

Anytown Alabama is a social justice leadership camp for high school students. At Anytown Alabama student delegates engage in typical summer camp activities as well as develop leadership skills that they bring back to their schools and communities.

Student “delegates” come from all over Birmingham and represent different races, genders, religions, schools, neighborhoods, immigration statuses and abilities. Located at the beautiful Camp Hargis, Anytown gives students the chance to canoe, hike, fish, play basketball, and swim in the pool or lake, while also participating in honest dialogue and interactive learning about social justice issues. They also engage in team building exercises that create lifelong friendships and a supportive, inclusive camp environment. Students learn how to respond to difficult real-life situations with kindness, courage and respect.

Students leave Anytown as leaders, more confident, empathetic and ready to stand up for what they believe is right. Students who attend Anytown have a positive impact on a school’s culture as they discourage intolerance and bullying and serve as allies for marginalized students. Interaction with a diverse group at Anytown also prepares students for life after high school where cultural sensitivity and the ability to communicate with different types of people are crucial.

Quotes from student delegates from NHHS:

1. ‘As a woman, Anytown Alabama empowered me to lead. Through the week of social justice training one is able feel the need to simply make the world a better place. Anytown easily can make at risk students find hope. It creates allies which have made my high school experience back at New Hope more fulfilling. Anytown not only empowers all the anybodies to further their education and take charge of their life, it encourages them to take the knowledge they gather back out into the work and share it with every person. This encouragement to touch every life you meet is emphasized. Anytown creates leaders.’

-B.W.

2. 'Anytown Alabama literally changed my life and all for the better. You meet amazing people that will always and forever change your life. They become a support group for you. You meet people that have the same problems/struggles as you and in seeing that you want to become a better person. The best thing about wanting to become a better person is it's not for anyone else, the satisfaction of anyone else but for you. You become a leader and you don't even realize it. It's a life lesson that I will never forget.'

-NHHS Student

3. 'Going to Anytown helped me with my everyday decisions. It helped me want to stay in school and do better with everything I do and the way I think and act towards others. Anytown helped me see I am not alone. I learned that there are other people with similar issues that I have. Since attending Anytown I have dealt with my past and with dealing with that has helped me in the present and in the future. I work harder at school and at home.

I know exactly what I want to do with my life. I want to make a difference in other people's lives. Anytown helped me open up to others, it helped me grow, I learned how to make friends, fix problems, deal with new and difficult obstacles rather it be something small or something completely life changing, it helped me to realize I can trust people, communication, accept others, and in doing all of this it will help me in school, work, home, college and in everyday life. I now strive to make a better life for myself. I now no longer look at myself as if I'm no one or that I am not important.

I have confidence in myself and that helps me a lot in everything that I do. I used to be negative about everything but now I look at things in a positive way. Anytown helped me in ways and I would not have changed a thing.'

-M.S.