



The DREAM Program, Inc.
P.O. Box 361
Winooski, VT 05404
(802) 655-9015 tel
(802) 654-8598 fax
www.dreamprogram.org



March 15th, 2008

The Highgate DREAM Update February 2008

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

As the snow continues to fall along the mountain tops surrounding Barre and Norwich University, there has been a commotion of craft projects and dancing happening in the valley with the Highgate mentors and mentees. This month was fun-packed!

Highlights from this month include:

- Creating and painting paper-mache masks in the Highgate community center!
- The first-ever DREAM Service Adventure to Washington, DC!
- Mentors establishing a Highgate DREAM myspace for the parents to find out what is going on for the week's DREAM Friday!

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:

- Paper-mache masks in the Highgate community center
 - As mentors blew up balloons and mixed up glue and water, mentees created masterpieces out of newspaper and paste! The following Friday was spent coloring and decorating their masks.
- An intense dance-off
 - Tall and small, young and old alike shook off the winter cold to show others dance moves that Ed McMahon would be jealous of!

Special Events for Children: Special events included:

- DC Service Adventure
 - Spectrum, a youth drop-in center, joined up with DREAMers for a ride on the veggie-fueled big blue bus for the first-ever DREAM Service Adventure in Washington, D.C.! Twenty-three teen DREAMers, mentors, staff, and Spectrum folk prepared and served meals for the homeless at DC Central Kitchen and Martha's Table. A smaller group was given the opportunity to attend the National Low-Income Housing Coalition Conference, where advocates gather every year to bring about knowledge and change in affordable housing.



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There was site-seeing as well. Teens found a new appreciation for the Postal Museum and were able to reflect together after experiencing the Holocaust Museum. Picnic dinners were eaten in front of the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. A trip of this scale and collaboration is a first for DREAM and will hopefully become an annual DREAM adventure.

Parental Involvement: This month, parental involvement included:

- The online world!
 - Suggesting a new way for mentors and families to better communicate. A common space for all happens to be Myspace, an online forum where members may communicate with the rest of the group. The mentors ran with the idea and created a private group for mentors and Highgate families only; they use the space to discuss weekly programming and the upcoming culminating event!

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:

- Shaw's Receipts Rewards
 - Mentors researched potential fundraisers online and discovered that Shaw's offers the Shaw's Receipts Rewards. Now the entire Highgate Program is collecting Shaw's receipts, including mentors, mentees, the central office, and families, to submit to Shaw's. Then 1% of eligible purchases will be sent back to the program.
- Champlain College Iron Chef
 - Champlain College held its third annual Iron Chef competition and DREAM was the guest of honor for the third year. The Sodexo staff host the competition every year and various faculty, staff, and DREAM mentors participate. They split into four teams and choose a theme; the food they cook is based on the theme. This year the students voted Super Bad as the winner, whose meal consisted of Hawaiian pizza, fruit and chocolate fondue, and cookies. Sometime after the competition Sodexo will present DREAMers with a donation for all of the hard work and fun they put in.

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. Activities at camp this month included:

- NW/HD and Elm St WAC
Dartmouth's Northwoods & Hollow Drive and UVM's Elm St DREAM Programs each ventured up to DREAM Camp for an overnight Winter Adventure Camp (WAC) extravaganza in the month of February! Snowshoeing, ice fishing, and walking on the (frozen) Metcalf Pond were only a few of the adventures our mentees participated in!



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DREAM Inc: The DREAM Central Office always has a number of projects and activities in the works, so here's the section for those updates, and any other random pieces of information.

- DREAM Expansion
 - DREAM's Board of Directors presented the Central Office a challenge: to expand DREAM outside of Vermont! The challenge, a suggested timeline and a funding and staffing scenario, was then passed on to the New Programs Team. They, along with other office members, will begin the investigation process shortly. The investigation will consist of potential locations of cities, colleges, and housing communities. By mid-March the office will present their findings to the Board, stay tuned for more information!

- NAMCO Block
 - The NAMCO Block DREAM community (formerly known as Armory Square) has recently been purchased by Rockingham Area Community Land Trust (RACLT) and Housing Vermont, and will now be under new management. RACLT has started renovating the building, and plans to turn the 74-unit building into a 58-unit building. This winter the construction began, which resulted in some of the families moving to other Windsor communities, outside of Windsor, and some families residing at NAMCO Block. Although this may be a challenging transition for DREAM, it is evident that the renovation will benefit the community and DREAM is planning to support our families throughout the transition.

- Winning Facebook Challenge
 - Facebook, through a generous donation by The Case Foundation, awarded thirteen organizations between \$10,000 and \$50,000 each in the Giving Challenge, a challenge which encourages people to donate to an online cause. At the end of 50 days, the top thirteen causes, those with the most individuals donating, were awarded. Overall, DREAM placed 5th and we were awarded \$10,000, in addition to the money we raised! Way to go, DREAM!

- D-Unit Hire Letters
 - This month DREAM sent out nine hire letters for D-Unit summer positions. A D-Unit is a paid summer intern, usually a mentor, who works in their DREAM community and organizes programming for all of the children in the community. We are excited for this summer and the energetic and vivacious interns we will work with!

Keep DREAMing!



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Katie Wiseman

Program Director, New Program Coordinator