

Meet Kayleen



Kayleen first came in contact with camp during winter vacation 2015. Living in Miami, she tagged along with a family friend to a Steve's Camp Reunion during a family visit to New York. From then on, she was hooked. Kayleen came to camp during the summer of 2016 and returned as a Counselor in Training in 2017. She paid for her own airfare by working two jobs, at Home Depot and as a translator for English language learners. This summer, Kayleen, Steve's Camp Staff and a group of rising seniors went on an impromptu college trip visiting 8 schools in two days after her summer session was over. Kayleen's comments are presented below, lightly edited for clarity.

I grew up in a very unstable family. I only had my father and brother supporting me, especially in my education. Their impact was huge because they kept me believing in my self and trying the best that I can in school. While it was just the two of them, I learned the importance of quality over quantity in relationships.

The first year I came to Steve's Camp, the moment I got off the bus I was like "Oh my god, I'm in love with this place." The natural and raw environment felt so peaceful and spacious. Your thoughts are able to be set free, your worries are able to be let go, and your stress is able to be set aside. For me, I was able to enjoy myself and find who I really am. After my first year I was like "I have to come back" because every time I leave Steve's camp, after 4 months, I lose myself again. Being a young woman in high school, with all that is going on in the world, life can be a lot to handle. So I had to come back, it's a break from my reality to come back to find myself again.

Coming to the camp made me feel like **my family was complete** with the counselors, the director, the staff and with the campers. **They give me hope, strength, confidence and security**. I've noticed when girls are feeling insecure about things; the counselors are so genuine. The help we receive at camp feels so much more realistic, more real and comes from more of a loving place. Now as a CIT I have the confidence to be open and vulnerable. It's a great feeling because it makes me feel important, like I matter and that I can be there for others.

This college trip is huge for me. I want to go to school in the north so this trip feels like a dream has come true. Now, I am going home full of excitement, determination and motivation to actually get to where I want to go, and that's all because of Steve's Camp and those that have supported me. My Steve's Camp necklace keeps reminding me to stay focused and stay strong. Looking down at the necklace reminds me when I am distracted or down, that the hard work and the struggles are worth it.



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Because of you...



Tori and Gabrielle learned to cook using organic ingredients... Session 1 boys saw a full rainbow... Gilbert hiked up a waterfall... Marquis had a summer experience he could be truly proud of... Anastasia got a taste of life on a farm... Cabin 2 stayed up late bonding... Davante showed campers what a successful college graduate looks like. The growth we have seen within our campers and as an organization is made possible with your generous support!



Thank You!



