September 28, 2012

ACA Ohio Section Grants Program

Rich Garbinsky

Pinnacle Sports

313 Medina Rd.

Medina, OH 44256

Dear Rich,

Allow me to again thank you and everyone at the American Camp Association, Ohio for the grant of $2,500 to support the 2012 Insight Summer Horse Camp at Marmon Valley.

A total of 33 campers attended the Insight Camp from August 14 – 18, 2012 (19 blind/visually impaired and 14 sighted partners). Four campers received full scholarships and the other 29 paid just $125 to attend. The total amount of scholarships awarded was $9,575.

This is the second year for the Insight Camp and we are pleased to report the program is an overwhelming success. Parents and campers were pleased with the experience and indicate they would like to participate again next year.

It was our goal to provide a summer camp experience for the blind and visually impaired that mirrors our regular horse camps, as safely as possible. A key to the success of the Insight Camp was training staff to understand the special needs of the Insight Campers. To start the training, we blindfolded the camp counselors and asked them to perform some simple tasks that involved movement and orienting to sound. It helped give them an understanding of what campers would be experiencing. The need to be more verbal during any camp activity was also stressed.

We also made worked with a Visually Impaired Specialist for the Newark, Ohio city schools to make modifications to the regular camp activities. For example, when teaching the Insight Campers how to use the reigns to guide their horse, we had someone bang on the arena barrels with a stick, allowing the visually impaired rider to orient themselves and maneuver around the barrel. At the archery range, we placed radios directly behind the targets, again giving campers a way to judge direction and distance of the target. I am enclosing a photo collage from the camp.

Our staff would be happy to share details of the program with any ACA Ohio members interested in learning more about our experience with the Insight Summer Horse Camp.

We appreciate ACA Ohio’s encouragement and support of new and innovative camp experiences through your Grants Program.

Sincerely,

Jim Schroeder

Development Coordinator