

Looking Forward to Camp

By Sarah Murphy

Danny is a 12-year-old boy going on his fourth year at Camp Homeward Bound, the Coalition's summer sleep away camp for homeless and low-income children. I interviewed him shortly before the end of the school year. Like most kids, he was itching for the summer, and he couldn't wait to get back to camp.

Coalition: What made you first want to go to CHB?

Danny: My mom. She heard about it in the shelter where we were staying. A bunch of kids from there were going.

Coalition: Camp is located upstate at Harriman State Park – away from the city. When you got off of the bus the first time, what was going through your mind?

Danny: I always wanted to see what it was like upstate. It was definitely NOT the city.

I thought something would come out and attack me, but it looked cool.

Coalition: Now that you've been there a few times, do you still think that?

Danny: No, but last year, we did see a bear. It was far away, but we could see it from our tent. I've never seen that before, but we weren't scared.

Coalition: What were some of your favorite activities at camp?

Danny: Canoeing, gym, photography. Last year, I won second place in the canoe race and helped make a movie. We have the learning center where we have computers and play things like Jeopardy to learn about school stuff, like science and math. And swimming. I love swimming. I liked cooking. I made stir fry, and it was delicious.

Coalition: What are some of your

favorite memories from camp?

Danny: It was really beautiful when we canoed under the bridge. You could see trees everywhere, and birds. One time my canoe tipped. That was really funny. Two deer passed through camp a few years ago. It was unreal. I also loved the talent shows at the end of each year. I like to sing in it and watch all of my friends.

Coalition: What made you want to go back each year?

Danny: I don't live in the shelter anymore, but I love getting away from the craziness in the city. And friends. I met some great guys, and we see each other every year. I really liked my counselor. He was cool. I could talk to him about anything. I can't wait to see him again this year.



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Coalition: What else are you looking forward to this year?

Danny: Swimming! I'm a level four swimmer now, and the other activities – it's good just having something to do.

Coalition: Do you think other kids should go? Why?

Danny: Yes! It made me realize there was more than just what I see in the city. It's a great experience, and you can tell your kids someday that you went to summer camp and about all of the things you saw and did there.

Coalition: What would you tell a new camper?

Danny: You'll have FUN and learn about all kinds of new things. And don't be worried. You won't be attacked. It's just camp. You'll come home in one piece.

Danny with Assistant Camp Director, Thomas Semeta



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