



# Glen Haven, Oakwood Forest & Ashton Woods Summer 2015 Newsletter

## Hot, busy and fun!

by Paige Hines and Jennifer Urdaneta

It's my third day starting at CNNC as I pull into the Glen Haven Center to help with lunch and get the kids ready for Project Effort, the program of the week. I pull into the apartment complex and park my car, barely having time to turn it off before three children already had their hands and faces pressed against my window, calling my name, "Paige! Paige, come play with us!" I got out of the car and immediately they piled in, pleading that I drive them to pick up their friends, or anywhere for that matter. I pried them out laughing and they ran off to play. Their openness to adults and others is something I am not used to

seeing in the children whom I usually work with at a day camp. In many ways it was refreshing to me, this space, where these children play outside, run around, imagine their own futures and have a chance to act like kids, even if it was exhausting to everyone else!

My name is Paige and I am a junior at UNC Chapel Hill studying Global Studies and Spanish Literature. I interned with CNNC to learn more about the refugee and immigrant populations in Greensboro. I helped with English and computer classes at the Oakwood Forest Community Center and assisted with the youth programs.

My name is Jennifer and as a junior Guilfordian and Bonner Scholar, I knew that I would have a summer filled with opportunities for growth and would be able to broaden my horizons by interacting the whole summer with the various communities that CNNC works with. Though in the past I have had experience with the three centers, I was ready to see what types of summer programming were planned. While I had many goals, one of my top ones was to be a mentor to children and connect with their families in order to learn more about their stories.

## Project Effort

The first of many programs of the summer was Project Effort. This weeklong day camp, hosted at a Presbyterian church on Phillips Avenue in Greensboro, was led by the Kinesiology Department of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) in partnership with Greensboro United Soccer Foundation. As volunteers, we arrived to the huge grass field and awaited the vans filled with very excited children to arrive. Once those vans arrived, we knew it would be a crazy day.

That week, the days were very hot, probably the hottest of the summer; however, that was no problem for the UNCG volunteers who were some of the most enthusiastic and lively people at the program. They were able to capture the attention of hot and energetic kids, who only wanted to run in the sprinklers to cool off. These, along with other volunteers, led each of the 8 stations, that divided the large soccer field where the games were held. These games included relays, passing, and general soccer matches between teams. All games encouraged

movement and teamwork between children coming from the different sites and backgrounds, by emphasizing good effort and sportsmanship.

As volunteers in our first week of programming, it was a great dive-in to see most children from the sites come together and gave us the opportunity to get to know them with all the excitement they had for being at Project Effort!



*Center youth at having fun at Project Effort*

## Summer School Programs

Each of the three sites also had month-long summer day camps and summer school happening. At Glen Haven, there were a variety of programs such as Girl Scouts, crafts in the afternoon called “crafternoon”, and Science activities for Middle School girls. Emma, the program director at Glen Haven mentioned that the most memorable part for her was the craft sessions in which the children could create colorful and lively art, not just by drawing, but all types of other

materials! Guilford County School teachers provided two intensive weeks of summer school programs at Glen Haven and three at Ashton Woods, including a week of “mommy & me” for some of our moms and their preschoolers at Ashton Woods!

At Oakwood Forest there were a variety of classes offered to adults such as English, computer, and knitting classes. On the other hand, in addition to math and reading activities, the summer school program was farm-themed for the children grades 5th grade and below. Brianna, the program director at Oakwood stated,

“Our hope was that farming would tie in what our returning students have already learned, as well as connecting them to some of their family’s’ history, as many parents grew up living in the *campo* or farm in Mexico.” From what we could see, the beginning of summer camp was a little harder for the children to readjust and start with academic work again, however we saw improvement by the end of the camp. Brianna also mentioned, “It warmed my heart to hear a rising 5th grader declare ‘Farming is so cool!’ I feel the program was successful.”



Above: At Kapuka Farms in High Point  
Bottom Right: Finding the queen in the hive  
Top Right: Worms aren't scary! Compost activity at Guilford College farm



## UBEATS

by Jennifer Urdaneta

At the end of the summer, all children from the sites were invited to attend, *UBEATS*, a STEM year-round program for English language learning students organized through UNCG's BioMusic Program, Guilford County Schools, Center for New North Carolinians, Greensboro Science Center, and funded by the Burroughs-Wellcome Foundation. Students attended day-long sessions at UNCG/A&T's off campus site – Gateway, and on the fifth day went on a field trip to visit the Paperhand Puppet Intervention group in Saxapahaw. After having worked with children from the three sites, it was so great to see them all unite again after a summer of different camps at their sites. It was also great to see they remembered my name and would call "Jennifer, Jennifer! How do I do..." every day of the camp. For me, it was great to see their learning and sparking an interest in science because I know how important it is for their futures. The teachers that lead the sessions of learning about rhythm, sound, vibrations and other musical vocabulary, were very great at capturing the attention of all students and cared about their learning.



*Feeling the vibrations of strings along the wall*

## Pool Days

Another aspect of the summer that children looked forward to was the weekly pool times at the different sites. We felt this was most needed on those unbearably hot and humid days. Every Monday there would be no less than 15 children standing outside Glen Haven Center's door waiting to go to the pool with their suits on and goggles in hand. Before leaving to the pool, there would be a designated lunch time where you could see boys playing with marbles on the ground, girls braiding each other's hair while singing to their favorite songs.

At Ashton Woods, the children were equally as excited and stood outside the center until it was time to leave. Most children going on these weekly outings took advantage of the refreshing time at Lindley Pool, ten minutes away each Tuesday. During the changing time in locker rooms, many of the girls were self-conscious of swimming suit regulations and had conversations about American culture and dress. It was a memorable moment in which an international perspective could be heard and valued. By watching these situations, it showed how the challenges of being a child and wanting to swim and have a fun time clashed with cultural standards and appropriate dress attire when swimming.

Since Oakwood has a pool site, a trip to Keeley Park, a sprayground in Greensboro, was arranged. This park was filled with water pipes and toys that spray water and buckets that fill with water and then pour out on all the children. Through much screaming and giggling, it was easy to see the happiness that all the children shared while they played. On some picnic tables, far from the water activities, were their mothers sitting and chatting about their children, homes, and home countries.

*Glen Haven Middle School Program*



## Volunteer Perspectives

by Paige Hines

While Jennifer helped with the youth summer school at Oakwood, I assisted with English and computer classes for their moms and other community members. In class we covered vocabulary and dialogue for shopping at the supermarket and finding sales, parent-teacher conferences, going to the doctor, and emergency situations. It was my first time teaching ESL, and all of the women were at different levels which made the class quite diverse in both pace and topics covered. We were happy to have a surprise visit from a beekeeper who was speaking to the kids one day. We sat in on the talk, which was a treat for all and great comprehension practice!

The class also had its surprises for me. While I knew of some of the issues facing undocumented immigrants, hearing their stories first hand was extremely impactful. On the day we were to talk about emergencies, police came to do an outreach event with the children. As in the case of the beekeeper, we thought this would be a great opportunity for our students to ask questions and learn. One woman was very frightened by the thought of the police and told us a harrowing story of experiencing police brutality herself. Other community concerns surfaced as well. However, the police were very informative and friendly, answering all of the questions thoroughly, and I hope that this type of interaction can continue in Greensboro.

by Jennifer  
Urdaneta

Over the summer, I personally learned about the diversity of cultures and backgrounds that are present here in Greensboro. Even though I am Latina, I was able to learn from my own Latino community here. In addition to this, I have also learned about the struggles that many immigrant and refugee populations have to go through in order to get to this country.

During the programming, since I worked mostly with children, I began to notice the ways in which leaving their home country or place of settlement and coming to the United States had affected them. However, most of what I noticed was a negative attitude whenever I had children talk about their own culture and heritage. Seeing that both children from Glen Haven and Oakwood Forest centers were indifferent about their own cultures and language, I started to ask myself what I could do to remind them about how special they each are, but also have children learn from each other's cultures as well.

I decided to create a heritage celebration event that took place at two of the centers. From what I noticed, both Glen Haven and Oakwood Forest sites were different in the sense of community it exerted. For example, the parental involvement level of Glen Haven was very low because of jobs and other commitments during evening hours, so I decided to create a celebration more focused on the children.

The different events of the celebration consisted of icebreakers and activities that asked each child to for example, share their whole full names and why they were named that. Other activities consisted of presenting national food pictures of dishes from Bhutan, Nepal, Burma and even Liberia, countries from which the children come from. At the end, even a dancing portion happened because of very energetic Nepali girls wanting to share with everyone a very well practiced dance.

At both sites, similar heritage celebrations happened because I felt that as children, the pride of being from a different country and having a different culture should be more instilled in their everyday lives. This whole summer I have enjoyed getting to know more people and learning stories of the amazing people CNNC works with on a daily basis!

## Special Thanks to our Volunteers!

By Aaron Hall, CNNC Volunteer Coordinator

The summer of 2015 was packed with outings and activities for the youth at the CNNC community centers starting in June with the UNCG Kinesiology Department's Project Effort and ending with the science and music program UBEATS in August. In between were day camps at the individual community centers as well as field trips to the pool, local farms, the farmer's market and the summer lunch program. None of these activities would have been possible without the time and effort of our incredible volunteers.

From transporting children to and from various locations, to trudging through the oppressive heat and humidity while supervising groups of excited kids, or assisting in picking up and distributing lunches, our volunteers went above and beyond



*Top: Youth at Project Effort*

*Bottom: AmeriCorps ACCESS Member Cristina Paytner reads with youth at Asthon Woods*

to help us ensure the youth at our centers had a summer full of fun and learning.

During the school year, serving youth at the individual community centers through our after-school tutoring program can be challenging on its own; supervising a group made up of the children of all three centers takes it to a whole other level. Over 150 youth of various ages were involved in the summer programs that took place all over the city, and it is inconceivable that these programs would have been nearly as successful as they were without the committed help of our volunteers and interns.

Thank you to all who gave their time and energy to make the summer a tremendous success. We couldn't have done it without you!

## A Message of Gratitude

Lizzie Biddle, Community Centers Program Coordinator

Each summer, the CNNC Community Centers: Glen Haven, Oakwood Forest, and Ashton Woods successfully provide programming for the youth and their families who reside in those communities. This year, thanks to a number of partners, we served over 150 youth and had our busiest summer yet!

We had three weeks of educational enrichment at all three centers thanks to Guilford County Schools ESL Department, fabulous volunteers, and interns like Paige and Jennifer! We improved our swimming skills at Greensboro City Pools; we learned about the music of nature and the natural world around us through the UBEATS; we learned how to put our best effort not only on the sports field, but through the rest of our lives through Project

Effort; we had free nutritional meals provided weekly through Guilford County School summer lunch program; but most of all relationships and memories that will last us a life time. We could not have done this without your help – THANK YOU!

A big thank you to the following:

The AmeriCorps ACCESS Members serving at the sites; Guilford County Schools ESL Department– Mayra Hayes, Bill Jarrett, Vicky Plott, Carmen Brown, Abbey Windsor, Soledad Lardies-Dunst, Beth Biester, Annie Wall, and Lori Vernon; UBEATS staff, Lead Principal Investigator, Dr. Patricia Gray, Christina Hankovszky, Brooke Thrower, Jessica MacNair, Carissa Zachar, Tom Niedziela, Martha Regester, Joanne Settle, Bill Jarrett and Martha Regester with Greensboro Science Center; Sari Rose, Tom Martinek, Greensboro United

Soccer Foundation, and all the Project Effort staff and volunteers; GCS Summer Nutrition Program; City of Greensboro Parks and Rec Staff at the Peeler and Lindley Pools; Edna Tan, Beverly Faircloth, and their volunteers; Ms. Debbie and her Girl Scout leaders; folks that made Oakwood Summer school possible: Laura Hall, Paul Okoyeh, TK Willis-Finney, Carson Dickerson, Judy Harvey, Danny Cao, Alexa Florencio-Picazo, Kapuka Farms, City of Greensboro Curbside Market, Guilford College farm, Suin Ksor, Ruby Westcoast with Pet Responsibility, GPD, Rob Jacobs, Melissa Tinling, and Evandro Cassova; the Office of Leadership and Service Learning for use of their 15-passenger van; folks that supported the community centers financially, the Kinder Morgan Foundation, New Garden Friends Meeting Social Concerns Committee, the Seven

Oaks Fund and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro. Thank you!



*End of the year party at Ashton Woods*