

Camp Counsellor, Camp America

Emma Ward, *Geography*

This summer I took part in the Camp America summer cultural exchange program. This activity involved working and living at a summer camp in Hinsdale, Massachusetts for 9 weeks, living and working with the children. The summer camp I was placed at was as follows:

Camp Danbee

Peru,

MA 01235

USA

Website: <https://www.campdanbee.com>

I believe this trip has helped me grow in many ways, and has had a positive effect on both my personal and academic development. I worked both as a general camp counsellor living in the bunk with the campers and doing multiple activities with them in mornings, lunchtimes and evening but also as a dance teacher. I had to prepare detailed lesson plans to tailor to a variety of abilities, and also tailor to a more professional standard account for individual needs and abilities when being booked to teach private lessons. This helped me a lot in terms of my academic career development, as firsthand I experienced the need for precise planning and preparation of lessons and the willingness of others to listen to my expertise and advice. This emphasized to me I enjoy helping people and seeing them better themselves, and that I enjoyed delivering specific knowledge and seeing my work in the form of my dancer's skills improving and seeing my dance routines flourish over the summer. We also put on a showcase at the end of the summer, where my classes performed the routines we had been working on over the summer. I was also chosen to be a team captain for one of the weekly events throughout the summer, which required intense planning and preparation before each week but had to be done in my own time and working with my fellow captains. This was quite a stressful time as many of the campers were often away on trips, or competing in sports competitions or missed class due to sickness, therefore often it was rare to get everyone together, so we were constantly working as a team to adapt to new challenges. This required accurate time management and a sense of professionalism when dealing with these unexpected issues in the workplace.

I also really enjoyed being able to help people and give my specific subject knowledge (in the case of dance, skills and technique) to be able to help other people get better and improve. This is what helped me think more about my career, and that I want to work with other people, discussing plans and practically working. On the whole, I think this helped enhanced my career aspirations to go into a job where I can use my knowledge to better other people and places, and that my work can contribute to building a final outcome. I have been interested in the field of sustainable city planning to help people live a better and more sustainable life through making changes to places and lifestyles.

Living at university, I have mastered living on my own and being independent. However, at camp I was responsible for the care of 13 young girls, as well as adjusting to living in a foreign country for the next three months, adjusting to their culture, food and living with a handful of new people. I had to be extremely disciplined and organized especially when it

came to time management, and I was constantly aware that I had to be in charge of these young girls on a daily basis, who looked up to me and relied on me all day every day. I was aware of my money to ensure I was covered for my stay and was able to enjoy any activities or time off I had, so learnt the importance of money management. I think this allowed me to grow a great deal as a person, and shown me I can deal with a variety of problems and situations that get thrown at me. I feel I have come back from this experience knowing I have the ability to tackle any issues thrown at me, and have made lifelong friends and memories that will be useful in my later life.

Below is a photo of my fellow counselors and age group of campers, a group where we worked closely together and who we were in charge of as counselors.

