



Class AGAPE

밀알 사랑의교실

9월 Newsletter

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2013 Camp AGAPE Reflective Essay Contest Winners!

Once again, essay submission came to an end and there were 33 essays written with so much love, passion, faith, humor, and dedication and only six essays needed to be selected. Congratulations to the 2013 Camp AGAPE Reflective Essay Contest winners!

FIRST PRIZE (3) – iPad with Retina Display or Galaxy Tablet 3

Christine Lee (LA)

Mi Jin Park (NCA)

Sunyoung Kim (LA)

SECOND PRIZE (3) – Kindle Fire HD

Eui Jin Song (OC)

Katie Da Eun Kim (NCA)

Phoebe Ahn (Torrance)

Christine Lee's essay can be found on the back of this month's newsletter – the other two first prize essays written by Mi Jin Park and Sunyoung Kim can be found in the September edition of Milal & World.

Torrance Volunteer's Lock-In

Written by Ms. Sarah Lee (Education Director)



August 16th – 17th, 2013: Torrance Class AGAPE took a week off for a Volunteers' Lock-In in the city of Manhattan Beach. The event began around 2 PM as 20 of us gathered and headed towards Manhattan Beach and settled in to the hotel we were luckily able to receive a good deal for. Once we settled in, the games began and the volunteers spent time mingling with each other without the teachers yelling to stay with their participants and chit chat later. Once the veggies were washed and ready to go, we all got into the car and headed to a nearby park for a "SAM-GYUB-SAL (pork-belly) PARTY". The time at the park came to an end as the sun went away to sleep and the Lock-In continued in the hotel room. One round of game after another and before we knew it, it was nearing 4 AM. One by one the volunteers went to sleep and the day had finally come to an end. Saturday morning began bright and early as we trickled down to the lobby for some breakfast and slowly packed everything up to check-out. Upon checking out, we all headed to Manhattan Beach and played beach volleyball, some played in the water regardless of how cold it was and continued to play more games as we enjoyed the warm sand beneath our feet. It was lunch time and as the volunteers were eating away their pizzas, we sat around in a circle and talked a little bit about why we were all part of Class AGAPE.

The discussion began as I asked some of the volunteers who have already fulfilled their community service hours why they were still at Class AGAPE and I could not stop smiling as I heard the volunteers share their love and care for our participants. One shared that if he was to stop coming to Class AGAPE, he would definitely miss Camp AGAPE the most and someone else also shared that they love being a part of our participants' lives and knowing that they could be of assistance and a friend to someone. The volunteers may have not known but the fact that they didn't have a specific reason as to why they continued to volunteer at Class AGAPE, I knew it was because it was a source of joy for each and every one of them. "Ummm... I just like coming..." is proof that something about Class AGAPE really touches the heart of these high school volunteers. Whether it's been three years or two weeks, we all know it's not easy to serve individuals with disabilities but to do it at such a young age with great hearts is truly a blessing and I know that each and every one of our volunteers at Class AGAPE will grow up to be those that make a huge difference in our world.

2013 Camp AGAPE Essay Contest Winner!

Written by Christine Lee (LA Volunteer)

What is exactly is Autism? When I first joined Class AGAPE the fall of my junior year, I had no definite answer to such a question. I gave only the utmost cursory answers to describe the vague ideas of what I had originally believed to be a "disease of the mind". Little did I know, I was very wrong. The beginning of Milal was a complete disaster on my part; I gave little concern to my student and regarded her with respect lower than that of my peers, actions of which I now regret deeply. Throughout the year, I believed that I was growing as a person and expanding my beliefs, but in retrospect, I now realize that only through Milal Camp AGAPE was I able to increase my build for compliance.



Camp AGAPE. The day I had been viewing with apprehension for weeks on end. I can safely say that I was very worried initially, on not being able to give myself up completely to Natalie (my student) for two and a half days. There were many thoughts that raced through my mind. How often do I take Natalie to the bathroom? What should I do if I cannot comprehend what she is trying to say to me? Are there possibilities of me creating a disaster? Yes, all of these were, if handled improperly, possible situations for disaster. Surprisingly, everything began to change as we loaded the bus to depart for camp, as I was left pleasantly surprised through the many incidents that exhibited Natalie's keen perception on the world. The first of these awe-inspiring incidents occurred when Natalie began to type out her thoughts for me on her well-adapted iPad. I was in shock. Never before had I encountered such an intelligent young girl with a "learning disability". How was it that she was able to fully register what was going on in the world but unable to speak logically? As I began to feel myself relax slowly, I began to let go of my tense apprehension. After all, I figured I would get nowhere if I were to let my fears consume my life. In the end, camp was a success. The time I spent with Natalie was one of the happiest of my life. Without exaggeration, the firsthand experience of fully dedicating myself to the life of another produced more or less an extremely positive result. I had learned to let go of my negative experiences with this child, and while I never forgot, I never let her Autism take over my life. I wanted her experience at the camp to be as if she were a typical girl, and wanted none of her disabilities to restrict her there. That was the point of the camp, right? Other than the exception of her wheelchair, Natalie was able to participate in every event and did so triumphantly. Although the swimming at the camp was a rough start, she grew so much with her skills as time passed, and I enjoyed watching her progress. What simply amazes me is how well she blends in with typical peers. She is doing fine academically and incredibly well socially. Natalie is a phenomenal young girl; words cannot describe. I cannot thank her enough for providing me with this eye opening experience. Thank you Class AGAPE for teaching me and giving me an opportunity to gain this new insight. I will gladly volunteer myself for the next Camp AGAPE and am happy to successfully admit that I have grown much during my experiences at camp with knowledge that cannot ever be replaced.

So what you ask, after all this is my refined answer on the definition of Autism? I have six words: Autism is an inculpable learning disability. People born with Autism are not at fault, but are merely victims of the disorder. Though this may be the case, they should under no circumstances be looked down upon, but should instead be treated as our superiors, and we the subordinates. We should help them grasp as much as they can out of their lives, so that they too may one day be able to enjoy the diversity and beauty that life presents. In the end, the overall fact remains that these people have a voice. And it's time to listen.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our participants, volunteers, and teachers!

Sept. 4	LA: Natalie Yoo	Sept. 11	IRV: Annie Koo	Sept. 22	LA: Alexa Chung
Sept. 5	TOR: James Han	Sept. 13	OC: Esther Pyun		ELA: Paul Lee
Sept. 6	ELA: Cyril Chin	Sept. 18	ELA: Abraham Park	Sept. 23	IRV: Rachel Kim
	IRV: Yutaek Oh		TOR: SeHyuk Gwoun	Sept. 24	LA: Seungwon Ham
Sept. 9	LA: Kathleen Min Lee		TOR: Sarah Woo	Sept. 29	LA: Jun Hyung Bae

C l a s s A G A P E L o c a t i o n s :

Orange County (2000년 8월 6일) 남가주동신교회	Los Angeles (2002년 4월 20일) 충현선교교회	East Los Angeles (2003년 4월 5일) 선한청지기교회	Irvine (2007년 4월 28일) 베델한인교회	Torrance (2008년 9월 13일) 토랜스제일장로교회
Dong Shin Presby. Church 담임목사: 손병렬 2505 Yorba Linda Blvd. Fullerton	Choong Hyun Mission Church 담임목사: 민종기 5005 Edenhurst Ave. LA	Good Stewards Church 담임목사: 송병주 2701 Woodgate Dr. W. Covina	Bethel Korean Church 담임목사: 손인식 18700 Harvard Ave. Irvine	Torrance First Presb. Church 담임목사: 이종민 1880 Crenshaw Blvd. Torrance
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