

ACA Ohio Section Grant Submission

Contact Information

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Project

Camp Ernst Adventures

This new camping endeavor is designed to offer teens and parent - teen pairs the opportunity to experience overnight trip camping in Ohio through bicycle touring and canoeing on the Little Miami Scenic Bike Trail and River. We believe parents and their teens will find a unique connection on our adventures by traveling and camping together.

Our trips will vary in length and duration from spring and fall weekend overnights to week long summer adventure tours traversing Ohio's diverse landscape. The trips will travel by bicycle in small groups tent camping in Ohio state parks such as Caesar Creek, John Bryan and Clarence Brown reservoir.

Planned activities involve canoeing on Ohio's Little Miami River including participating in an environmental cleanup. Additional stops are planned at Ohio Historical Sites including Ft. Ancient and Cedar Bog for native cultural and ecological education.

Camp Ernst staff will teach bicycle safety patterned on the League of American Bicyclists education programs. Leaders will be League certified and the longer trips will offer bicycle safety certification for the participants. Travel will be primarily on established Ohio multipurpose trails and connecting roadways. Camp staff will also teach the art of tent camping, outdoor cooking and related activities designed to be shared by all participants.

Camp Ernst Adventures will collaborate with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, US Army Corps of Engineers, Ohio Historical Society and YMCA's throughout southern and central Ohio on our trips. We anticipate employing private outfitter's for specialized programming such as canoeing.

We believe this program can be duplicated by other Ohio camps utilizing bicycle trails and rivers throughout the state. Camps may employ state routes on bicycle

friendly roadways to explore the Ohio's natural beauty providing their campers with a home grown educational camping program.

The Program Purpose

At the core of Camp Ernst Adventures is the goal of providing teens and their parents a unique learning opportunity to live and work more effectively together. Bicycle camping offers teens independence through their own effort, while stressing the importance of working together to create a successful trip. We are gearing the program to participants with minimal bicycle and camping experience. Campers need to bring their enthusiasm to learn bike camping.

Parents often have difficulty connecting with their teens and we have found that those barriers are often removed when they are working together in a group camping environment. Teens and parents will find the commonality of purpose in traveling and camping together improves their cooperation with each other as they focus on achieving the travel and responsibilities of the trip.

The camping skills learned foster increased confidence in expanding their capacities to travel under their own pedal power. By sharing the trip responsibilities, participants learn the art of working cooperatively for the success of the group. Campers will join the staff in cooking, setting up camp, maintaining their equipment. We will instill the philosophy of leaving our campsites cleaner than they were found which we believe translates into a formative experience beyond the trip.

Teens and parents alike will benefit from the success they achieve from the completion of their trip. Each participant will have unforgettable memories of their travels having learned a way unique way of camping.

We want to attract campers who have minimal experience and keep them engaged in the program by offering diverse trips that have wide appeal. Our goal is to build a program that offers progressive opportunities for participants to challenge their abilities and in so doing will expand our base of ongoing trips in Ohio to destinations beyond.

Specific grant request

We seek to purchase lightweight tents, stoves and related cookware for twelve campers that can be carried on bicycles using panniers. We want to purchase twelve sets of panniers to permit our trips to be self contained and not bound by a support vehicle. We anticipate this to cost \$2,100.

A promotional flyer and bulk mailing for the initial weekend trips scheduled for May 2010 amounts to \$350. We will include a schedule of summer trips to provide ongoing programming. We expect the program will generate interest to initiate additional weekend trips in the fall.

The total grant request is \$2,450.00

Grants have been obtained for a fleet of bicycles, helmets, safety gear and spare parts. Camp Ernst staff has three League of American Bicyclist certified bicycle safety instructors to oversee the program.

The YMCA currently provides web site support and email marketing. Program fees will cover the staffing, related administrative expenses and operational program costs such as food and activity fees.

2010 Program Timeline

We request the funding for our grant request by April 1, 2010 and want to initiate our first weekend trip in May 2010 on the Little Miami Scenic trail in Newtown Ohio. We will offer coed teen and parent – teen trips in the spring, summer and anticipate adding additional trips in the fall. Our goal is to use the grant to create an ongoing program that may be replicated by other Ohio camps.