

# Summer SEALS Day Camp 2015 Annual Report

April 2, 2016

With the completion of its ninth consecutive year, the 2015 Summer SEALS Day Camp continued to build upon the successes of the previous summers, *enriching lives*... of 30 youth academically, socially/emotionally and behaviorally... *one summer at a time*.

Adding rising 2nd graders to the camp program provided a new experience for staff and campers alike, with the rising 4th graders enjoying the role of “mentors” to the younger students. Programmatically, the staff worked to improve campers’ core reading and mathematics skills while exposing them to a host of related activities to maintain a high level of engagement in learning through out the summer. The three integrated units in 2015 were Discovering Earth and Space (Midnight on the Moon), Medieval Times (The Knight at Dawn) and Oceans (Oceans of the World). Campers received the books to keep (including an extra one for the 2nd graders about going to 3rd grade), wrote and solved math and science problems, and completed crafts related to each unit. Special events included visits by Dr. Jack Holt who demonstrated rockets, Dr. David McLaughlin who created a model of the solar system, and Dr. Catherine Ardrey who taught the campers songs about the ocean. The YMCA Arts program staff visited twice and helped with related craft projects. Field trips included a visit to the Baltimore Aquarium, the Selinsgrove Pool, and of course, the annual highlight of visiting Pinto Bay Pond, where Mike Flock and John Bickhart delight the campers with a nature experience. Additionally, the campers sponsored a free community car wash and collected clothing for the Mustard Seed. The end of camp celebration included campers giving presentations to parents on the various units, diplomas and prizes for the campers to celebrate their many achievements and good foods, including pizza donated from Papa John’s as well as fresh cantaloupe and watermelon donated from Hoover’s Farm.

Our school district partners once again provided the program evaluation results. Terry Heintzelman, Principal, and Amy Veach, School Counselor, provided data for the 2nd graders from the Selinsgrove Area Elementary School. Likewise, Matt Conrad, Principal, and Holly Morgan, School Counselor, provided data for the 3rd and 4th graders at the Selinsgrove Area Intermediate School. The district could not provide basic math skills scores as this data is not presently available for 2nd – 4th graders; however, oral reading fluency and reading comprehension scores, comparing campers with a control group (i.e., similar grade level peers who did not attend camp), are represented below in Figures 1 and 2, respectively.

While maintaining a focus on program quality and administration, the Summer SEALS Board is attuned to fiscal concerns, including fundraising initiatives to sustain the program. Website updates, including links to present/past annual reports and program newsletters as well as EITC information and a Facebook page, are prime examples of these efforts. Summer SEALS’ designation as an Educational Improvement Organization by the state through its Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program (i.e., for the second and third grade portions of our program) merits special comment. In years past we have included EITC contributions in our annual fundraising totals, reflecting substantial amounts from several local banks and businesses. A development consultant retained by the Board in 2015 advised us against continuing to do so in the future. She indicated EITC funds should be reported in a distinct category, separated from annual contributions given that EITC funding is never assured. The 2015 state budget impasse drove her point home as we and many other organizations across the state envisioned EITC monies simply vanishing before our eyes. With the Governor’s approval of line items in the state budget late in December 2015, businesses were given conditional approval to disperse EITC funds. Shortly thereafter, Summer SEALS received a total of \$35,000 in EITC contributions from BB&T, M&T Bank, Mifflinburg Bank and Trust, Northumberland National Bank, Swineford National Bank, Waste Management and Weis Markets.

With our 10th Anniversary theme in mind, celebrating our past, securing our future, our development consultant is helping us to plan a path forward to ensure the program remains fiscally sustainable for the future – developing, in short, beyond a grass roots, “Mom & Pop” operation. To that end the Board of Directors amended its By-laws to expand the Board from nine to twelve members. We are delighted George Cravitz and Eric Rowe have joined the Board as of February 2016. George is a widely admired educator, having devoted himself to teaching high school English in Selinsgrove (retired) as well as serving as an adjunct member of the faculty at Susquehanna University and advisor to the Enactus program. Eric served the school district with distinction for many years as a member and President of its Board of Directors as well as several civic organizations throughout Selinsgrove and the surrounding Susquehanna Valley. Additionally, Dr. David McLaughlin filled the vacancy on the Board created by Dr. Anne Reeve’s retirement from Susquehanna University. David is a member of the SU Education Department faculty with particular expertise in math and science education. Collectively, they bring new and valuable perspectives to help lead the program well into the future.

Once again the Board engaged Herring, Roll & Solomon, P.C., to complete a complied report as well as the accounting/book keeping services of William D. Bucher, CPA to ensure the program’s fiscal affairs are properly executed. The support we receive from so many individuals, businesses/corporate and foundation donors is never assumed or taken for granted. We remain steadfast in our commitment to be good stewards of the resources donors entrust to us each year. Among the program’s many successes, the community’s faith, hope, and trust in Summer SEALS heralds tremendous promise for its future. Together we have and will continue to do great things!

We gratefully acknowledge our program partners: Selinsgrove Area Rotary Club, Selinsgrove Area Community Foundation, Susquehanna University and its Education Department, and the Selinsgrove Area School District. Their synergy and unwavering commitment to Summer SEALS continually inspires.

*Report Compiled by:*

Michael P. Hayes, Ph.D. & Dorothy M. Anderson

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