

CAMP ASLAN 2015

Fall has arrived, but summer is still alive in the hearts of the children of Aslan. Our goal each summer is to keep our Aslan kids growing – physically, emotionally and spiritually. Studies show that inner-city children typically start their school year behind where they ended their previous school year! But this isn't true for middle and upper class children. The answer to "Why?" is easy. Middle class and upper class children continue to grow throughout the summer with learning and enrichment programs. The same opportunities for growth are just not there for inner-city kids.

Our Aslan kids don't have piano lessons and they don't play sports on traveling teams. They don't go to all-day summer camps where they're challenged to continue growing and maturing. This unfortunate fact of life is the reason why Camp Aslan is so important for our children. We fill their minds with interactive learning experiences that are tons of fun and keep them thinking and growing.



This summer started with a trip to the Monmouth Museum. Above and left are some of our youth in the Space exhibit – learning about space exploration and getting to step into a space suit! They were introduced to the concept of how vast space truly is, and they walked into an “inflatable universe” where they looked up at the night sky constellations as seen from earth.

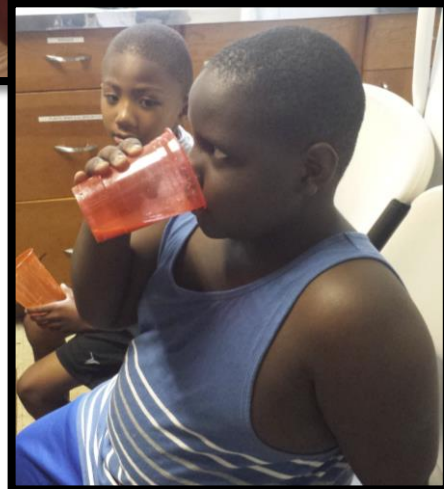
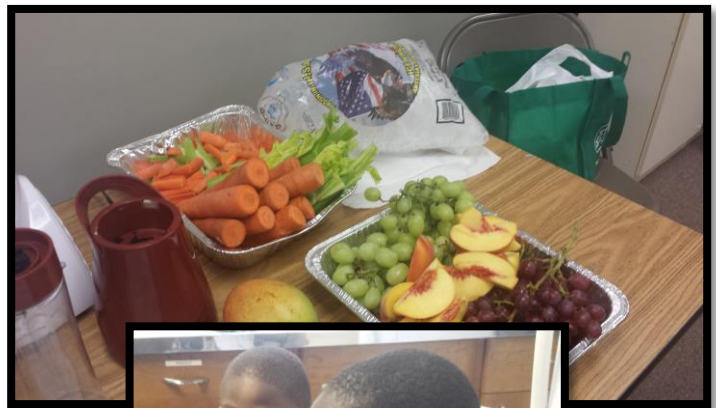


From space they moved to an exhibit of ancient Egypt where they studied Egyptian history and saw a golden-faced mummy. From here they walked into a room with a full-sized helicopter that they climbed into and operated the “joy stick” control. Fortunately, the helicopter didn't go anywhere ☺!

Seabrook Village (a large retirement facility in our area) hosted another great event for our children. Pictured below are some of our budding artists with their handiwork after painting class at Seabrook.



Childhood obesity is such a problem in the inner-city neighborhoods where Aslan works that we always try to emphasize healthy eating. So, we had our yearly “summer juicing” program to show how really good vegetables and fruits can taste.

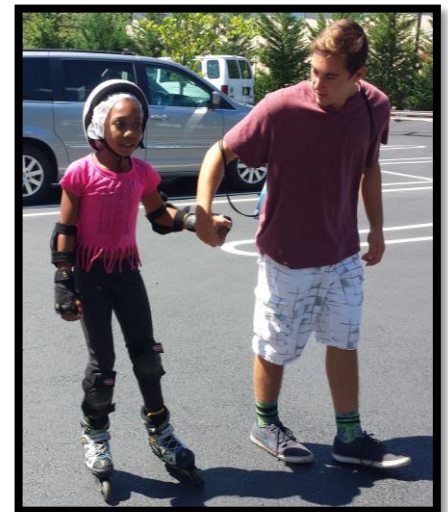


We love to challenge our students and encourage them to learn new skills. Rock wall climbing and in-line skating are perfect examples. I remember wall climbing with some Aslan kids many years ago, and it took all my concentration and strength to make it to the top. This summer several of our young people made it all the way up the wall and repelled down perfectly.



Even with all the protective gear, in-line skating is difficult. But lots of slipping, sliding and falls didn't deter our students from trying. Within a couple of hours, several girls and boys had mastered the skating and were able to do it without any helping hands.

We also send students to Camp Lebanon – a wonderful Christian camp in western New Jersey. And through a generous grant from a private foundation, we were able to send 5 girls to YMCA Camp Mason in northern New Jersey. Summer was filled with so many other things – trips to the beach, science experiments, chess, language classes, face painting, a fantastic “bounce house” and so much more.



You can see why Camp Aslan is so important to our students. For several hours a day we transport our kids to a wonderful, magical place - like *Narnia*, for all you C.S. Lewis fans! During these golden moments, our children can escape from the difficult, mean streets and situations stifling their lives. They can begin believing that, with Aslan's help, a lot of hard work, and with God's help they can find a life of happiness.

They can be successful and push away all the negative voices telling them they'll never succeed or amount to anything – that their lives are meaningless. We are always in this for the long haul. We do not give up on any child – no matter what the



problems might be or how hopeless the situation might look. The heart of Aslan is relationship. No one else in the world is telling these children what we're telling them, and this is why our work is so very unique and important. Aslan Youth Ministries is now 40 years old. It all started in 1975 when 2 couples followed God's call and moved 2,000 miles away from their homes, families and friends. It has taken perseverance, faith and a lot of hard work, but Aslan is still changing the world every day . . . one child at a time!

