

Students Enjoy Challenge, Fun At Academic Summer Camps

(NAPSA)—One of the best-loved summer traditions for children is camp. Among many specialty camps available, academic summer programs are often overlooked. Academic camps may not attract those students who are counting down the days to summer break, but they offer great opportunities for bright students looking for ways to exercise their brains and connect with new friends.

Developing book and life smarts

With rigorous classes taught by master teachers, academic summer programs can offer enrichment material that most students don't get in school. In addition, students can explore areas of study usually reserved for college students by taking classes in architecture, philosophy, robotics, or mathematical modeling. Summer program students often are delighted to find themselves surrounded by other highly motivated students.

Because many academic programs are held at colleges and universities, students as young as 4th grade get a taste for campus life. With support and guidance from counselors, students experience supervised independence—living in the dorms, eating in college cafeterias, meeting bright students from across the United States, and enjoying recreational and cultural activities after class.

John Sequeira, 15, from Miami, Fla., decided to return to the Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development for a second year, explaining, "I found great friends, experienced a taste of dorm life, and learned many things. The other kids here are some of the greatest people you will ever meet."

School credit away from school

In addition, a few summer programs offer accredited classes



Students Marc Lim and Teddy Chow enjoy campus life at the Center for Talent Development's Equinox program for 10th-12th grade students.

that allow students to earn high school credit for classes taken during the summer. Amin Lakhani, 13, from Skokie, Ill., just completed 7th grade when he enrolled in Algebra I at the Center for Talent Development. After earning an "A" in the three-week course, Amin was able to transfer the credit to his middle school and enter honors geometry as an eighth grader. The Northwestern program, accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, grants high school credit and issues transcripts to students satisfactorily completing its summer courses. Many talented students can cover a year's worth of curriculum in three weeks of intensive learning at academic camps.

According to physics teacher Dr. Mark Vondracek, "Gifted students thrive on the brisk pace and cathartic environment of accelerated summer classes. I enjoy watching my students blossom into young scholars and watching their confidence grow from the support of their classmates and the positive learning community."