

The 2012 CHADD Summer Camp Awards

by Karen Sampson Hoffman, MA

SUMMERTIME WAS A LITTLE SWEETER this year for four young people who received awards through the CHADD Summer Camp Award Fund: Aaron and Eric Chapman, Drew Krepsky, and Alexa Rosenholtz. They received awards of up to \$6,500 for camp tuition, travel, and camp gear through the program, which funds campers who attend specialized summer camp and treatment programs. The fund was made possible this year through donations from Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the Toys“R”Us Children’s Fund, Inc., and the Annapolis Parrot Head Club of Maryland.

CHADD offers the summer camp award fund for children of CHADD members and

plans to open the application period for the 2013 awards in February. Information on applying for the program will be available at CHADD.org/summercamp in January.

Aaron and Eric Chapman of California jointly received one award toward their summer camp tuitions. The brothers were recently adopted by their aunt and uncle following a family tragedy in which they lost their parents. “They’ve never had anything like this,” said their aunt, Sarah Chapman. “They’re probably unsure of the fun they’ll have. They’ve only seen things on television for camps like this. It’s such a great opportunity.”

Fifteen-year-old Aaron is a musician and an artist who has an interest in writing music. “I like playing guitar, I like instruments. I can play any instrument,” Aaron said, adding he writes rock music in the style of the Red Hot Chili Peppers. His sketches focus on word art and storyboarding. “I try to do more realistic drawings that communicate.”

Eric, age fourteen, is an athlete. “I like to play baseball, I like to run and do athletic stuff,” he said. “I’m really good at PE. My teacher uses me as an example for everything we do in class.” Eric is also interested in community service opportunities through the Boys & Girl’s Club’s Torch Club. “He’s very much a people pleaser,” said Mrs. Chapman. “He really tries hard to help you and please you and do the best he can for you.”

The brothers are also amateur videographers who have made several movie shorts together and with members of their church youth group. Some were made during overnight camping trips with their youth group. “They’ve experienced the church-camp style of expeditions,” said their uncle, Dennis Chapman. “It’s nothing like what they’re going to experience at the summer camp.”

The brothers took part in a camping trip at SOAR, an adventure camp for children and adolescents affected by ADHD. Their aunt and uncle are grateful the camp committee made the unusual decision to grant one award to be shared by two campers. “It was a blessing for them to be chosen for this opportunity to explore the world,” said Mrs. Chapman. “We’re older parents so it’s hard for us to get them out

with children their age.” Mr. Chapman added, “Now that they’ve progressed into their teen-aged years, this is good for them... the chance to be free and be who they are as young men.”

Fifteen-year-old **Drew Krepsky** of Wisconsin was excited about making his first airplane flight to attend summer camp. He also attended a SOAR program in Florida. Before he headed out to camp this summer, Drew said, “I’d like to meet some people, too. I’m looking forward to that. It’s going to be a good time.”

Drew has an interest in animals, especially cats and horses. He has two cats trained as therapeutic animals that he brings to local assisted living homes. “The residents there get to pet them and play with them, and it’s therapeutic,” said Drew. “It’s good to pet an animal.”

Drew is also part of SPIRIT Riders, which provides horseback riding opportunities for individuals with disabilities. “It’s a volunteer [association] for physically handicapped people so they can ride horses,” he explained, adding that he has been a sidewalker and is currently a horse groom. “I volunteer there. I like seeing the different personalities in the horses.”

His opportunity to attend summer camp paid off for Drew as the school year began, said his mother, Kellie Krepsky. Following his camping experiences, he is interacting more at school and taking part in activities there. “For Drew to have the confidence to speak up in class on the fifth day of school is huge,” Mrs. Krepsky said. “We are so thankful for the scholarship money Drew received this past summer. CHADD does make a difference in people’s lives.”

Also attending a summer camp for the first time was twelve-year-old **Alexa Rosenholtz**, who received the opportunity for an extended trip to Summit Camp. Alexa was very excited and looked forward to the chance to make friends with other young people affected by ADHD. “The whole thing has been exciting and overwhelming,” remarked her mother, Bari Rosenholtz. “We are grateful for the opportunity.”

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