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Young CHA Residents Return from Unique Opportunity to Attend Overnight Camp

100+ Children that live in CHA Developments Participate in Overnight Camp Program this Summer

CHICAGO (August 15, 2005) – More than forty children came bounding off a bus Friday at the corner of 38th & Michigan near what remains of the Robert Taylor Homes filled with stories and keepsakes from their week away at summer camp – a unique experience for the children, residents of CHA developments across the city, many of whom had never before visited someplace outside the city or had the chance to go to sleepover camp. The children, between the ages of 13 and 15, were among more than 100 young CHA residents who had the opportunity this summer to participate in a unique overnight camp program, organized by CHA with assistance from the Salvation Army and the Chicago Youth Centers.

Hosted by the Chicago Youth Centers' Camp Rosenthal in Dowagiac, Michigan, a two hour drive from Chicago, the children took part in such activities as writing and publishing their own newsletter, playing soccer, learning how to climb on a climbing wall, swimming and fishing, boating, canoeing, archery, arts and crafts, putting on a camp talent show, attending classes as part of a nature program, and other activities.

"I liked everything about camp because it was something different and we got to meet a lot of new people," said Shamille Green, one of the young campers.

"This is the camp that I attended as a child, so I have a history here and a strong sentimental attachment to Camp Rosenthal," said Judith Stanton, Camp Director, who welcomed over 100 children to camp through the CHA program this summer. "Camping is powerful work—no other institution can do what a camp does. What's unique about it is that kids have to learn how to do things for themselves—how to get up in the morning and prepare for the day; clean their cabins and be responsible. Kids also meet new people from different cultures, backgrounds and neighborhoods and learn how to get along with them. The success of camp relies on teamwork, cooperation and a sense of fairness with everyone working together. Camping really builds confidence. Every child shares in the responsibility of helping the camp to run smoothly – they really embrace it."

"We are excited about the chance to bring this life changing experience into the lives of children in our developments," said Terry Peterson, CEO of the Chicago Housing Authority. "This program, like a number of others we've crafted for hundreds of young CHA residents this summer, will offer them skills they can use to build healthy, happy lives and successful careers. We want to thank our partners at the Salvation Army and the Chicago Youth Centers who are helping us create these invaluable opportunities for young people throughout the city."

“The teen program this year went super,” said Mr. Caneal Rule, one of the Chicago Youth Centers overnight camp program’s co-directors. “They had a great time and didn’t want to come home.”

Prior to this final camp session, Camp Rosenthal also hosted three other groups of children, all CHA residents, between the ages of 8 and 12. From June 27th to July 1st, 38 CHA youth attended the camp, from July 5th through July 15th, 42 children attended and 43 attended the third session from July 19th through July 29th. Nine more children attended the Salvation Army’s Wonderland Camp from July 5th through July 9th.

For more information about the program, please call the Chicago Housing Authority at 312-745-2461 or visit www.thecha.org.

Note to Editors: Photographs of the children’s arrival home can be downloaded from the following websites:

WEBSITE: <http://www.mkcpr.com/filebin/Girl.Mr.Rule.Boy.jpg>

SUGGESTED CAPTION: Mr. Caneal Rule (center), one of the Chicago Youth Centers overnight camp program’s co-directors, arrives home to Chicago with two of this year’s campers, Jeneqwa McIntosh (left) and Jordan Childs (right). The unique program is sponsored through a partnership with the Chicago Housing Authority.

WEBSITE: <http://www.mkcpr.com/filebin/4Girls.jpg>

SUGGESTED CAPTION: (left to right) Tracee Crump, Shamille Green, Porche Franklin, and Jeneqwa McIntosh arrive home to Chicago from Camp Rosenthal, a unique overnight camp program sponsored by the Chicago Housing Authority in partnership with the Chicago Youth Centers.

Each photo has a suggested caption. Photos are courtesy of CHA and no photographer credit is necessary. If you have trouble using the photo, please contact Amy Pickett at 312-822-0505 or apickett@mkcpr.com .

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Do you have a vision for CHANGE?