

Grab The Torch has been such an amazing experience for me and taught me so many things that I never expected to learn, both about myself, others, and society. One of the most enjoyable things about Grab The Torch was the giving spirit all around me. From the speakers, who took time out of their day to come and talk with us and answer all of our many questions, to my team members who were so willing to share personal stories about themselves that at some times made us all laugh or brought others to tears. I also felt this willingness to give from Dave, Ms. Gedrick, Harrison, and Elly. These 4 individuals worked so hard to put together the Grab The Torch program, and gave their time, effort and love to us all week long. I also learned so much about myself. Self reflection is such an important thing, and something that I will be sure to do more often. Through learning about my own values, identity, and purpose, I learned how I could use my gifts to help others here in my own community. This is something that is so important to learn at a young age and especially valuable because I now know that to be a philanthropist and make a real difference I don't need large sums of money, just my time that I am willing to give to others. During this weeklong camp I also conquered one of my biggest fears- the fear of water. I was very hesitant to go on the 10 miles canoeing/kayaking trip that was planned for us because I can't swim. I was reassured by both Dave and Susan that it would be perfectly safe and I trusted them and went. Looking back I can honestly say it was one of the greatest experiences of my entire life. The breathtaking views and the energy of the girls around me made to totally forget how terrified of water I was. By the end of the trip I was even comfortable enough that I volunteered to help rescue a canoe- in the process almost flipping over my canoe. The girls I met here will also stay with me forever. In such a short time I have become so close to this group of likeminded and motivated girls. They made me think in ways I never had before and we had a few debates but in the end we all became better friends. These girls supported me in ways I had never seen before on the river and in the classroom (yurt) and I am all the better for meeting them. I am so sad to be leaving tomorrow but I know the lessons I learned and people I have met I will carry in my heart and head forever.

Nina – Maine 2015