

*Horizons Savannah is a not-for-profit organization with a clear mission: We partner with youth, their families, and the community to enrich the lives of students through the joy of learning, while developing the skills for success and inspiration to reach their dreams.*

The program features time-and-research-tested components that differentiate it from other educational interventions. At its core: Six weeks of full-day classroom instruction, recreational activities, cultural exploration, and relationship-building.

Kids come to the program from all over the Savannah public school district. While they share socioeconomic challenges, they also share the basic human desires for connection, growth, and fun. Horizons kids are eligible to join the program as kindergartners and can remain (the vast majority do) year-after-year through high school graduation. Many return to the program after their high school years to work as volunteers or professional teachers as young adults.

Horizons operates at the generous invitation of four local independent host schools – Savannah Country Day, Bethesda Academy, St. Andrews School, and Savannah Christian. Horizons students enjoy the resources that these institutions provide as program sites. Young people from host schools volunteer as classroom and activity assistants. Horizons brings people together from disparate circumstances who might never otherwise meet. These connections demystify our perceived differences and create valuable lifetime bonds.

Horizons teaches kids to swim. Swimming is both a survival skill and an esteem-building activity, especially for kids who have never dipped a toe in water before. Horizons fields a swim team in the local league, another way to connect families from different backgrounds with one another.

The program works. Horizons kids' reading and math standardized test scores, measured at the beginning and end of the summer session, significantly improve, in stark contrast to many of their non-Horizons peers. I was first introduced to the program when my kids volunteered as students at Country Day. Later, their mother, in the last few years of her life, worked as a middle school teacher after returning to school to qualify to do so. For the past two summers, I have taught middle school English and math.

I have celebrated little wins (a hesitant kid suddenly blossoms as she reads aloud to the class from our selected novel), and I lament the challenges ("If you're not going to put your phone away and join what we're doing, you

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can leave, because you're wasting your time and you're wasting mine"). It's an incredible privilege to have a chance to positively impact a kid.

Horizons Savannah depends on people like you. We employ professional teachers and limit teacher/student ratios to 15:1 (plus a paid assistant and a volunteer in most classrooms). We feed our kids – breakfast and lunch, ever day. We transport them using contracted buses. We operate all day, five days a week, for six weeks in summer, and we supplement the core session with on-going engagement throughout the school year. We run a swimming program. We take five field trips. We offer a variety of clubs, ranging from personal finance, to yoga, to lacrosse, and many more. And we do it all for a cost of approximately \$1,500 per student for the entire year. This summer, we will welcome approximately 300 students, while more than 100 remain on our waiting list. Our capacity is limited only by our ability to fundraise.

Horizons Giving Day is our single most-important fundraising initiative each year. "Day" is misleading. The actual day was May 17, but the campaign continues through the entire month of May and beyond. Please consider supporting the work. I have studied many social impact groups – I am confident Horizons is among the very best (and offers the greatest return on your investment).

Email me directly, [slauretti@theskinnie.com](mailto:slauretti@theskinnie.com), and I'll answer any of your program questions and donation logistics concerns. Or check out [horizonssavannah.org](http://horizonssavannah.org) (where you can find a live donation link and learn more about the program, its history, and its outcomes). Schedule a visit to one of our sites this summer to see the program in action and understand the impact of your investment. The Horizons team, whose contact information is available at the aforementioned [horizonssavannah.org](http://horizonssavannah.org) is ready to assist you and welcome you to experience the magic for yourself.

Thank you for your consideration.



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