



## Summer Camp

### The moment I heard about ten-year-old Shawna, I knew I wanted to take her to camp.

Last Thanksgiving, Shawna was laying on the couch when bullets whizzed through the window above her head and lodged in the opposite wall. Minutes later, a few blocks down the street, someone shot up Shawna's 98-year-old Grandma's house.

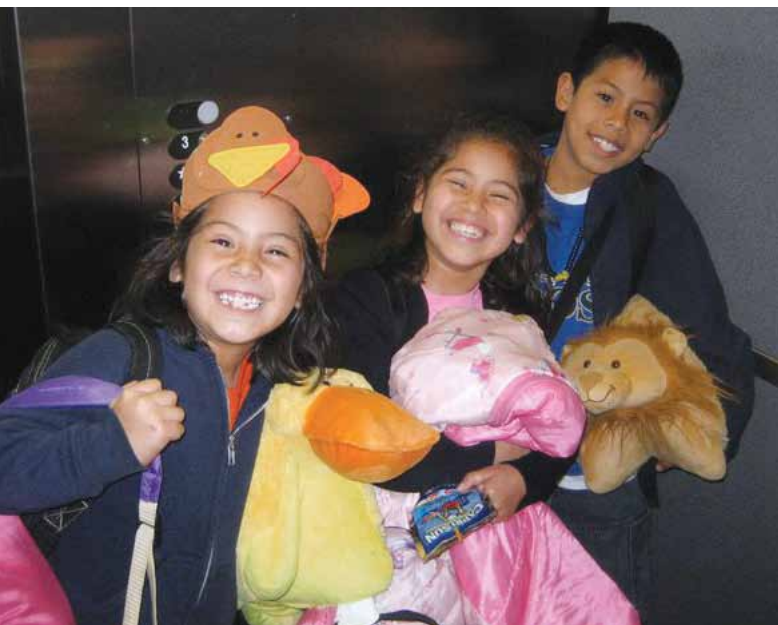
Shawna, a veteran of Bible Club, attended her first camp last summer. Even though she and her five siblings are afraid of all the drive-by shootings on their gang-infested block, when we pick Shawna up for Bible Club, she is dressed, prepared with her Bible and ready to go. She jumps at the chance to be away from the danger and stress of her neighborhood.

Shawna cannot wait to go to camp this year. She knows exactly what classes she wants to take. She participates in everything wholeheartedly; she leaps on the inner tube at the lake and quickly climbs up the pole onto the platform for the zip line. At camp, she forgets the kids who use bad words, tease, bully and fight at school. Shawna will take what she learns at camp into the rest of her life.

Now you know why taking Shawna to camp is so important to me. If anyone deserves a carefree vacation in a loving environment, Shawna does.



**This summer I want to take thousands of young people to camp!**



Jorge, Elizabeth and Mary, who all attend our Christian school, have had a disasterous year. Their father was removed from the home (accused of abusing an older teenage step-daughter), which devastated the children. They deeply miss their dad and talk about him fondly. In addition, their older sister, Katie, unexpectedly left the house, another blow for the family. Katie would pick up the kids up from school and help them with their homework. These changes have deeply wounded the children.



Going to THE OAKS will be life changing for Jorge and his sisters. Away from the pressures and chaos of the city and their family, they will get to be children—running in grassy fields and sleeping under the stars. They will eat three meals a day, swim with friends, hear the gospel and experience the love of Jesus.

We have deep conversations with our campers, because they feel safe to share without restraint. This seldom happens in the city.

These conversations result in children and teenagers following Jesus, receiving His healing for emotional wounds, and learning to love and forgive others who have hurt them.



Dequan grew up without a father. With tears, he shared, “My younger step-brother always makes fun of me, saying, ‘At least I have a dad who cares about me.’ At my football games, I always wish I had a father to support me.”

Dequan gave his life to Christ at our Winter Retreat. He faithfully attends Bible study and shares the Word with people at school. Summer camp will allow Dequan to learn God’s Word, to build relationships with other Christians, and to continue on a healing path. Dequan can’t wait to go back to the place where he first put a stake in the ground to follow Jesus.



Robin's life was also changed at camp. Robin is 14; her developmental challenges make her a target for cruelty at school and around the neighborhood. She works to earn a trip to camp: she attends Bible club regularly, struggles to learn her memory verses and follows the rules.

Attending camp at **Morning Star Ranch** is the highlight of her year. Before going to camp she and her siblings had never been outside of St. Louis. They experienced everything with wide-eyed excitement and talk continually about their trip throughout the year. Camp is a safe and loving place for Robin to experience the love of Christ.



I have seen thousands of lives changed at camp. In a small house packed with his mother, aunt, ten kids and grandma, Zalike finds little space to call his own. At 16, he has already lost his father and uncle. Without a solid role model, he is searching for answers and the streets are ready to give them. But also ready with answers is Josh, a Wichita missionary who has taken Zalike under his wing, teaching him God's Word.

This summer Zalike will attend camp, a full week outside the routine chaos of his life. He will get three meals a day, experiencing the freedom to laugh, study and learn with other teens who are living for the Lord. He will dream and have space to breathe, and time to believe that God's plans include him.



I love Shawna, Robin and Zalike. And, because I love them, I want to do something special for them. And, I know you do, too!

I am committed to taking these young people, plus thousands of other inner-city children and teenagers to camp this summer.

For youngsters like Zalike, this will be their first time; for others, like Shawna, camp is a welcome tradition.

We teach these children and teenagers in Bible clubs and Christian schools all year, but camp is a special time to nurture their walk with God—and to assure them of His love for them.

## In order to take these precious children and teenagers to camp, I need your help.

It costs \$200 to sponsor one child for a thrilling week in God's nature, uncrowded by people or cement. No gangs, no violence, no fear.

We need to raise \$418,000 to provide camping experiences for all the youth we believe God wants us to take to camp this summer.

Think about Zalike, and the difference one week in God's great outdoors will make, spending time with Christian friends, his Bible-club teacher and God. And then, multiply that impact by thousands.

Perhaps, you can sponsor two or three inner-city children. Maybe, you can underwrite one day of camp for one child (\$40). Whatever you send will be deeply appreciated. Thank you for standing with us in sharing God's love with these great youth.

Yours in Christ,



DR. KEITH PHILLIPS  
President

P.S. We need an additional \$126,250 to hire summer staff—teenagers and young adults (many former Bible-club children)—to help lead and minister to the younger campers.



**SEND AN URBAN CHILD TO CAMP!**

**GIVE NOW**

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