



EMPIRE STATE SPECIAL NEEDS EXPERIENCE AT LIONS CAMP BADGER

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Press Release

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Lions Camp Badger Announces 2011 Summer Programs

Lions Camp Badger in Spencer, NY announced today that they are now taking applications for their 2011 summer programs. The camp programs are designed to meet the needs of youth and young adults, especially those with intellectual and learning disabilities.

There are three summer camp programs to choose from:

- **Community Connections Leadership Experience**, a two week life skills experience from June 12 – June 26, is designed for young adults, ages 18-26, who have either left school or are in the process, and are still living at home.
- **Overnight Resident Camp**, one week sessions for campers, ages 15-21, June 26-July 30, offers a program that develops social skills, self-confidence, and independent living skills.
- **Day Camp**, one week sessions for campers, ages 12-21, July 11- July 29.

The camp is a statewide project of the Lions Clubs of New York State, and is located on 200 wooded acres in Spencer, New York, about 15 miles south of Ithaca. Campers come from all over the state. All camp sessions are designed to offer a small number of campers a structured, supportive, personalized camp experience. Activities are designed to engage each camper, support their special needs and interests, and develop their personal strengths, talents and skills. The goal is to provide both fun and educational experiences through recreational activities, improving communication, social and life skills, promoting self-advocacy, self-reliance and independence, and

creating an environment where youth can develop friendships based on interests, and be active members of teams.

Lions Camp Badger offers a high staff to camper ratio and has a limited the number of campers for each session in order to make sure that each camper is comfortable and well supported. Staff will be able to actively engage and support each camper based on their unique needs and interests.

John Rabideau, Lions Camp Board President, said “At Lions Camp Badger, our overall mission is to help youth and young adults with special needs. Our camp is not for everyone. We offer a camp experience that fills what we see as a current gap – a small inclusive camp where each camper can receive the special attention they need. We have a long history of offering successful programs for youth with disabilities, especially those with intellectual or learning disabilities, attention, organizational, speech, or communication challenges. We are building on this impressive history to offer camp programs that will include all youth and young adults with special needs. Acceptance is based on each applicant’s needs, abilities, interests, talents, and goals. By moving our camp to be more inclusive, we can meet the needs of more youth and young adults, with and without disabilities, who are often left out of larger, more traditional camp experiences.”

Rabideau went on to say, “Our camp programs are designed so all campers are included, and each camper can make choices based on their interests and abilities. Our focus is on abilities. We know from parents and Lions around the state that there are many youth and young adults who need a camp setting with a smaller number of campers, and more individualized supports than can be provided at larger camps. Throughout our history, we have offered experiences and adventures tailored to meet each camper’s special needs.”

For more information, and to obtain a camp application, please go to the Lions Camp Website at <http://lcb.org> or call toll free, 1-800-232-7060, or (607)549-4800