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## Ball helps camp glitter for at-risk children

■ BY JOANNA BROWN

Where Theresa Malin grew up in rural Wisconsin, every day was like summer camp.

"I could come home from school and go boating," she recalled.

Today she's working to provide a similar experience for children from Chicago's West Town neighborhood. Malin, Alyson Aron and Kate Huff — all of Winnetka — are co-chairing the 2014 Glitter Ball to support the House in the Wood Camp in Delavan, Wis. More than 400 at-risk children and teens go to camp there each summer, with an additional 200 Chicago Public School students using the camp for week-long outdoor education programs during the academic year.

The black-tie fundraiser returns to Chicago's Four Seasons Hotel for the 20th year on Nov. 1. Guests will enjoy cocktails and dinner, as well as live and silent auctions.

The Glitter Ball is a project of the North Shore Board of the Northwestern Settlement, a group founded in 1936 to raise funds to help maintain the House in the Wood Camp.

The theme for the evening is a compass.

"We chose this because the outdoor education has become such an important part of the camp's activities — but for us it's also about helping kids find their direction in life," said Malin.

The children and their families are largely clients of the Northwestern University Settlement House, which offers emergency and family services in West Town. These include a stocked food pantry, senior services, computer classes, holiday baskets and

Headstart programs for children.

Children as young as 7 attend summer camp for two weeks at a time and enjoy a variety of outdoor activities; swimming and boating top the list. But Board President Ginny Burnstine of Glencoe said that's the tip of the iceberg.

"The counselors are all nurturing and enthusiastic and skilled at helping these kids develop feelings of self-respect and confidence. They feel safe and accepted at camp, and they take responsibility for chores they do in their cabins," Burnstine said.

**"They feel safe and accepted at camp, and they take responsibility for chores they do in their cabins." | Ginny Burnstine**

Teens who are returning to camp can apply for a leadership program, too, in which they serve as mentors to younger, first-time campers.

"These experiences have a positive impact on their families and their communities, so the camp really casts a wider net," Burnstine said.

The Northwestern University Settlement House reports that 84 percent of campers achieve developmental gains during summer camp, and 88 percent of elementary schoolers meet or exceed state standards in science after attending an outdoor education program at the House in the Wood camp.

Find more information about the 2014 Glitter Ball at [www.glitterballchicago.com.org](http://www.glitterballchicago.com.org). ■

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Theresa Malin and Alyson Aron (standing) get together with Ginny Burnstine and Kate Huff before the upcoming Glitter Ball. PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBIN SUBAR