



December 1, 2010



CAMP EXCLAMATION POINT, INC.

# Annual Report 2010

## Our Mission and History

### Our Mission

Camp Exclamation Point, Inc. provides a one-week residential summer camp experience where meaningful choices create a community of kindness, for rural Vermont children whose families have limited resources.

### Our History

Camp Exclamation Point, Inc. (CAMP!) is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1991, when the Vermont Migrant Education Program discontinued its summer camp program. Former camp staff members wanted to preserve an experience that had made a difference in the lives of so many Vermont children and teens. As a result, they

founded Camp Exclamation Point, Inc.

Now Camp! serves Vermont children with limited opportunities due to rural isolation, a lack of financial resources, and disruption of home life and education due to frequent moves. The only cost to camper families is the \$30 registration fee. All other costs are absorbed by Camp!.

We believe our program design

empowers campers to make choices that directly affect their experience both at CAMP! and back home, while putting particular emphasis on kindness and cooperation. From this experience, campers become aware of an expanded set of possibilities, are better able to make good choices in their lives, and to have a positive impact on their home communities.

## New Grants

Every year our Board and Managing Director look at alternative funding sources for our program. This year we were fortunate to partner with two "new" organizations for grants. One was with the Fanny Allen Foundation and the other was

with the Community Action Team at Ben and Jerry's.

The Fanny Allen Foundation grant supported nutrition and health initiatives at camp, while the Ben and Jerry's Vermont Community Action Team grants empower Ver-

mont organizations providing community services, activities and events.

Thank you to both organizations for supporting the important work of Camp! this past year.

## Camp Exclamation Point Board Members

Our Board looks for the highest level of service to the populations we serve, and continues to donate their own time, energy, and personal resources to ensuring that CAMP! remains a constant in the lives of our campers and their families. The 2010 CAMP! Board members are:

Ed Paquin, President  
Dave Rosenberg, Vice-President  
Scott Moore, Treasurer  
Eric Thomas, Secretary

Alan Graham  
Joscelyne Knight  
Judy Bush

Erin Shea  
Steve Ward  
Karina Lepeley

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# Camp! Programming

At Camp Exclamation Point we provide a traditional resident camp program with a broad range of choices to meet a variety of camper interests and abilities.

Our campers live and work together in three different “families”: a tenting or “Pod” family, a dining room family, and an “Awesome” family (a group who share a common activity choice throughout the week). Pods are the tent groups, which are divided by similar school grade levels. Dining Room families are the table groups a camper sits with throughout the week. The table group stays the same all week so everyone has time to really learn about each other. Awesome groups are programs that happen each day, building on the previous day’s skills. Awesome programs are a range of activities that might include Tennis, Bread Making, Bottle Rockets, Archery, Canoeing, Jewels and Treasures, Fly Fishing or Fabric Design.

In addition to Awesome options, campers can also pick from nine different “Choice” activities throughout the week. Choices are shorter length activities like sports, arts and

crafts, drama, nature learning, dance or storytelling. You may even see campers snorkeling or testing their engineering skills in an egg protector competition as a Choice activity.

Other areas for learning around camp include the Waterfront, Nature Center, Archery Range, and the Arts and Crafts Center. There is always a lot going on at Arts and Crafts like charcoal drawing, watercolor painting, jewelry making, origami, mobiles and tin can lanterns. There is plenty of time during the week for campers to finish multiple art projects and many of them enjoy tie-dyeing shirts at some point in their week as well.

Campers learn about the environment through programming at the Nature Center, where there are always interesting “critters” to observe. There are scientific experiments through the Nature Center, such as rocket launching and the famous Egg Protector competition. Every day campers have

a swim lesson and at some point during the week an introductory canoe lesson. Free swim and the morning Polar Bear Swim are both popular activities on the Waterfront. Some campers learn to swim for the first time while they are with us, while some swim across the lake during their week at camp!

The Children’s Literacy Foundation (CLiF) partnered with us again this year. CLiF creates a lending library of books for campers and staff to use during the week, and the foundation gives each camper several books of their choice to take home when camp ends. CLiF also brought storytellers to camp for an evening campfire program, bringing reading and books to life for all our campers.

By encouraging our campers to return each year, making space for siblings, and offering teens leadership opportunities, we have built a strong camp community that supports rural Vermont children and their families.

*“CAMP! is new friends and new skills that build confidence.”*

*~ School Counselor*

# Contributions and Support

Camp Exclamation Point is fortunate to have received support from numerous sources. Thank you to the following organizations for their financial support:

The Turrell Fund

Walter Cerf Foundation

Agnes Lindsay Fund

Fanny Allen Foundation

Ben and Jerry’s Community Action Team

Vermont Community Foundation

Brattleboro Savings and Loan

United Way of Chittenden County

Brattleboro Kiwanis Foundation

Paul Frank and Collins

CAMP! Staff of 2010

Additionally, local businesses continue to donate materials, supplies, food, and labor to the Camp! program. Without this support, our budget would be twice as large. We would like to extend special thanks to:

On The Rise Bakery

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters

Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream

O Bread

Shelburne Farms

Catamount Accounting and Tax Services

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to all the enthusiastic participants in our Annual Kickball Tournament this past July. The event is our biggest fundraiser and all proceeds directly benefit camp programming in the summer. This year’s teams included:

NOFA, On the Rise Bakery, South Burlington

Parks and Recreation, the Vermont Ice Storm, and the Vermont Nurses Association..

Finally we would like to thank all the individuals who made personal donations both large and small. Each donation made it possible for campers to enjoy another summer of camp fun!



# Thinking Back and Looking Forward

This past summer was the 20th Anniversary of Camp Exclamation Point, and it was a summer of growth! We saw more than 65% of our campers from the previous summer return, and increased the number of campers referred through the migrant education program by 18%. We revamped our Teen Leadership Program to provide older campers with even more leadership skills and mentoring opportunities within the camp community. Beyond that, we continued to focus on healthy food options in our dining hall meals and snacks, using locally grown produce and Vermont products whenever possible. Many of our children learn about vegetarian options and try new foods during their camp week. This year was no exception with the leading favorite being the yellow watermelon!



while we ended the year slightly higher than hoped at \$1800 over budget, with the economic times as they were, we felt that overall it was a successful year for the program.

As we look ahead to summer 2011,

we anticipate an even greater need for a program such as CAMP! for Vermont children in need. Our goals for the upcoming year include building on last year's increased partnership with Vermont Migrant Education in serving children from rural communities, seeking new sources for sustainable funding, and increasing men-

toring support for older campers. Additionally, we will be looking for alternatives to fund camper transportation. More than 53% of our campers rely on camp provided transportation to get to and from the camp property each year. With gasoline and insurance costs rising daily, transportation costs impact the camp budget significantly. We would like to see that situation change in order that more funds can go directly to programming and increasing our camp population.

As we move into 2011, we want to thank all the past supporters of CAMP! We are looking forward to providing another positive, enriching, summer experience this coming August. As one of our campers once told us, "I wish camp was all year long."

## Ways to Help

If you are interested in supporting CAMP!, there are numerous ways to help. We are always looking for volunteer staff for camp week in August, and positions range from kitchen staff to group counselors to lifeguards. Individuals and groups can support camp fundraising through participation in our Annual Kickball Tournament held each July in Richmond. Additionally, you or your company may donate products or services to camp. Past supporters have included On The Rise Bakery, CLIF Foundation, Healthy Living, and Shelburne Farms.

Financial support is always welcome as well. Even with a primarily volunteer staff and a variety of donated supplies from local organizations, it still costs CAMP! \$450 for one child to attend camp for the week. That includes transportation between home and camp, food, lodging, and activity supplies. Camper families only pay the \$30 deposit, which is often waived in cases of financial hardship.

We are always seeking donors interested in providing one week of a summer camp experience for this population. If you would like to become a FRIEND of Camp Exclamation Point, and sponsor a camper this summer, it would mean the world of difference to a Vermont child. CAMP! Friends are invited to visit us during the week we are in session, and are recognized on our website and in our publications. They also receive our Annual Report each year. Please consider becoming a CAMP! Friend and help sustain this extraordinary summer opportunity for Vermont children.

YES! I want to be a FRIEND of CAMP! Here is my tax-deductible donation for:

\$500                      \$450                      \$100                      \$75                      Or in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\$450 pays for one camper for the week. \$65 covers one day for one camper.*

You can make your tax-deductible check payable to: **Camp Exclamation Point, Inc.**

Our mailing address is: **P.O. Box 91  
Richmond, VT 05477**

Or you can donate online through our website at: [www.campexclamationpoint.org](http://www.campexclamationpoint.org)

*Camp Exclamation Point, Inc. is tax-exempt under Sec.501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

## Our Staff

CAMP! has continued as an organization both directed and supported by the people who form its core staff. CAMP! operates each summer with primarily volunteer staff, who gladly take time from their own jobs, schools, and lives to provide a week of summer fun for campers from around the state of Vermont.

A broad range of experience, age and talent is represented on our staff. Artists, teachers, students, lawyers, legislators, carpenters, secretaries, clerks, technicians, musicians, managers, parents, and more become cooks, counselors and lifeguards for a week and bring their interests and love to share with campers.

As in past years, almost 95% of our staff donated their time and energy to volunteer with camp. Overall, these extraordi-

*"Camp is all about the magic" -  
Camp Volunteer*

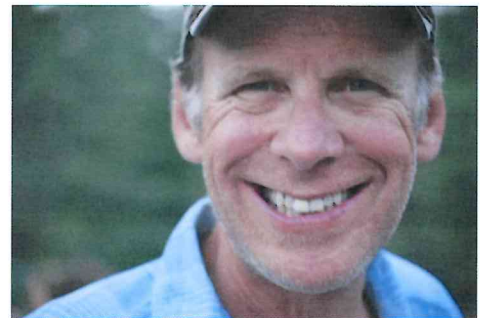
nary people have been volunteering at CAMP! for an average of eight years each. Over 80% of our staff are returnees, while we welcome new staff members every summer. In the past, we have had staff come from as far away as British Columbia, England, and Oregon, while others live just down the road from camp.

Without the dedication and support of current and former staff members, the cost of camp would be more than twice as much per camper. Many staff members not only donate their time the week of camp, but donate monetarily through their workplaces, our fundraisers, or by connecting with local businesses.

We are always looking for volunteers to help at camp and welcome help in any

area of camp work; the kitchen, waterfront, art center, boat house, camper groups, or health center, just to mention a few.

If you or anyone you know want to be a part of the Camp! program, we would love to hear from you. For more details, check out the Volunteer page on our website at [www.campexclamationpoint.org](http://www.campexclamationpoint.org) or e-mail us at [campexcl@gmail.com](mailto:campexcl@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you and helping you connect with this great opportunity to help Vermont children!



**Camp Exclamation Point, Inc.**

**PO Box 91**

**Richmond, VT 05477**

**[www.campexclamationpoint.org](http://www.campexclamationpoint.org)**



*Campers and Staff Summer 2010*