

I have been attending Horizon for technically 6 years now and I feel as though I have come a long way from where I started. My first year was terrifying. I am a naturally shy person and despise change, so coming to Horizon was daunting. Everyone was so welcoming, yet everyone also had their own friends already. I felt like an outsider. So much so that I did not even come back my next summer. I regretted not coming back and looking back now part of my outlook of camp was my own fault. I didn't even try to make new friends or put myself out there. This is an ADULT camp for a reason! I was still used to the little kid camp ways that everyone was your friend and if you were cute and sweet people would pay attention to you, that is not how it works in the real world so why would it work here? I decided I would come back in 2020, but then the pandemic happened. Which happened to be the best thing for me. I was able to put myself out there more in the community while still feeling safe and in my own home. I made bracelets, sent them out, and started getting on the weekly Wednesday night zooms. By the time camp returned to being in person, I had formed my own friendships with people and had friends to hang out with. I told myself that I would get more involved with committees and things like that when we came back to camp that summer, but I then got the news I had been accepted into my dream school for teaching. Growing up, I never really knew what I wanted to be. Some days I wanted to be a firefighter, others I wanted to be a historian, but once I finally got my first job at a small daycare, I knew. I knew that teaching was what I wanted to do. I fell in love with it and I even saw things that I had learned from camp coming into my daily life. The camp mindset and ideals go hand in hand with teaching. I truly believe that my camp experiences throughout my life have made me the teacher I am today and will continue to make me a better teacher as I continue coming to camp and further my education. If given the chance of being awarded the Horizon Hope Grant, I can afford the textbooks not covered for the last semester of my program.

I continue to bring Horizon's Mission and Vision to life in my daily life as a teacher, aunt, sister, and friend. I live to educate others on how we as people who live with disabilities, are truly no different than those who do not. We want the same things and want to be treated the same way. Sometimes we may need help from time to time, but when that time comes, we will ask for it. Until then, we've got this. I want to raise my nieces and nephew and my students to be well rounded and kind individuals who support those who live similar lives as me. I want them to feel comfortable asking questions, instead of being afraid and stare as most do nowadays. I bring Horizon's Mission to life through our youth. They are our future. Unfortunately I do not attend many events as they are far away, but I am on multiple committees. I am on spring/fall weekend, recruitment, and I think camp committee as well.