

A Special Camp for Special Kids

by Lisa Spellman

The charm is in the ordinary at UNMC's Munroe-Meyer Institute camp.

Recreation technicians and volunteers create traditional day camp activities: sing-alongs, art projects, sports, cooking, swimming, gardening, music and community outings. But, this camp is extraordinary because of the children it serves.

These children have developmental disabilities.

Celebrating its 25th year, Camp Munroe serves more than 200 kids each summer between the ages of 3 and 21 who have mild to severe developmental disabilities.

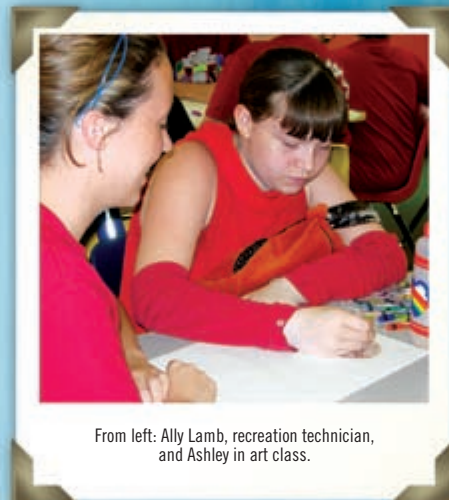
The six-week program provides respite for families and learning experiences for volunteers, who are junior high students earning community service hours or are just gaining experience. Using a buddy system, each camper is placed in small groups based on their age and has a volunteer or staff member assigned to them for the day. Participants may attend camp for one or more weeks.

"Camp Munroe is unique because it is the only full service day camp in the Omaha metro area for special needs children," said Director Michael Crawford, Ph.D.

The unique summer recreational program is part of the Munroe-Meyer Institute's Recreational Therapy Program. ∞∞



From left: John Elson, volunteer, and Aaron Kobza, recreation technician, work with Greg and Justin on swimming activities.



From left: Ally Lamb, recreation technician, and Ashley in art class.



From left: Ellie Wlodkewitsch, volunteer, and Grace learn about rhythms in music class.



Sheehan leads the group in drumming.



From left: Danielle Frolio, recreation technician, and Madi plant flowers in the garden.