



The DREAM Program, Inc.

P.O. Box 361
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www.dreamprogram.org



**The Forest Park DREAM Update
April & May 2010**

Greetings from DREAM! Here is a summary of the exciting events and developments that occurred during the months of April and May. You can always look back at past monthly reports or other programs' reports by going to: <http://www.dreamprogram.org/about/localprograms.htm>. And please, do not hesitate to contact us with questions or ideas.

Summer DREAM is around the corner for Forest Park DREAMers as they had their last couple of DREAM Fridays at the end of April, before the all the mentors finished finals, and a few awesome mentors graduated. As the semester came to an end with many exciting DREAM adventures, the mentors also nominated a new co-facilitator to work with the group to make sure everyone's voice is heard and meetings run smoothly. We are happy to welcome Josh Cote to join Matthew Couture in this role!

Highlights from April and May include:

- Climbing walls,
- The *Last* DREAM Friday...and
- Just one more Final Adventure!

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:

- **Climbing walls** had been in the back of the Forest Park DREAMers minds all year and it couldn't have happened any better as they headed over to the Green Mountain Climbing Gym. Everyone received specific training to climb and belay. The mentors did a great job with having a two to one ratio with kids that day. This also helped continue the trend with seniors graduating and kids having a new mentor ready to step into that match.
- **The *Last* DREAM Friday** was filled with a fun outdoor adventure to the neighborhood park with water balloons and extra time to bond with each other.
- **Just One More Final Adventure:** At the last minute, one more Friday adventure was made possible after getting rained out earlier in April. The DREAMers headed to Fairhaven for a softball game vs. Outer Valley. Cheering on a senior's mentee, Porsche, they also played kick-ball, and sent their seniors away with this surprise adventure they were so looking forward to earlier in the month!

LABs/Parental Involvement: Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings are where parents, mentors, and other community members come together to learn more about each other, build trust, discuss ideas and issue, and build stronger lines of communication. This month:



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- Some mentors have been visiting the family and children before and after the DREAM group activities to strengthening their relationships with their partners and families. Many families have or are looking to relocate with the first phase of the redevelopment occurring Fall 2010 for half of the community. On Wednesday, April 21st, Rutland Housing Authority had a residents meeting where DREAM assisted last minute in spreading the word out by passing out flyers to every door. The meeting was highly attended by many residents and the children groups working in the community.

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:

- Fundraisers that are being planned for next year include a distance biking adventure. While the initial excitement is there, unraveling details to come on this event are something for all DREAM supporters and programs to look forward to!

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 was involved by:

- **The Welcoming Alumni Barbeque for Southern Vermont on April 22nd.** Graduating seniors from Bennington College along with Castleton State College and Green Mountain College seniors, were all recognized for their years of dedicated service to DREAM, and received their official welcome into the Alumni Organization (not to mention their official Alumni t-shirt).

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

- **Camp DREAM kicks off for the summer on Tuesday, June 22.** The school year is quickly drawing to a close, but the fun and adventure with DREAM is far from over! With eight sessions this year, camp has newly hired a total of twelve camp staff: eight camp counselors and four trail crew! For more information on Camp DREAM, or if you would like to come visit, email Ashleigh, Camp Director - ashleigh@dreamprogram.org.
- **The 2010 Teen Retreat was a booming success!** Over 50 teens from all over Vermont braved the un-seasonal April chill at Camp DREAM for a weekend of fun and informative workshops, on topics ranging from college preparation to vocal percussion. Check out photos from the retreat here! <http://dreamprogram.smugmug.com/Vermont-Programs/Multiple-Program-Events/Teen-Retreat-2010>
- **Days of Caring, May 13-15:** Camp DREAM hosted volunteers and DREAM office staff for three days, and it was part of the United Way's Days of Caring program. IBMers, friends of



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DREAM, Bridgewater State Students, DREAM office staff, and another AmeriCorps program hauled wood out of the site, split it, and delivered it for the wood warms program. The Wood Warms Program distributes wood to families in need for the winter. Overall, DREAM had about 35 volunteers at camp to help clean up the land and deliver wood to heat four families' homes this winter! Way to go everyone! If you would like to volunteer anytime for a day or two, email Steve: stephen@dreamprogram.org.

Office Announcement:

- **Summer DREAM kicks off for the summer on Monday, June 21:** From mid-June until mid-August, DREAM Interns called "D-Units" will be programming with the kids from Forest Park, four days a week. This summer a Green Mountain College student, Katelyn Barcellos, will be leading programming in Forest Park as the new D-Unit, and Alicia Best, in her second year and from Bennington College, will be here as a Recreational Specialist Intern.

Keep DREAMing of Summer!

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