



# CAMP RAINBOW CONNECTION

*Celebrating God's Love*

In 2013, the laughter and joy of Camp Rainbow Connection continued into its 29<sup>th</sup> summer. CRC started at Westview on the James, a camp of the Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, and Richmond Districts of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church in 1985. That first year, there were 25 campers and a small staff of 15 volunteers – all family and friends of Rev. Jim McClung, the founding director. CRC has grown to two weeks – one in July and one in August – at the Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center. We have been at the Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center since 1989.

## Highlights of 2013

- The theme for the summer was “As We Serve.” The focus Bible verse was Matthew 25:40.

*“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you,  
whatever you did for one of the least of these  
brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” (NIRV)*

- Over \$17,325.00 was given in financial assistance for campers who could not otherwise afford to attend. A full scholarship is \$500.
- There are many other ways to contribute: financial donations, prizes, supplies, and gifts of time. Donations of materials and supplies help to keep the cost of camp at a very reasonable level. At \$500 per week for campers, Camp Rainbow is one of the most affordable summer opportunities for individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a comparison, in 2013 a week at Camp Baker in Chesterfield County was \$800 and the regular Adult Adventure Camp of Camp Virginia Jaycee was \$775.
- Eighty-nine volunteer staff members provided two weeks of fun and learning for 122 adults with intellectual disabilities as part of Camp Rainbow Connection this summer. Held one week in July and one week in August, Camp Rainbow is a continuation of Christ’s ministry given life through the hands, hearts, and feet of the volunteers who serve as buddies and support for the campers. These volunteers are the key to transformation in the lives of our campers, one another, their local faith

communities, and the world at-large. Staff members ranged from 16 years of age to well into their eighties. This year's campers were age 22 to 85.

- For the summer of 2013, a total of \$17,325.00 of financial assistance was provided for individuals to attend Camp Rainbow Connection. These scholarships were based upon need and made possible through generous gifts from individuals, local church mission committees, UMM and UMW groups, and civic organizations. The funds allowed campers who could not otherwise afford the full cost of camp to experience the unconditional Christian love of Camp Rainbow Connection. Many of the campers, all of whom have some level of intellectual disability, have little income over and above what is paid for their residential care. At \$500 per week for campers, Camp Rainbow is one of the most affordable summer opportunities for individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- All of the staff members who work with camp are volunteers. Most give two weeks of time during the summer to serve. The Director is paid by the Virginia Conference UMC. The only administrative employee of Camp Rainbow Connection is a summer college intern, whose salary and benefits come from funds donations given to Camp Rainbow and the Commission on Disabilities, its sponsoring organization.