

Profile: Matthew McAtamney



Hometown:

FAIRLIE, Christchurch

Program:

Summer Camp USA 2009

Total length of time spent overseas / or intended length of travel:

4 Months

How did you find out about IEPs Summer Camp program?

HORIZONS UNLIMITED

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

I was at Camp Half Moon, Great Barrington, MA

Camp?? Loved it, just like you said I would. I can't go back next year because of university, but I assure you I'll be back more than one more summer.

I spent the summer at the water front, teaching water skiing mainly, but also some kayaking, canoeing, swimming, and even tennis. I was in charge of an intermediate boys cabin, 6 boys at one time, aged 10-12. They were all my responsibility and in the evenings I had another counsellor help me out.

Highlights, the lot!!! I can't single out anything above the rest as I just enjoyed every part of camp so much. We went on some really fun day trips while at camp such as theme parks, zoos, water parks, indoor skate parks and ten pin bowling. But days at camp were equally as good.

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

Camp games, camp-fire, skits, dances, meal times, sing alongs, etc... all of the fun things which you can only experience if you've been to camp. The fun times which I'll never forget from nights off duty with staff, to nights on duty in the cabin with six 12 years olds running around crazily not going to bed!!! I loved the lot.

Were there any times that were hard?

Hard? No! But there were long hours, which made it feel hard, but you get used to it. Rainy days? When you get a number of rainy days in a row it seems harder, but there's always something to do or camp will organize a day trip to make it easier for you!

Tell us about your adventures after Camp

Starting in Boston I spent 3 days there with nearly every counsellor then everyone went their own ways.

I travelled in groups varying from 2-18 people, we started in San Francisco and hired cars and road tripped down the coast. 10 days, 18 people.

Then Washington DC and Philadelphia for 3 days. Then onto New York, with 16-ish people for 5 days. Followed by 8 days going to American counsellor's Colleges to visit them.

Niagara falls, Toronto, Boston again as it was so nice. New York 3 days staying with one of my American campers. Finally home via LA.



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

BIG, ITS BIG

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

Travel cheaply, spend largely.

Don't be shy, just throw yourself out there, because at the end of the day what is there to lose? You're going to be home to the other side of the world in a few months anyway so make the most of it.

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

Yes It was an amazing opportunity, and Thank you. You made it all so easy for me to be able to get there, visas, what steps to take etc...

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

The personal help you gave me, I could always find out what ever I needed to know straight away and easily. Being able to talk to people on a person-to-person basis is great and everyone at IEP knows what Camp's like so you understand.

Would you do it again?

Yes I plan to, I can't because of Uni this year, but I am hoping to take a years study abroad in Europe. So I will go to camp on my way over there.

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

So much, mainly the personal development anyone gets from going to the other side of the world for the first time and by themselves. Also, the little skills gained from teaching and understanding the students at camp which will help my learning and understanding at Uni this year.



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