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MEDIA ADVISORY
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Rainbow Days Hosts Children from Local Shelters for 25th Annual Kids' University

DALLAS – From July 26-30, **Rainbow Days' 25th annual Kids' University** hosted 146 children from local homeless and domestic violence shelters, transitional living sites and extended-stay motels for a STEAM-themed educational summer camp experience.

Kids' University began July 26 with **three days of interactive classes** hosted at **Lake Highlands Junior High School** in **Richardson ISD**. Each day, the children were placed in small groups by age and participated in a variety of engaging, hands-on classes covering STEAM educational topics and career exploration. At Kids' University 2021, educational classes covered subjects such as **natural sciences**, computer science, music, animal science, physical education and more. Educational programming was provided by **High Touch High Tech of Dallas**, **Imagine Science of the Grand Prairie Family YMCA**, **Cranium Kids**, **Challenge Island**, **Creepy Critters**, **Simmons Bank**, **Intrinsic Foundation**, **Paper for Water** and **Girl Scouts of America**. Additionally, campers had the opportunity to explore a variety of careers through sessions led by local educators, artists, banking professionals, Dallas Police Department officers and U.S. Air Force service members.



On July 29, the career exploration at Kids' University continued through a special **field trip to KidZania USA presented by SMU**. At KidZania's interactive facility, Kids' University campers had the chance to choose from **more than 100 career-themed roleplay activities** that enabled them to explore a variety of professions and **visualize a myriad of careers they could pursue** in the future.

Finally, the weeklong Kids' University experience concluded on July 30 at the **Dallas College Mountain View Campus** with a **special graduation ceremony** during which campers wore colorful caps and gowns and received diplomas. This unforgettable experience allowed each child to **envision how it would feel to graduate from a higher learning institution** in the future. The graduation ceremony also featured an inspiring keynote address from **Keith Davis**, former NFL player and youth motivational speaker with **Just Say YES**.

One of the biggest benefits of the annual Kids' University camp is that it **addresses a serious need** of homeless children living within the confines of shelters: the lack of enriching, safe and fun summer activities. Kids' University makes it possible for children to practice their life skills alongside **positive adult mentors** and learn new things in a fun, **child-friendly setting away from the shelter** environment.

Another significant benefit of Kids' University is introducing homeless children to higher education and life on a college campus, which in turn helps encourage them to pursue the dream of college themselves. Many of these children have previously never been introduced to the possibility of attending college in their lives. Kids' University gives them the opportunity and space to decompress, strengthen their **STEAM education** knowledge, and consider the **multitude of career options and higher education paths** that await them.



Rainbow Days is grateful for the numerous donors and volunteers who made this special camp experience possible. Food for Kids' University 2021 was sponsored in part by the generous financial support of **Women of Saint Michael**. Additionally, Rainbow Days cherishes its partnerships with **Richardson ISD, KidZania USA, SMU** and **Mountain View College**, which all hosted various Kids' University activities this year. Special thanks are also in order for the following foundations for their overall support of Rainbow Days' **Family Connection** program benefiting homeless children: **The Rees-Jones Foundation, Citi, Baron and Blue Foundation, Capital for Kids, In-N-Out Burger Foundation** and the **United Way of Metropolitan Dallas**.

ABOUT RAINBOW DAYS: Kids' University is a program of **Rainbow Days**, a 501(c)(3) Dallas-based nonprofit organization. Founded in **1982**, Rainbow Days has a mission to help children and youth in adversity build coping skills and resilience to create positive futures. Through support groups, camps, **life enrichment programs** and critical needs services, Rainbow Days makes meaningful connections with at-risk and homeless children and youth and has positively impacted more than **234,000 kids in the Dallas area** to date. For more information, please visit www.RainbowDays.org or call (214) 887-0726.

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