

Modern Day Hero

What did people say when you told them that you were going to work at camp this summer? Did they laugh? Tell you to get a real job? Ask if you'd seen the movie Meatballs one too many times? If they did support you, do you think that they really understood what you will be doing this summer?

If this is your first summer at camp, you may not be aware what you are really doing here. Even after a summer or two, the full scope of what we do may not be totally evident. Whether you really understand it or not though, you have assumed a position of tremendous responsibility. Camp is obviously a place where both you and the campers have fun, but we're playing for higher stakes here than simply showing the kids a good time.

In short, your mission this summer is to be a hero. Not a superhero, because those don't exist in real life. Real heroes usually aren't on the news or in People magazine. Real heroes don't care about fame, fortune, or a place in history. Real heroes are just that-real, ordinary people that have an extraordinary effect on the lives of other people. The motivation of a hero is nothing more than the simple fact that being a hero is the right thing to do.

Children need heroes. However, many people think that children need heroes so that they "know what they want to be when they grow up" or "have someone to look up to." While those things are important, that's not the role of a hero.

To be a hero, you must provide a child with one thing-HOPE. It is your calling to give that child hope wherever they need it. Maybe they've had bad experiences with adults. You show them that adults are not all bad. Maybe people laugh at their dreams. You teach them that it isn't only ok to dream, but essential. Maybe they come from a broken home. We show them, through our Griffith Park Boys Camp team, that teams and teammates can be a positive experience. Maybe they've never really been loved. By caring for them in the proper manner while they stay here, you give them the hope that love is more than just an idea, but rather something real they can experience. Heroes allow children to have hope for themselves and their future. Heroes keep the glimmer that we see in the eyes of children from fading as they get older.

Just being here doesn't make you a hero. It does give you the opportunity to become one. You have a choice to make this summer. There are a lot of distractions here at camp. Will you choose to be remembered forever as a hero in the eyes of your children?