adjacent to the monument, each student read and listened to Lincoln's speech as it played over portable iPod speakers. The speech was Lincoln's vision. Skill number one, all leaders must have a vision. With the experience fresh in their minds, students wrote their personal vision statement.

As students combed the battlefields and explored monuments they discussed the importance of good leadership. Recurring themes such as good decision-making were related back to experiences at City Kids Camp in Wyoming.

This small intimate group of future leaders allowed everyone to voice their opinions and deliberate peacefully. One proud student shared, "We went to Gettysburg and learned a lot about the war and how intelligent people make decisions. Now we are more intelligent."

Back at the weekend's home base, Thorpe-Wood, a retreat center in the Catoctin Mountains, students enjoyed memories, hot chocolate and laughter around the campfire, anticipating the next leadership seminar in December and reminiscing about their shared experiences in Wyoming.

Editor's note: Our sincere thanks to Tim Quinn for this special educational event. Each teen completed the weekend with a deeper understanding of their personal strengths and future goals.



Volunteer Tim Quinn with student Maria Ben-nough at Gettysburg National Park.



"We went to Gettysburg and learned a lot about the war and how intelligent people make decisions. Now we are more intelligent."



Cornelia Franklin and her mom enjoying the adventure together.

AIDS Walk Washington: Team City Kids

Lindsay Fallon rallied the troops to create the first ever City Kids Team to participate in AIDS Walk Washington. The 18 member team was comprised of students and their family members. After experiencing the travails of Rocky Mountain hiking, one student commented that five paved kilometers wasn't so long. Everyone enjoyed a celebratory lunch afterwards.

City Kids encourages students to participate in community events and public service. During the summer months, City Kids students and staff contributed 200 hours to Habitat for Humanity.

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City Kids Wilderness Project

Our founders, Randy & Nicole Luskey, envisioned a special place where underserved children from inner city Washington, D.C. could discover their true potential through the wonders and challenges of the great outdoors. From their vision, City Kids was born and a summer camp was established at the Broken Arrow Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Each summer 65 children and teens venture to Wyoming to confront adversity in the wilderness and within themselves. The journey continues back home in D.C. with engaging enrichment programs throughout the year. The City Kids experience strengthens personal resolve so children, regardless of race, ethnicity or family income may reach their goal of a happy, healthy and productive life.

 A Catalogue for Philanthropy Charity

Being the Best They Can Be

Students who join City Kids agree to abide by a code of conduct or *Honor Code*. The code promotes solid social values which help build a community that is safe, fair, and fun for every member. Each summer, the staff selects two students as Honor Campers. They exemplify these values and they put them into action every day.

Malaika Ismail graduated from D.C. Preparatory Academy and is a 9th grader at Holton-Arms School in Bethesda, Maryland. With her dedication and inner strength Malaika achieved all of her goals. She developed strong relationships with her fellow campers and became a trusted leader within the group. Malaika wrote, "We did a lot of exercises that needed teamwork and I loved being part of a team." Malaika is an inspiration to her peers.

Treyvon Curtis attends The SEED Public Charter School. This was his first year at City Kids. Treyvon adapted to every new situation. He pushed himself through his fears. Even when the hikes were hard or the days seemed long, Treyvon was able to find the strength within himself to keep going. He was always on time, respectful, and organized—a natural leader amongst his peers.

City Kids is lucky to have great students such as Malaika and Treyvon. We look forward to watching them mature into strong leaders.



Treyvon looking like a super star.



Malaika and her pal Chanel Franklin asleep in the van after a long day of canoeing in Grand Teton National Park.