

Dear Fellow BMR Alumni:

As a former camper and parent of campers/counselors, I cannot recommend highly enough sending your children to BMR. The reasons are endless: wonderful, loving, family-owners/operators; magnificent setting nestled in the Pike National Forest; escape from the concrete, technology trances and rushed life of school and the city to a serene spot with plenty to do, but with time to just sit, reflect, slow down and engage; opportunities to learn and grow through activities that conquer fears, build confidence, teach patience, and nurture friendships; and have you heard about the food?! The list could go on and on.

As a camper, I learned how to clean a toilet, sweep a rug, share my space and make my bed...things I had never done growing up in my privileged home. (My husband is thankful today for those lessons!!!) But there's more to it: it's the comradery of cleaning together with your cabin-mates, taking turns doing the hard things, helping each other out when needed. They are lessons needed in everyday life forever. I also learned to ride a horse, hike a mountain, rappel, shoot a rifle, make a bird feeder out of pine cones, and cook in a wood-burning stove. These are things that usually aren't available in the city. I was also able to be "me"... not the expected "me" of school and family, but just "me." I sat on a log and wrote poetry, I spoke in chapel service, I was a waitress in the mess hall...all very new and formative experiences.

As a parent, I watched my children blossom at Blue Mountain. They developed a love for nature and outdoors, and realized the importance of caring for our natural resources. They learned to work as a team with their cabins and in sporting events, and to utilize their gifts in harmony with others. They learned compassion for children who lived in different family situations than their own, and they learned leadership from the counselors and staff. They even learned to enjoy sleeping under the stars on campouts.

The BMR Legacy Fund makes it possible for children that could not afford this experience to have it. It is an invaluable gift that you can give to these children. I encourage you to donate generously to this fund and provide a wonderful, meaningful and personal growth-filled summer for youth in need.

Thank you in advance...
Julie Melnick Dearien