

Profile: Jerry McCarthy



Hometown:

Wellington (Lower Hutt). Just moved from Auckland

Program:

Summer Camp USA 2009

Time spent overseas:

3 months

Which Camp were you at and what did you get up to?

I went to Indian Head Camp in Pennsylvania and was the Gymnastics Director there. I had the most amazing time and am planning to go back next year. I did a lot of extra work with a few girls at camp who trained at a high level at their gymnastics clubs back home. 5 days a week we would be in the gym for an hour and a half before the regular schedule for the day started. It was just great being able to coach the more skilled gymnasts but also fantastic coaching all the other kids! I was asked to go to New Jersey to pick up the 'dream week' kids (kids who are coming to camp next year). It was a real privilege as only 2 of us got asked. We had to meet all the kids parents and then be with the kids on the bus ride back to camp and make sure they weren't too upset as it was the first time away from home for most. We got put up in a hotel for the night, had a great dinner and breakfast-all paid for by camp! There was one other kiwi at camp who was great. One day her mum sent her a care package from NZ with Tim-tams, Milo and Pineapple lumps and we sat up on 3rd hill under the stars one night and had a feast. It was brilliant. The best thing about camp though was all the people I met. Such an amazing group! I'm still in contact with a lot of them-friends for life!

What are some of the experiences that you had which made an impact on you?

When the kids first arrived-the way they treated the new counselors was astounding. A lot of them were rude and disrespectful. That was soon ironed out and a great summer was had. But initial meeting was a real shock!

The last few days I was just so sad to be leaving camp. I definitely shed more than a few tears! I guess the kids really made an impact on me. I really miss them!

Were there any times that were hard?

Yes, the long hours and by the end of the fifth week coaching 8 hours a day got very tiresome

Did you travel after camp? Tell us about your adventures.

Yes. 32 of us from Camp flew to Miami and rented a villa in North Beach for a week. It was absolutely amazing! (4 Scots, 1 Welsh the rest English and then me; the one-and-only kiwi!) It was a much needed break after camp. Lots of us from there then caught the greyhound (an experience) up the east coast to Orlando (Disneyworld), to North Carolina (stayed with a girl from camp at her university), then we went to Washington DC and stayed with a friend of mine from NZ, went to Philly, Boston and then back to New York. I went to the US Open and saw Chilik and Del Potro as well as Venus and Serena. A great day out!



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**What is something unexpected/
different/strange about USA
compared with other places you
have lived?**

The food is so unhealthy! So hard to get fresh healthy food.

**Do you have any advice for someone
who wants a Summer Camp
adventure?**

Travel light and take a back pack! You can buy whatever you forget and need when you get there.

**Did you have a good experience
and feel supported going on Summer
Camp with IEP?**

Yes.

**What did you value about going to
Summer Camp with IEP?**

Continual support and advice when needed.
(I changed my flights and it was simple!)

Would you do it again?

Absolutely.

**Did you gain anything from Camp
that will benefit you in what you
do next?**

More confidence and ability to relate to people
of all ages better.



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