



December 15, 2017

Dear Rich and the ACA Ohio Grants Program,

Camp Joy would like to thank the ACA for your generous grant of \$1,500 to support the Arts & Crafts Service Program at Camp Joy. We are pleased to report that this program was effectively carried out in the fall of 2017. Because this pilot program was so successful, Camp Joy will continue to deliver Creative Arts Service Programs in 2018 and into the future.

The original goal was to provide the opportunity for campers to participate in arts and crafts activities that complement the outdoor experiences at Camp Joy while helping those in need. With oversight from counselors and a trained arts specialist, the campers make items that they can donate to the local homeless shelter. Through this program, campers learn how to create useful items, feel good about helping others and gain a deeper understanding of the importance of giving back.

Being that it was a new program, Camp Joy had to make some adjustments along the way, learning from mistakes and modifying the way it was delivered. Originally the program was offered as part of the hour-long “choice time” in the summer. Campers attempted to make scarves by finger-knitting. It was discovered that this was not practical given the short amount of time and high level of difficulty.

Instead, the Arts Service Program was delivered in the fall to 50 campers in the foster care system who participate in weekend camp sessions on a monthly basis. With a portion of the ACA grant funds, Camp Joy purchased 50 sweatshirts that the campers could design and decorate. This was much easier to do than finger-knitting and gave the kids more flexibility to utilize a broader range of art supplies and materials.

Over the course of two camp sessions (October and November) the campers had a fun and rewarding experience making their sweatshirts and deciding where they wanted to donate them. Before the campers started the design work, the counselors and campers had a meaningful discussion about the importance of helping others. The campers, who are themselves in foster care and facing hardship, took especially well to opening up and talking about how a small act of kindness goes a long way. They were very excited to be the ones who were in a position to give back. While designing the sweatshirts, the conversations continued about both the arts component and making a difference for someone in-need.

On December 2nd, Camp Joy staff delivered the sweatshirts to Bethany House. This organization assists single mothers who are homeless by providing a safe and nurturing temporary home. Approximately 25 mothers live at this facility. Joy staff were greeted with cheers gratitude by the mothers and their children of all ages. The fact that these sweatshirts were made by campers in foster care resonated with the mothers who were extra appreciative of this thoughtful and generous act of kindness.

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Camp Joy once again thanks the ACA for making this program possible. It has and will continue to be a “win-win” for both the campers and for the organization receiving the product that the campers make. Camp Joy looks forward to growing the Arts Service Program to include even more campers and to share this with other camps across the region. Thank you very much again.

Sincerely,

Mike McGinty
Camp Joy Foundation
Executive Director

Gunner Blackmore
Camp Joy Foundation
Development Manager

Joel Egbert
Camp Joy, LLC
Camp Director

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We invite you to watch the following slideshow:

<https://quik.gopro.com/v/zYHf5V3ein/>

Arts Service Program



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