

# Profile: Nicole Sherburd

## Hometown:

Morrinsville, New Zealand

## Program:

Summer Camp USA

## Tell us in a few hundred words which Camp you were at and what you got up to at camp?

I went to an all-girls camp in Maine called Camp Pinecliffe, which is right up the top of the East coast. The girls stayed for all seven weeks, with parents visiting the 5th weekend of camp. Camp was set on a lake with stunning views and lots of pine trees surrounding us. In my first year arriving at camp was exciting and daunting as I didn't know what I was getting myself into. But in my second year when I arrived it felt like I was coming home.

For the first 10 days was pre-camp which is where we learnt everything that we would need to know over the next seven weeks. Once the girls got there it was all go and full on. The first 10 days are probably the hardest. It is a whirlwind of laughter, tears, excitement, and lots of entertainment from the girls. My favourite part of the day was just before bed time. The girls had about 20 minutes to get ready, the girls would all end up sitting on mine and my co-counsellors beds where we would all talk about our days and they would tell us little stories.

## What was your role at camp?

I was a waterski instructor and bunk counsellor. My camp was very structured and every day there was a schedule. My day consisted of making sure the girls woke up at reveille (yes there are bugles at camp) to go to breakfast. Cleaning the bunk and to make sure that the girls had everything they needed for the morning activities. I would then head down to the lake to waterski for a fun morning of teaching (and sometimes skiing myself.) Then it was lunch time and then my favourite part of the day REST HOUR, and then more activities in the afternoon. Dinner, a bit of free time to catch up with everyone else and then evening activity, which consisted of many different games. Lots involved dressing up, movie nights and each age groups play and sometimes a social with a boys camp.



## Top 3 memories of Summer Camp?

1. Singing at meal times
2. Evening activity, especially when there is a water fight involved
3. Staff play

## Was there a camper that stands out in your mind? If so why?

There are too many kids at camp to have just one camper that stands out the most. For me in my department they are the ones that I taught to get up on skis for the first time, the kids that you have special handshakes with. By having the girls there for the full seven weeks you make a real strong bond with them especially the girls in your bunk, after a while you view them as your kids.

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

The experiences I gain from camp will stay with me for the rest of my life. I didn't really think camp would change me that much.



Going to a foreign country where I didn't know anyone was really a life changing experience. While at camp I figured out what I wanted to do career wise, my friends and family have noticed small changes too.

### **Did you travel after camp? Tell us about your adventures – where did you go?**

I did a lot of traveling after my first year at camp. I ended up travelling around America with people that I meet at camp; there were four of us including another kiwi and two English girls. We went to New York, Niagara Falls, Washington DC and I also went and stayed with a few American friends in Nantucket and Tucson Arizona visiting the Grand Canyon. I then continued on to Europe where I did a 32 day Contiki called the Easy Rider covering most of Western Europe. I met the most amazing people and made friends for life. I finished my trip with a stay in Norway visiting family friends.

In my second year I went to Boston for a week where I meet up with my two best friends from camp in my first year. The trip was filled with lots of laughing and catching up. I then went to New York again after with new friends from camp for 5 days before returning home.

### **What was camp food and your accommodation like?**

Camp food was really good. We were lucky to have a really good team of cooks always making amazing food. Every day there was a selection of salad stuff for lunch and dinner and lots of fruit at breakfast. My favourite always being dessert with American brownies and cake.

The accommodation was stunning! Camp was set right on the lake with main bunk looking out onto it. There were two different types of bunks, one for the juniors and ones for the seniors. I was in a junior bunk that slept 8-12 kids including counselors with enough room for a daily fashion show. We had two toilets and a back room for all their draws of clothes. The senior bunks were more open plan for them all to sleep in.



### **What is something unexpected/different/strange about USA compared to home?**

The USA was very different from home, you noticed it a lot more in the small towns. Its looks exactly like it does in the movies with all the old buildings and the flags hanging on the lamp post.

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

Do it! It will be the best decision you will ever make.

### **Did you have a good experience going on Summer Camp with IEP?**

I had a really good experience with them. They were always helpful no matter how dumb the questions were. The application process was straight forward and easy to follow.

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

For me the cost was a big factor especially when I was a Returner. No hidden costs meaning there was more money left over for travelling.

### **Would you do it again?**

In a heartbeat!!!

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

I gained more than I can put into words. I am now more decisive and confident in my choices. After camp I knew what I wanted to do career wise and am now going on to study early childhood next year.

### **What is next for you?**

Teaching and lots more travelling.

