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Two Baltimore City Students Attend North Bay Camp on Scholarships -- Thanks to My Sister's Circle and an Erickson Staffer

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NorthBay and Erickson Provide Summer Camp Opportunity 'Free of Charge' to Two Baltimore City Students

Shabria Alston and Maya Muriel go to summer camp for the first time thanks to a partial scholarship from NorthBay, and the generous donation from one Erickson staffer

BALTIMORE CITY, MD (July 29, 2008) – NorthBay environmental camp has welcomed two Baltimore City middle school students to their summer camp program 'free of charge.' Shabria Alston and Maya Muriel, however, were able to go to camp thanks to their involvement with the Baltimore-based group My Sister's Circle, partial scholarships from NorthBay, and a donation from an Erickson employee. NorthBay is located in North East, MD.

"NorthBay is thrilled to be able to offer scholarships to girls involved with My Sister's Circle. Partnering with organizations like My Sister's Circle is one of the best ways to increase the depth of the experience for the students who get to come to NorthBay," said NorthBay Executive Director George Comfort. "In that way, their experience at NorthBay is enriched and reinforced during the rest of the year with their mentor."

My Sister's Circle, Inc. (MSC) is a comprehensive, relationship-based program designed to mentor girls from disadvantaged Baltimore neighborhoods during their challenging transition to middle school, throughout high school and into college. The organization matches girls with mentors, provides one-on-one tutoring, and organizes cultural, educational and recreational events and trips.

In an effort to immerse their students in new environments and diverse learning experiences all year round, MSC partners with a variety of summer camps and programs. Thanks to NorthBay's partial scholarships, during their week at camp Alston and Muriel had the opportunity to participate in activities including: archery, arts & crafts, dance/drama, extreme science, filmmaking, land sports, mountain biking, mountaineering, paddling, pioneering, rock climbing, sailing, swimming, water skiing/wakeboarding and wilderness living.

"This year, NorthBay was able to use more than \$250,000

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to award scholarships to students who wouldn't otherwise have the chance to come to camp. The vast majority of that money was used for partnerships with organizations that are able to continue to connect with the students," added Comfort.

After reading about MSC in a recent Baltimore Sun article, Erickson's Document Manager Monna Nabers was inspired to help the organization. She contacted Harvison who told her partial scholarships to NorthBay had already been provided, so Nabers made a personal donation to offset the balance, and provide for additional camp supplies. By utilizing Erickson's donation matching program, Nabers ensured the cost for both girls to attend camp – fully stocked – was covered.

"These girls have never been to camp before, so these partial scholarships were a tremendous opportunity for them," said MSC Executive Director Heather Harvison. "These summer camp experiences expose our girls to a broad array of outdoor activities, introduce new and different cultures, stimulate creativity, develop leadership skills and increase self-confidence."

Once a week, teams of MSC mentors visit partnering elementary schools to facilitate after-school programs for fifth-grade girls. Sessions include: presentations by highly successful business women, health professionals and college professors; a wide array of artistic, musical and creative writing activities; conflict resolution and methodologies; and, in-depth discussion about topics relevant to everyday life.

About NorthBay:

NorthBay was established in 2005 by The Erickson Foundation to establish educational opportunities for young people. Through its partnerships with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Maryland Department of Education, NorthBay hosts more than 10,000 middle school students each year. With a full-time staff of more than 100 professionals, NorthBay uses experiential education to instill confidence, knowledge, and leadership in young people and teach them that their actions have a lasting impact on the future. NorthBay is located on more than 97 acres at the confluence of the Chesapeake Bay and Susquehanna River in Cecil County, Md.

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