

JCP! JCP! JCP!

By Kurt Schwarz
Executive Director

The title of this article is not only one of our favorite camp chants but one of the key performance indicators of our ministry! “JCP” stands for the ISC Junior Counselor Program which is comprised primarily of 16–17-year-olds who have graduated as campers, and are now chosen to serve with our summer staff team. We also pick up a few Junior Counselors on the recruiting trail throughout the year. These are seniors in high school who have shown they have what it takes to join our summer ranks. The JCP chant is a boisterous mantra to signify our excitement for these important new team members. The cheer is shouted at staff training periods and any time

one of our leaders singles out one of our beloved Junior Counselors for just doing something awesome!

Over the last several years, the ISC Junior Counselor Program has boomed. The thing we love most is the opportunity it provides for us to continue pouring into former campers. We have gotten to watch some of them grow up for years. Moreover, it is a chance for these young men and women to take the next step forward in their journey with Christ by serving others. It is a total WIN-WIN scenario! Most of our Junior Counselors are from the exact neighborhoods as our campers. They can relate in tremendous ways and now get a chance to share the hope they have found in Christ with kids who are just a few years younger than them.

It is a total WIN-WIN...



The concept is simple- Junior Counselors have been so impacted by their time at ISC that they now want to be used to reach others with that same love and truth that they experienced themselves. The Junior Counselor Program is a natural next step for former campers who are serious about their walk with Christ and want to take the next step in growing closer to Him.

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Junior Counselors are placed in cabins with veteran counselors and act as extra support to them. They are there to learn from their co-counselors, without the pressure of taking the lead role. We make it clear to our counselors and summer staff leaders that this is a big brother and big sister opportunity. Not only are they serving their campers, but modeling leadership for their Junior Counselor. Each summer we see Counselors take Junior Counselors under their wing and help them have success. Junior Counselors are also assigned to spiritual advisors who check in with them each day to talk through any challenges they might be facing in this new role. The feedback from JCP participants has been incredible!



Mecca started with ISC as a camper from Newark, NJ. She has been serving as a junior counselor for the last 2 years. She summed up her JCP experience like this, “I feel so blessed that God has given me this opportunity to reach kid’s hearts and share Christ with them. The weeks may be hot, long, and draining but ISC is something I never want to miss!”



Josiah said, “I think I was the youngest co-counselor at camp and was definitely feeling some pressure. The first few days were a learning curve for my campers, who were quite rowdy, and also me. As the week went on they really came to like what ISC had to offer and opened their hearts in a big-time way. By the end of the week, all of my campers rang the ISC “Born Again” Bell!”



Selah shared, “I wasn’t quite sure what to expect coming to camp as a junior counselor but once I met all of the other amazing team members, I saw the Lord shine through every single one of them and I knew that my time would be beautiful. After meeting my campers and hearing their stories I knew that the Lord was going to use me. I had some of the most beautiful and meaningful conversations with them and most of my campers accepted Jesus into their hearts! When I saw the looks on their faces and the burning for Jesus in their hearts I knew that the Lord had made a huge impact on everyone, including myself.”

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Gabe could truly relate to our campers and shared that “being a Junior Counselor at ISC this summer has opened my eyes to truly understand what serving really means. I enjoyed the camp term so much. It was so much fun doing the activities with my campers and getting to know them, but the best part was seeing the Word of God make an impact on them. I got to meet a lot of kids who live in Newark and Jersey City and loved connecting with them on a deeper level because we were from similar places. Being a Junior Counselor this summer was a great experience and I’m looking forward to doing it again!”



The Junior Counselor Program is just another example of how ISC is life-changing for all who participate. We are so grateful for the opportunity to minister to Junior Counselors and trust that this is just the beginning of how God wants to use them!

EAGLES’ PERSPECTIVE

By Terry Norfleet, Director of Youth Services

Man Up, Inc.

The Bronx & Brooklyn, New York City

All of the children and teens we sent to camp from Man Up, Inc. had an amazing time at ISC. For some it was their first time away, for others, it was their third summer there, but all of them want to return next year! The thing I appreciate most is hearing the beautiful stories that each of the youth share when they return home. One camper, Joshua, turned twelve years old at camp and told me all about the birthday

song at lunchtime. More importantly, he shared with me that he wanted to change his life around after camp. He said, “listening to the speakers and counselors sharing their testimonies made him want to be like them.” He met some amazing role models at ISC that truly inspired him to live differently. Since camp, he has been attending our mentoring program regularly, and we can notice the difference!



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