2016 SUMMER REPORT
A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUMMER LEARNING SUCCESS

I am proud to report the summer learning successes of Horizons at The Episcopal Academy. We completed our fourth summer on campus hosting 75 students from two partner schools in North Philadelphia and Lansdowne, Delaware County. Our main goal at Horizons is to eliminate the achievement gap for our students. As reported in the New York Times, “The achievement gap between children from high and low-income families is roughly 30-40% larger among children born in 2001 than among those born 25 years earlier.” As this evidence shows, the achievement gap is growing and one of the best ways to address this gap is through summer learning programs. The National Summer Learning Association states, “the effects of summer learning programs endure for at least two years after participation.” Through its support of Horizons, the entire Episcopal Academy community is helping stop summer slide and close the achievement gap for our students from low-income families who return to the program each year through 8th grade.

INSPIRING MINDS

Academics are the most important part of the Horizons day. Each Horizons class of 15 students has a lead plus an assistant teacher and our faculty is a mix of Episcopal teachers and area public school teachers. Horizons programs place particular emphasis on literacy, and our program is committed to helping students develop as strong, engaged readers. We have a full time reading specialist who leads our guided reading program and pays particular attention to students whose reading skills lag behind grade level benchmarks.

Project based learning helps involve students in the classroom. This past summer, our fourth graders worked on their own research projects: developing topics that interested them to formulating a plan to raise awareness about their issue or cause. For example, groups that were researching lupus and leukemia ran a bake sale on campus and donated proceeds to help fund research for those diseases. Learning by doing and the program field trips engage our students and help provide a different experience than their school year learning. Enrichment takes place daily and ranges from basketball clinics put on by our Upper School volunteers to a two-week art enrichment class that allowed 1st and 2nd graders to focus on art concepts and develop their artistic skills.

To help track our program’s progress, Horizons students are tested using the STAR testing program from Renaissance Learning during the first week of the program and again during the last week to check skill development. Our students showed academic progress across the board from the six weeks of academics during the summer. Students without intervention typically lose 2-3 months of academic skills over the summer compared to Horizons students who are gaining ground.

“Reading skills are tested for our early grades (K,1,2), and all grades demonstrated progress. Our 1st and 2nd graders had growth at or above national expected growth rates while Kindergarten was slightly below. Our 3rd and 4th graders are tested for both reading and math skill growth and their results are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Overall Growth in Months</th>
<th>Below Grade Level</th>
<th>Overall Growth in Months</th>
<th>Below Grade Level</th>
<th>Typical Summer Learning Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I do notice a difference with Horizons. [My children] are more excited to get to the next level because that’s what Horizons pushes them for, the next level.”

- GAIL FISHER GLENN, PARENT OF 3 HORIZONS STUDENTS
BUILDING COMMUNITY

Our Summer 2016 program theme, Character Counts, allowed Horizons at Episcopal to reflect the unique culture of Episcopal Academy while providing more social and emotional learning opportunities to our students. Throughout the summer, our teachers stressed three of the Episcopal stripes: Kindness, Respect and Self-Control in their classrooms to reinforce the Character Counts theme and allow the Horizons students to learn important life skills and lessons.

An important part of our summer community is the Horizons Upper School Volunteer Program. This past summer, 44 Upper School students volunteered with us for a minimum of two weeks. These students fill a tremendous role at Horizons and help our teachers provide much needed individual support for our students. Horizons students look up to these role models, and as one volunteer stated, “I learn so much by working with the Horizons students. They open my eyes to the world and teach me about gratitude.”

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Horizons at Episcopal debuted an important enrichment program this summer. Kim Piersall, Episcopal Academy Experiential Learning Coach, brought a version of her Middle School resilience training and leadership development program to our 3rd and 4th graders. This program, called “Building the Leaders of Tomorrow” allowed us to provide more social and emotional support to students and teach important self-management skills. Horizons students loved this enrichment course and learning how to constructively express feelings and emotions. As part of this course, 3rd and 4th graders had special field trips to TreeTops Adventures (ropes course) at the Elmwood Park Zoo and The Philadelphia Rock Gym where they got to demonstrate their newfound leadership skills. We are hoping to bring a version of this program to all of our Horizons students next summer.

Swimming continues to be a transformative part of a Horizons summer. Learning to swim is an important life skill for all of our students. Overcoming any fear of the water and mastering swimming skills in the pool provide a much needed confidence boost for many of our students which carries over to their attitude toward learning in the classroom. ESF Summer Camps again donated swim lessons for our students – an invaluable gift for Horizons and our students!

“Horizons is so important because it gives [our students] the opportunity to be on a level playing field. It definitely means something to the students and it’s not just a summer program but a life journey. We are giving students tools to be successful in life.”

– TAN EEKA HARPER, HORZ IONS TEACHER

YEAR ROUND CONNECTION

We will keep in touch with our students and families over the school year through our Service Learning Saturday Program. For the 2016-2017 school year, our students from Frederick Douglass Mastery Elementary School and Ardmore Avenue Elementary will come to Episcopal Academy on October 15, December 10, and February 4 to join with our Episcopal Middle School volunteers in learning and community building.

FUTURE DIRECTION

We are excited about all we have accomplished through our fourth year. Horizons makes summer learning fun and we achieved 95% attendance during the Summer of 2016. We had an 88% retention rate year over year and one of the keys to reducing the achievement gap is having our students return each summer. Our priorities over the next year are developing a middle school curriculum that addresses the academic and social/emotional learning needs of our oldest students and providing a more formalized enrichment program for all of our Horizons students. The Horizons network is growing, with 50 programs in 17 states and Horizons believes in the promise of opportunity for all children.

We could not run this program without all of the support from the Episcopal Academy community. Teachers, administrators, families, students and staff have rallied around us to provide many resources for our students and we are so grateful. A big thank you to our donors for supporting Horizons. Together we are making a difference!

With gratitude for all of your support,

KATHY JACOBY
Executive Director

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Executive Director

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