

Who we are:

We are the Flight Program. We are a group of young men who made poor choices when we were younger and ended up getting sent to placement at the Diakon Wilderness Center. Most of us have been in and out of the system, placements, and detention centers. That was the past.

Today is the future. Today we are *voluntarily* participating in the Flight Program and we're taking new and challenging steps in our lives to change and become successful. We rely on one another for support. We attempt to do what is right, not what is easy. We now look towards the future and our goals instead of living "in the moment." We want the best that this world has to offer and we're now ready to go after it—the honorable way. We are separating from our old friends—they don't know what to think of us anymore. Our families don't know us anymore... they're impressed. Our old teachers, probation officers, and everyone else in our communities that we struggled to understand will soon see that we're going to make it.

We now have positive dreams and goals. We believe in helping others along the path to success: *as iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another*. We are discovering and using the tools and resources in our communities to achieve our goals. We are breaking free from our comfort zones and Soaring to New Heights.

We sacrifice our weekends to be with our brothers. We let go of the old Friday night parties; now we spend that time helping each other and the community. We're not afraid to cry in front of each other. We're not afraid to ask for help. We dropped that front. Fridays and Saturdays are now about positive people, places, and things. We're on the move—in and out of state, going to new events, eating new foods, meeting new people, hiking new trails, and always... telling our story.

Thanks to everyone who donated time to spend with us!



Soaring to New Heights!

Flight Program

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Bringing a close to a busy and fulfilling summer...



Morning view from the rim of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon

we were able to successfully raise over \$4,000.00 to help offset airfare and other costs associated with our upcoming trip to Arizona to conquer the real Grand Canyon on October 9-18th. During our Hike-A-Thon, we successfully backpacked 30 miles in just under 2 days – 47 hours to be exact and needless to say, we all slept well upon return home and had many aching muscles over the following week. It was well worth all of the effort, the views were spectacular and weather was perfect – we were able to sleep under the stars each night. Thank you to everyone who sponsored us!

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Many Hands. One Heart.™
DIAKON WILDERNESS CENTER
A LUTHERAN FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRY

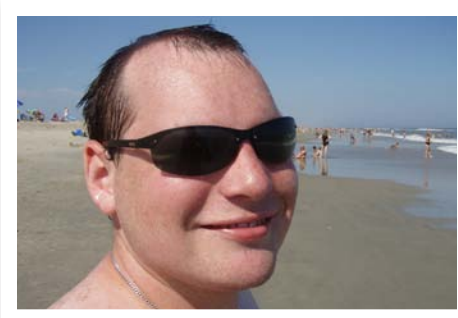
This project is funded, in part,
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After a quick break to recover from the hike, we were once again hitting the road for our trip to Chincoteague Island, Virginia for a weekend of swimming, fishing, and relaxing at the beach. We all agreed that a positive weekend of fellowship at the beach can quickly rejuvenate each and every one of us. Additionally, we all loved witnessing Steven's first time swimming in the ocean and fishing and we're glad we could be the ones to make that happen.



In front of the beach house



James on the beach



Beginning the demo work



Slim's boat



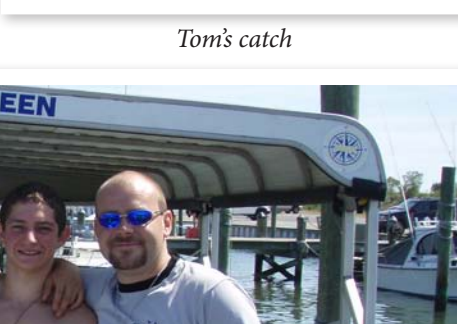
A full dumpster



Tom's catch



Rob's huge catch



Dirty Rob & BK

We finished the summer out with giving back to the community. The Flight Program teamed up with **Cumberland Valley Habitat for Humanity** on their Carlisle house project for demolition work. We all agreed that demolition is certainly our specialty! In order for the builders and the township to see exactly what repairs will be needed on the again house they intend on rehabbing, we were brought in to remove the walls, ceilings, and anything else attached to the original frame of the structure. Within 3 hours we successfully filled an entire dumpster and were told that the Flight Program will be on "speed-dial" for any future demolition work needed. It was challenging and rewarding work, but we all enjoyed the opportunity to help others in need.

The close of summer brings about the beginning of college for many of the participants. Tom, John, and James each began college this Fall. John was even on the front page of his local newspaper for changing his life around! Chris and Brandon are excited to hopefully attend trade school later this Fall. Steven is still continuing his pursuit of getting his Barber's License while simultaneously attending high school. In his "free time" he was able to attend classes at his church and was baptized at the end of August... we are so proud of you Steven! Each week these young men grow stronger in their desire to succeed and help support one another through the daily struggles they face... as Brandon likes to say: "That's how we roll."



Sleeping under the stars



Showing off our catch



A very full dumpster



Steven's Baptism



Enjoying the Overlook



A great view of the PA Grand Canyon

The Flight Program is currently accepting applications. For more information, contact Rob Kivlan at Diakon Wilderness Center. Phone: (717) 903-5102. Email: kivlanr@diakon.org.

Check out our participant-created webpage for more pictures and updates: www.myspace.com/flightboys2009

"Interested in donating to Flight? Simply visit this page on the web: <https://www.diakon.org/DonationForm.asp>, and select "Flight Program."

Meet Tom:

When Tom first arrived at the Wilderness Center at 16 years old he had already been expelled from a handful of schools and had been in and out of his county's detention center too many times. Within his first few weeks at the **Wilderness Center**, Tom quickly discovered that he was not going to simply manipulate his way through the system once again. Rather, he was expected to change. Once Tom finally embraced this concept and began to embrace every challenge placed before him, he thrived. In fact, Tom requested to stay longer in the **Foundations Residential Program** because he felt he was not fully prepared to return home. During this additional time he was able to develop a "plan for success" that he is still following to this day. This included the unorthodox approach of immediately signing himself out of high school in order to avoid his old, negative peers and the stigma that he had created for himself and Tom successfully completed the GED and began attending college at 16-years-old. He has since maintained excellent grades and is looking forward to transferring to Messiah College this Spring to pursue becoming a high school English teacher. "I want to give back to kids through teaching, just like Diakon was able to do for me. I'm going to make the most of the second chance that God has given me."

