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A Publication for Families and Friends of Camp Sunshine – A Ray of Hope for Children with Cancer

Giving Back Former camper and scholarship recipient Sean Bailey strengthens his camp ties as an invaluable volunteer. **Page 4**

Warm and Fuzzy Join us for benefit performances of "James and the Giant Peach." **Page 5**

Beautiful Tradition Volunteers from Spa Sydell provide restful, rejuvenating moments. **Page 8**

C A M P S U N S H I N E



POSTCARDS

19 Campers Honored With Sunshine Scholarships

Landscape architect...pediatric oncology nurse...teacher...innovator...pro golfer...military leader...biomedical engineer. For childhood cancer survivors, planning for college, career and the future is especially meaningful. Camp Sunshine is proud to announce a record 19 recipients of the Camp Sunshine Scholarship for former campers now attending a college, university or technical school.

Camp Sunshine's Board of Directors established the scholarship in 1992 in memory of Stephen Doak, an accountant with Joseph Decosimo & Co., who provided pro bono services to camp and who died of lymphoma. The scholarship fund was expanded in 2000 in memory of camper Jennifer Allen. The recession meant a cutback in scholarship awards in recent years. However, thanks to fiscal prudence and the receipt of two large planned gifts in 2013, the scholarship fund was reinstated this year – empowering even more former campers to pursue their dreams.

"Receiving the scholarship from the people who have come to mean so much to me was such a great honor," noted recipient Erin Dunton. "Camp Sunshine will forever hold a special place in my heart, and I intend to be a part of this amazing organization for the rest of my life."

Every scholarship applicant submits an essay about his or her cancer journey. Here are excerpts from just some of these remarkable future leaders.

Camp gave so much to me...I honestly do not believe that I would be the person I am today had I not attended camp.

Camp Sunshine not only allowed me to meet 10 of my best friends and make memories I will never forget, it also gave me a confidence that I could not have gotten anywhere else.

Camp taught me that having cancer is 'okay.' Growing up and being different from other people is not an easy thing, and Camp Sunshine taught me that having cancer is nothing to be embarrassed or shy about; rather it is a blessing that I was able to overcome something so terrible at such a young age... To me, having cancer was a gift. It sets me apart from most people, especially people my age, and allows me to appreciate life so much more.

Stephen Meadows, University of Georgia



For as long as I can remember, nurses have been a huge part of my life. There was Jo... Momma Duck... Tara... Kristi. These women, along with many others, have significantly influenced my decision to become a nurse. My experiences as a childhood cancer patient have shown me that my calling is to work in Pediatric Oncology.

I believe our life experiences of each day shape us into the person we will be tomorrow. After five years of being in remission, I find myself here (at Georgia Regents University), trying to fulfill my lifelong dream. In spite of the obvious obstacles I have faced, I graduated from high school, started college, joined a sorority and try to live each day to the fullest. Instead of choosing to let cancer run my life, I embraced it and it has helped make me the person I am today. Some probably think that my health will get in the way, but I see it as a strength, not a weakness, and I know it will make me an excellent nurse.

Montana Brown, Georgia Regents University



DEAR CAMP SUNSHINE FRIENDS,

When we say camp is a ray of hope for children with cancer, we mean throughout the *entire* journey. From childhood through young adulthood, campers and their families can turn to camp for support, friendship, fun and vital programs. Choosing a college, technical school or university is exciting, yet daunting for any young person. For our campers, the task is especially sweet and significant. We are thrilled this year to reinstitute the Camp Sunshine Scholarships for former campers. Originally begun in 1992, the scholarships were suspended after 2009, when funding was down. We delight in being able to offer the scholarship once again, helping a record 19 campers fulfill their dreams.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Camp Sunshine enriches the lives of Georgia's children with cancer and their families through recreational, educational and support programs.

One thing that strikes me about the applicant essays is the number of campers who intend not only to give back to Camp Sunshine as their life story unfolds, but also to dedicate their professional career to helping stem the impact of childhood cancer. Read these passages and prepare to be inspired.

Our Volunteer Spotlight features Sean Bailey, a former camp scholarship recipient, who received his undergraduate degree at University of Georgia and is now pursuing a pharmacy degree at Mercer University. Sean is a little older and further down life's path than this year's scholarship winners. But his core question – *Why would I not give back* – resonates throughout the 2014 scholarship essays.

In Community Partner, we highlight our longtime supporter Spa Sydell. It warms my heart not only to read founder Sydell Harris's reminiscences about her very first experiences at camp some 25 years ago, but also new owner Reina Bermudez's commitment to continuing this truly beautiful tradition. Additionally, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Alliance Theatre, our Presenting Sponsor, The Coca-Cola Company, and our benevolent sponsors who are making possible the fundraising performances of "James and the Giant Peach" on March 22.

To all of our supporters and friends, we thank you for empowering Camp Sunshine to be a ray of hope. We wish you and your family warm and comforting holidays. May your New Year be healthy and filled with sunshine.

Sally Hale, Executive Director

Spread a Little Sunshine This Holiday Season

Make your holiday giving count with these creative ideas to benefit Camp Sunshine.

Tuck a ticket in a child's stocking. Children of all ages will delight in "James and the Giant Peach," Camp Sunshine's signature fundraising event for 2015 at Atlanta's Alliance Theatre on Sunday, March 22 at 1:00PM and 3:30PM.

Buy a brick. Honor a friend or loved one whose life has been touched by camp by purchasing an engraved brick or paver for our brick walkway at the Camp Sunshine House. Brick options range from \$100 to \$500.

Send a special message. Honor friends, family and business associates with a donation to Camp Sunshine. Along with your financial gift, send us the names and addresses of those you are honoring, and we'll send them a personalized card designed by one of our campers.



For more information on the many ways you can give to Camp Sunshine at holiday time or any time of the year, contact Mary Kyle, Development Director, at 404-325-7979 or mary@mycampsunshine.com.

19 Campers Honored with Sunshine Scholarships, Continued from page 1



Nowhere in the universe has a place brought me such happiness and gratitude.

The friendly nature of camp always leaves me afterwards more ambitious toward the future.

When I look back on my life, leukemia has molded me into the real, optimistic person I am today. Surviving cancer granted me a considerably larger glimpse at life.

My major at University of Georgia is landscape architecture. My desire in this field of study started when I pondered what kind of profession made me thoroughly impressed. The very initial thought that popped into my head was how someone precisely and elegantly built Camp Sunshine. The combination of an earthy summer camp environment and an advanced building complex assembled for disease-struck children flabbergasted me. I want to be part of the global picture that assists people in engineering projects such as this one.

Richard Yu, University of Georgia



Being diagnosed with childhood cancer was truly a blessing in disguise.

Ever since, I've always tried to live my life knowing that the events that occur that seem to be out of my control happen for a reason... Having survived a life-threatening disease and having lost friends

from this disease as well has led me to value life as a gift. I have gained a sense of determination and maturity that which allows me to work hard toward my dreams as a musician. In a world with many restraints and suffering, music is a means to share a story and allow a listener and performer to rise above the realities of the world.

Danielle T. Wilson, Boston University

I want to become a military officer, lead by example and set high standards. I have always wanted to give back to my country and live with a purpose since I was given a second chance at life.

I view my experience with cancer as a life lesson and my perseverance over this obstacle as a new opportunity at life. Cancer has taught me every day is full of opportunity to change lives and change the world.

I have learned that in life adversity is what you make of it. There are those that will let their adversity determine their lives and those who will use their adversity as a tool to further their journey toward success... I realize that my struggle was not a punishment but a blessing.

Matthew T. Quintana, University of North Georgia

For me life was spent dreaming of the depths of the ocean... marine biology was where I wanted to be.

In November of 2011, I was diagnosed with leukemia and thrown into the cancer world. During the craziness of being newly diagnosed, I became fascinated with my nurses. Their work seemed like a fine art, each act being carefully carried out to ensure the maximum care for each patient.

Only the best of the best can become nurses. But nursing is much more than starting an IV and taking vitals. My nurses at Egleston have taught me that to be a nurse you have to have compassion for who you are caring for... There is not enough ink and paper in the world to tell you how my nurses have done this for me.

Carrie Turner, Georgia Southwestern State University

I have aspired to become an engineer since the first time my dad, a mechanical engineer, showed me around his workplace when I was five.

I hope to be able to use my degree to work at Google in their research and development division. I believe Google is a great company that sets out to help people and is not afraid to try new things. This directly correlates to me... I want to bring education to Third World countries, bring advances in the medical field, give the world an easier access to the internet and countless other endeavors.

As a child I was diagnosed with ALL and to pull through it, I had a lot of help from family, friends and even complete strangers. Ever since then I have strived to help people in any manner I can... I strive to be the best I can be and help others be the best they can be.

Ben Marchese, Georgia Tech

I have enjoyed every second I've spent with Camp Sunshine. Without a doubt, camp is my favorite place on earth... It has been a haven where I can go and not have to be the odd one who had cancer and has to take what seems like thousands of pills every day. It is so refreshing to be in a place where no one even looks twice at a girl who has lost all her hair or a boy who is playing baseball in his wheelchair.

I have just completed my freshman year at the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega. I am majoring in early childhood education and special education... I have always had a passion for children; my goal is provide them not only with instruction and knowledge, but also with unconditional love and a foundation for the rest of their lives, just as Camp Sunshine has done for me.

Erin Dunton, University of North Georgia



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



“How Can I Not Give Back?”

Sean Bailey's cancer journey might have overpowered a less relentless traveler. "But persistence is my thing," he said. Fourteen years after a devastating diagnosis of acute myeloid leukemia (AML), Sean displays the same resolute spirit as a volunteer counselor as he did as a young camper.

Sean was in the sixth grade when he started developing distressing symptoms, including unusual bruising and a cold that would not go away. "One day my neck was so stiff, I couldn't move an inch," he recalled. "Call it mother's instinct, but my mom knew something was wrong with me." Blood tests at the pediatrician's office resulted in a phone call that very afternoon. "They said I had cancer and needed to be at Egleston right away."

The 100-mile trek from the family's home in Warner Robins to Atlanta was the first step on Sean's defining path. "My life became treatment after treatment. I can't remember who or how I was introduced to Camp Sunshine, but I do remember going to camp the first time. Amy (Moosbrugger) was there. She was amazing the way she made me feel at home. Camp was a dream come true – to be able to chill out, talk to people, play games and be a kid again."

Moreover, camp helped sustain Sean during the challenges ahead. After an initial remission, he developed a fungal infection in his lung, a complication of the cancer, which eventually resulted in surgical removal of his right lung. In July of 2003, Sean began bruising again and experienced a relapse of AML. His only treatment option was

an autologous bone marrow transplant. It was successful. "I had no complications," he said. He has been cancer-free for 10 years.

Sean was a recipient of the Camp Sunshine scholarship in 2007 as an undergraduate at University of Georgia. After receiving a science education degree from UGA, Sean went on to become a pharmacy technician at Egleston and is now pursuing a pharmacy degree at Mercer University. He is equally focused on his commitment to Camp Sunshine. "As a

kid, I went to every camp program I could go to," he said. "I volunteered on the Teen Council, and I didn't miss a single summer camp since my diagnosis." He completed camp's Leader in Training (LIT) program. For the past three years, he has volunteered as a cabin counselor for Junior Week and volunteered for the first time at Family Camp this fall.

"Why would I *not* volunteer? There is no other option in my mind but to give back to this place that has given so much to me," Sean reflected. "I want

to introduce the people I love to this special place. At camp, kids realize they are not alone. The strongest medicines can be things like friendship and fun – the things that camp provides."*



"I love being a volunteer. It's totally different being on this side of camp. The kids will wear you out... but they also allow you to experience your inner kid."



“James and the Giant Peach” Performance to Benefit Camp

Campers, families and friends, get ready for a magical afternoon as Camp Sunshine in collaboration with The Coca-Cola Company, our Presenting Sponsor, and Atlanta's nationally acclaimed Alliance Theatre offers two exclusive private benefit performances of “James and the Giant Peach” on Sunday, March 22 at 1:00 and 3:30PM.

Based on the children's classic by Roald Dahl, “James and the Giant Peach” is the story of a young English orphan who experiences an amazing journey in a larger-than-life enchanted peach. James's companions are a zany ensemble of insects, brought to life by nimble actors sure to thrill audiences of every age. Young and old alike will fall for the charming

sweetness of a young boy on a whirlwind adventure to find his chosen family in this one-act, family-friendly musical.

Thanks to the generous support of our corporate sponsors and many donors, the Alliance Theatre production has become the annual signature fundraising event for Camp Sunshine. Proceeds support the year-round programs that camp provides for children with cancer and their families. Last year, Camp Sunshine provided nearly 130 programs over 140 days, offering a ray of hope for these children and families. For more information about sponsoring or participating in this event, contact Lindsey Acciarito 404-325-7979 or Lindsey@mycampsunshine.com.*

19 Campers Honored with Sunshine Scholarships, *Continued from page 3*

I was diagnosed with leukemia at two years old, and my parents were told that if I survived I would probably have severe side effects for the rest of my life. The chemotherapy was expected to cause learning disabilities in both math and science. Against those odds, I have attended nationals twice on my school's Science Olympiad team. I was also invited into the Science National Honor Society and achieved a perfect science score on the ACT.

According to (statistics), less than two percent of teenagers have started their own business. Against those odds I founded a shaved-ice business... Less than 27 percent of teenagers have donated over \$2,766 to charity. Against those odds I have donated over \$6,000 to charities... Throughout my life the odds have been stacked against me. Yet statistics have not defined me but instead have made me unique and determined to overcome whatever adversity I face.

Griffin Battel, University of Virginia

I have seen a one-legged man climb the rock wall in 42 seconds.

I have seen a wheelchair-bound kid ride a horse like he was born to be a jockey. I have seen a partially blind boy hit the bull's eye of an archery target not just once, but three times in succession. Seeing all my fellow campers live out their belief that they can do anything has inspired me in my career path.

Whether or not I can accomplish my dream of becoming a professional golfer on the PGA Tour, I see a very realistic and beneficial way of serving my community and those less fortunate than I am... Golf is a great vehicle to be able to give back and teach. The smiles I have seen at the mini golf course at camp when a putt is made is remarkable, and I cannot but imagine the fun and smiles from (campers) learning how to golf.

James Cyran, Clemson University

NAME	UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE ATTENDING	HOME CITY
Abby Allen	Kennesaw State University	Sharpsburg, GA
Alyssa Ansell	Florida State University	Niceville, FL
Griffin Battel	University of Virginia	Gulf Breeze, FL
Maia Brookes	University of Georgia	Suwanee, GA
Montana Brown	Georgia Regents University	Thomasville, GA
Tori Brown	Middle Georgia State College	Dublin, GA
James Cyran	Clemson University	Norcross, GA
Madeline Detraz	Kennesaw State University	Douglasville, GA
Erin Dunton	University of North Georgia	Jacksons Gap, AL
Mackenzie Dyer	Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College	Milner, GA
Levi Fortner	Truett McConnell College	Hazelhurst, GA
Ben Marchese	Georgia Tech	Milton, GA
Stephen Meadows	University of Georgia	Loganville, GA
Sebastian Perez-Ramirez	Southern Polytechnic State University	Atlanta, GA
Matthew Quintana	University of North Georgia	Savannah, GA
Carrie Turner	Georgia Southwestern State University	Weston, GA
Michael Waters	Georgia Institute of Technology	Powder Springs, GA
Danielle Wilson	Boston University	Decatur, GA
Richard Yu	University of Georgia	Marietta, GA



For any House program, we ask that you RSVP to 404-325-7979

JANUARY 2015

SPA SYDELL NIGHT At Camp Sunshine House

January 12, March 9 and April 27

6:00-8:00PM

Call to RSVP

Come have dinner and be pampered by the talented professionals from Spa Sydell.

PRESCHOOL MUSIC CLASS

2nd and 4th Wednesday each month

10:30AM - 12:30PM

Call to RSVP

Join us for lunch and music class. For campers birth-6 years of age and their preschool siblings.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 Office Closed	2	3
4	5	6 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Eglston	7 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/SR	8 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	9	10
11	12 Spa Sydell Night	13	14 Pre-School Music Class	15	16 Savannah Regional Program Teen Lock In and Winter Dance	17
18	19 Office Closed	20	21	22	23 Sibling Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	24 →
25 →	26	27	28 Pre-School Music Class	29	30	31

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

We now provide programs in all areas of the state in addition to programs in the Metro Atlanta area. Check out our website www.mycampsunshine.com, the newsletter and your mail for programs coming to your area.

THE NEXT STEPS: OFF TREATMENT WORKSHOP

March 14

Camp Sunshine House

Call to RSVP

Topics addressed at this educational program will include:

- Medical Follow-up
- Cognitive Late Effects
- Family Life After Treatment
- Helping Your Child Transition

FEBRUARY 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Eglston	4 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/SR	5 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	6	7
8	9	10	11 Pre-School Music Class	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Seasonal Sunshine	25 Pre-School Music Class	26	27 Teen Retreat at Camp Twin Lakes	28 →



Connect with Camp Sunshine online to stay up to date on the latest news and happenings! Join us at www.facebook.com/campsunshine and on Twitter @mycampsunshine.



For any House program, we ask that you RSVP to 404-325-7979

MARCH 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1 →	2	3 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Eglston	4 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/SR	5 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	6	7 School Age Overnight →
8 →	9 Spa Sydell Night	10	11 Pre-School Music Class	12	13	14 Next Steps: Off Treatment Workshop
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 James and the Giant Peach	23	24	25 Pre-School Music Class	26	27	28 Spring Fling for Preschool Families
29 →	30	31				

SPECIAL EVENT

**Camp Sunshine Presents
James and the Giant Peach
Sunday, March 22, 2015**

1:00 PM and 3:30 PM

Join Camp Sunshine for one of two special performances of "James and the Giant Peach" at the Alliance Theatre! Tickets and sponsorships are on sale now through the Camp Sunshine website for this fabulous family spectacle. Call 404-325-7979 for additional information.

SAVE THESE DATES

**May 16, 2015
Staff Orientation**

**June 14-19, 2015
Summer Camp – Teen Week**

**June 21-26, 2015
Summer Camp – Junior Week**

**August 14-16, 2015
Sibling Camp**

APRIL 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/SR	2 Remembering the Sunshine Family Night	3	4
5	6	7 Sunshine 2 U at Aflac Cancer Center/Eglston	8 Pre-School Music Class	9	10 Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	11 →
12 →	13	14	15	16	17 Family Camp at Camp Twin Lakes	18 →
19 → Remember the Sunshine Day at Camp Twin Lakes	20	21	22 Pre-School Music Class	23	24	25
26	27 Spa Sydell Night	28	29 Washington DC Trip for Teens	30 →		



CAMP SUNSHINE®

A ray of hope for children with cancer.™

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CAMP SUNSHINE POSTCARDS

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Spa Sydell and Camp: It's a Beautiful Thing

The bond between Camp Sunshine and Atlanta's premier Spa Sydell dates back so many years that founder Sydell Harris said, "I'd have to count my camp bracelets to know for sure."

It was about 25 years ago, back when summer camp was held at Camp Barney Medintz, that Sydell and her husband Arthur first visited camp and fell in love with it. She remembers standing outside on a wooden platform doing make-up for the girls, while Arthur and their son Richard played Frisbee with the boys. "It was an incredible experience . . . in the heat of the summer, being there with those children," she recalled. "From then on, Camp Sunshine has been such an important part of our lives and part of our culture at Spa Sydell."

New owner Reina Bermudez cherishes the legacy: "I didn't know about Camp Sunshine until I started working at Spa Sydell in 2007. But I quickly realized how important this relationship is; there is never a doubt this is where our heart is."

For Reina, it is personal. Her father is a cancer survivor and her brother is on chemotherapy. She is the mother of a blended family of seven children. "I love, love, love children," she said. "They are sweet and innocent and rambunctious. To see a sick child, a child

with cancer, it breaks your heart. This is something we can do to make a difference in the lives of these families."

In addition to providing spa services to campers at summer camp, Spa Sydell Nights are held every other month on the second Monday from 6:00-8:00PM at the Camp Sunshine House. Camp families can take the time to relax and rejuvenate with the professionals from Spa Sydell, enjoying massage, reflexology, facials and manicures. "We have wonderful technicians. To see the staff so involved by volunteering their time and talents is wonderful," Reina said. "It's not as if you have to ask the employees to please take a turn . . . everybody signs up! Everyone loves being a part of this tradition."

Sydell still participates in spa nights when she can: "We talk to the families and hear their stories and realize these are unbelievable people. Arthur says the kids are the biggest heroes you could ever imagine. I always tell people if you come to Camp Sunshine your life will change. Sometimes in life the smallest things can upset you and you think how am I going to handle this. At camp, you realize what these families are going through and it puts things in a different perspective. Camp Sunshine is powerful – it makes you realize how special life is." *

