

Spears expands leadership program

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How many times have you said to yourself, "I wish I would've learned that when I was a teenager!"

Or how often have you thought, "If I could've just learned this years ago?"

Have you ever looked back on your college education and wondered what life could be like had you really known what your options were?

Think about your career — if years ago you'd known what you know today, would you have selected an alternate career path? Would you have pursued your passion, followed your gut, chased that dream? What could your life look like if you had more information and opportunities to

explore your options?

Well, after redesigning our teen programs here at the Spears Family YMCA, we're ecstatic about our 2010 Counselors in Leadership Training summer program, because we're doing just that.

We're taking action to provide teens with a summer experience that encourages explorations of college, career and community service. We're creating valuable experiences that will help develop our teens for life, all in a 10-week period; and we're pulling out all the stops to make it a smashing success.

Though the program's focal point is developing strong future counselors and youth leaders, we know we also have a responsibility to develop well-rounded youth.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and

Fridays, students will spend time in training and working with day campers, ages 5-10, under direct supervision of the training and camp leadership staff.

Teens will learn how to lead games, activities, crafts, songs, skits and have opportunities to practice. They will also learn about child abuse prevention and pool safety.

While this learning and hands-on practice is taking place, they will receive community service hours. The lessons are invaluable — students get to see their impact on the lives of youth who look up to them.

Our newest component is held on Tuesdays and is designed to help teens explore career options by networking in our local community. Each week we'll explore either law, public safety, arts, audiovisual technol-

ogy, communications, finance, hospitality and tourism, science and technology, health science, marketing, information technology, human services, government and public administration and entrepreneurship.

Teens will participate in site tours and hear guest speakers in the respective fields. The goal is to get answers to the three major questions: What do you do? Why? How did you get where you are today — traditional or non-traditional career path?

We want to help students understand people's motivations behind their career choices so they develop their own thoughts on pursuing their dreams.

Lastly, campers will experience college tours and recreation experiences on Thursdays. We'll visit UNC School of the Arts, N.C. State and High Point

University.

We'll play paintball in Hillsborough and try out a zip line in Asheboro, to name a few of the trips we have lined up. And we're exploring as much of our state as possible.

This summer will provide teens with the opportunity to build healthy relationships, self-confidence, leadership skills and their resume.

For more information visit the Alex W. Spears III Family YMCA at 3216 Horse Pen Creek Road, Greensboro or www.spearsymca.org.

If you're interested in serving as a business community site host, e-mail me at harvey.floyd@ymcagreensboro.org.

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