

The Inspire Spotlight

Newsletter of Inspire: A Shalom Afterschool Initiative

May
2017

Inspire by the Numbers

16

Field Trips / Excursions
offered this school year
(3 more are happening
over the summer!)

990

PB & J sandwiches eaten
this year – **THANK YOU** to
Kevin and Susan for their
dedication in making &
delivering this snack every
Wednesday!

3

Average number of
home visits for each
student in the Spring
semester.



INSPIRE
a shalom afterschool initiative



The Great Outdoors

“Uh, uh, Ms. Noor!” Ayub called out. “I heard a bird, it goes ooh hoo hoo hoo. I used to know, Ms. Mary told me what it is called! Oh, I can’t remember the name. There it is again. No, not that one. Listen! Do you, do you hear it?”

Tuesday is birding day, and Ayub is giddy with excitement. As soon as he can, Ayub slings a pair of binoculars around his neck and runs towards the door. He can’t wait to get outside to see what he can find. Ms. Mary, our birding volunteer, has repeatedly expressed her amazement at Ayub’s eyesight and how quickly he recognizes different species. He is not only the most *excited* birder in the group, but by far the most *gifted*.

Ayub is a seventh grader whose parents are from Ethiopia. Basic math facts are hard for Ayub to master and writing is a challenge – but this kid *thrives* in the outdoors.

On Wednesdays, when Ms. Noor leads a group of students to the woodland behind the church, Ayub is her most dedicated participant. His curiosity to explore has sparked an interest in trail building. He doesn’t complain (much) about the mosquitoes. He jumps right in -- pruning back vines and raking leaves to help the woods become more inviting and accessible for everyone.



Ayub captured a cricket while learning about invertebrates at an Urban Ecology session!

continued on back...

The Great Outdoors continued...

On the second Saturday of every month, Ayub gets himself out of bed at 6 AM (three hours early, just to be sure he doesn't oversleep!) and waits for his ride to attend the Atlanta Urban Ecologists. This program explores the rich ecology of the metro area, and Ayub is one of eight Inspire students who participated this year. Students have planted trees, conducted a nighttime search for amphibians, learned about beavers, eaten insect snacks, and canoed down the Chattahoochee River. Ayub is thrilled about all that he has learned, like how to recognize natural species, describe wind patterns, and see the effects of weather on natural areas (he now notices the new paths made by water after a storm!).

One of the goals of Inspire is to expose students to new experiences and to help them explore areas of interest they might not have otherwise encountered. Ayub has benefited immensely from the opportunities he's had to be in contact with nature this year at Inspire. Having time in the outdoors has offered him regular opportunities to achieve and to develop confidence and self esteem. While Ayub spends most of his day in an academic setting - where he doesn't feel that he belongs and where his strengths don't shine - Inspire gives him an opportunity to be in a different setting, one where he thrives and can feel proud of his accomplishments.

Your gifts of time, interest, and financial contributions make it possible for Inspire to be a place where the gifts of each student are recognized and celebrated. On behalf of Ayub and all of our students, we say thank you.

Clockwise from top right: Ayub and his blindfolded partner Samuel make their way through an obstacle course on the path Ayub helped to build in the woods; Ayub helps Meron and Iesha build a dam while learning about beavers with the Atlanta Urban Ecologists; Ms. Noor and Ayub plant carrot seeds in our garden plot; Ayub and his team hug a tree – checking that off the scavenger hunt list on our field trip to the East Palisades trail; Ayub (with the bionic red eye – aka headlamp) and friends head out in the dark to search for amphibians at their Urban Ecologists session; Sergine and Ayub search for birds with Ms. Mary.

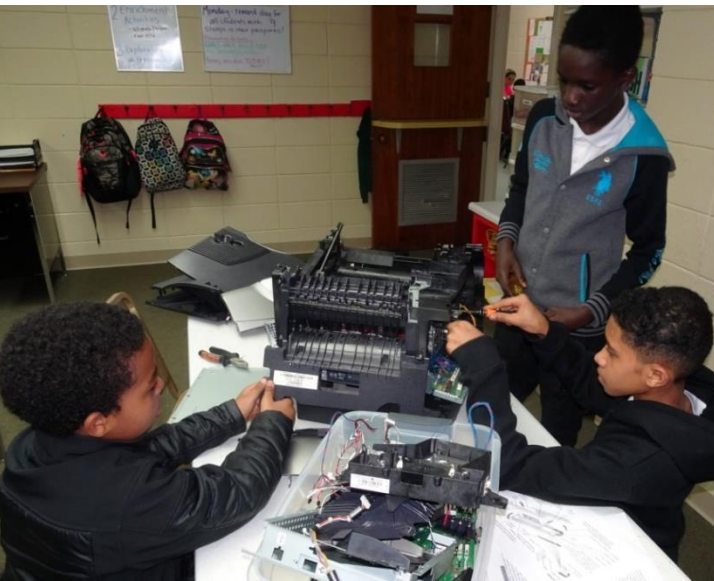


***To see ALL that we did this year, check out our 2016-2017 YEARBOOK at <http://shalominternationalministry.com/multimedia/>



Highlights from Spring 2017

Clockwise from top right: The Paideia Groove team joined *our* team to teach us Ultimate Frisbee and the Spirit of the Game; Ms. Lydia teaches Meron how to tie a tie; Mala learns how to turn sheep's fleece into yarn; Simon, Eric, and Yonathon deconstruct an old printer in our Un-Maker's Space; Sergine, Elizabeth, and Lois model their ethnic clothing at our Fashion Show fundraiser.





In January 2017, President Trump passed an executive order which soon became known as the “travel ban.” We created space at our program for students to think about, discuss, and respond to this. As refugees themselves, our students had many thoughts that they wanted to share. They created protest signs they wished to hold up at the airport protests (see [Protest Paper Doll Chain – Love Trumps Hate](#) on youtube) stating things like “outside people matter” and “America is the land for ALL.” They wrote letters to President Trump [yes, we actually sent them! (and are still awaiting a response)] that said things like: “My family came here because there is a war in my country,” “We are grateful to be in this country because we have a better life and it is safer,” “We want to give back to this country by welcoming people and making less racism,” and “My family and I hope that we don’t have to go back.” Our students also decided they wanted to create a video to share with the world about why *they* think this country should continue to welcome refugees. Search [Refugees](#)



[Welcome – Inspire: A Shalom Afterschool Initiative](#) on youtube (or click that link) to watch the video and learn from the perspectives of our insightful and thoughtful students.

To Volunteer, Email:
inspireshalom@gmail.com



A Note from Ms. Natalie

Save the Date! Mark your calendars (in pencil please, the date is still tentative) for Saturday August 26, 2017 to join us for an Ultimate Frisbee Hat Tournament fundraiser! In partnership with our new friends at The Paideia School (see pg. 3, top right photo), we will be hosting an Ultimate Tournament to raise money for Inspire. Novices and veterans alike are welcome! More details will be forthcoming. We hope you’ll join us for a day of fun, sun, food, and support of the work we are doing in the Clarkston community.

Shalom,
Natalie J. Schucker
 Natalie Schucker
 Program Coordinator



How to Donate

ONLINE: www.rally.org/inspire

CHECK (our preferred method): Make checks out to “New Church Development Commission” and write “**Inspire**” in the memo line.
Mail checks to:
 New Church Development Commission
 1024 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30306

SUPPLIES:
 Check out our [amazonwishlist](#) to donate specific items we need by searching “[Inspire: A Shalom Afterschool Initiative.](#)”

To See Photos, Visit:
www.facebook.com/inspireafterschool



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