

Subject: Wells Foundation site visit Emerge Link Program

On Oct 16, 2017 2:33 PM, "Aumjames" <aumjames@aol.com> wrote:

Wells Foundation Site Visit Report
Emerge Link Program

Date of Visit: September 21, 2017
Board member : James Davies
Staff: Katherine Shane, grant writer
John Rummels, Youth Program Coordinator
Claire, vista volunteer

Key Points

The Emerge Link program provides educational support services including tutoring, school supplies, social activities, and other academic resources to formerly homeless youth living in the Camden apartments at 4643 Lyndale Avenue North. Goals of the program include improving youth's school attendance and performance, and enhancing youth's social/emotional skills, community connections, and overall support networks. During the school year there are 16 hours of weekly programming after school. This includes one hour of academic and reading time, a social hour, and a snack. There is also an 8 week summer program with 35 hours of programming including outings in the community. The program takes place in a classroom on the lower level, a recreation/art room in the main floor, and an outdoor recreation area with garden plots. The lower level room has been decorated and furnished by volunteers from Ikea and makes a great classroom/library space, and the art room is bright and inviting as well. Goals for the program include making progress academically and socially, leadership skills, and developing new academic interests. These goals are tracked carefully and indicate a high success rate. I was impressed with the commitment of the staff, and the enthusiasm of the students. One of the visits this summer was to a horse ranch, and the children are very happy they had this opportunity. They have done some remarkable art projects, including a recycled plastic version of the Chihuly yellow chandelier which they saw on an outing to the Minneapolis Art Institute. The children were excited to help us plug in the chandelier so I could see it lit up. Amazing.

All of the apartments at Camden house formerly homeless families, and the support of the Emerge Link program is helping these families break the cycle of poverty. The Wells Foundation support has helped with academic and program expenses and is much appreciated.

Volunteer opportunities are available in either tutoring or reading with students. They would also welcome volunteers to come in and do a specific art or craft project. This could be arranged through Emerge Volunteer services.