



## US SUMMER CAMPS SEEK AUSSIE RIDERS

***“It was my dream job - spending a perfect summer horse-riding overseas, travelling to some of the most amazing places in the world - it changed my life!”***

Amy Amato is talking about her experience of being paid to horse-ride around some of the most spectacular countryside in the USA. Amy was Assistant Director of the riding program at an American summer camp in New York state and says she loved camp as much as the kids did.

“As well as the experience of teaching horse riding twice a day for nine weeks, it’s the experience with the kids that I gained the most from,” she says. “Being at camp is a wonderful social experience both for the counsellors as well as the kids. I feel more confident in myself and I know that I am a better person for it!”

Amy’s trip was arranged through International Exchange Programs (IEP), a non-profit organisation specialising in sending young Australians and New Zealanders on working holidays overseas to Canada, Britain, Ireland, the USA and South Africa. IEP also offers a range of volunteering opportunities to South Africa, Costa Rica, Cambodia and Peru.

Experienced Australian riders are always in high demand for American summer camps, and employment runs for 8-10 weeks starting in May or June.

“Camp popped up on the internet while I was looking for a full time job and I thought that it would be more fun than an office job,” says Amy, who has been to camp two years in a row. “The best thing about Summer Camp USA is the opportunity to work in another country and experience another culture. The kids make life interesting too. I love making new friends from all over the world.”

Every year thousands of North American children aged between six and sixteen go to one of about 10,000 summer camps across the USA. American camp directors hire overseas staff to add an international dimension to camp life. IEP recruits participants from all over Australia and places them in camps most suited to their abilities and interests.

“The best thing about my particular camp, Forrestel Farm Riding and Sports Camp, is the location. It is such a warm and friendly place to be,” says Amy. “Set on an 800 acre farm surrounded by blue stone walls, there is always something to do in the most beautiful of surroundings. The barn and the farm house really look like something out of a movie. A lot of the time, it was hard to believe that I was actually there!”

Amy also enjoyed the opportunity to engage in other outdoor pursuits.

“I really do have so many wonderful memories while at camp. I was fortunate enough to be able to participate in a number of sports and outdoor adventure activities as well as horse riding, such as canoeing and rock climbing.”

For more information on IEP’s programs check out the website to get all the brochures, info and application forms.

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