

Molly Ann Tango Memorial Foundation Press Release
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Molly Tango Foundation Sends Jacqueline to Camp

Jacqueline Bartimoccia is a 10 year old girl scout and huge baseball fan with a sparkling smile who loves to tease her siblings! She's in the 4th grade at Pembroke School in Danbury and has Cerebral Palsy-Spastic Dysplasia. Jacqueline is ambulatory, but has balance issues and an awkward gait as well as limited verbal communication skills. Although she can make her basic needs known, it is really difficult for her to communicate to people who are unfamiliar with her.

Jacqueline uses an augmentative communication device in school, a Dynavox Minimo, in order to facilitate her academic skills; however she is limited in using the device at home or in social situations. The Dynavox Minimo is a small hand held "computer" that can create messages of any length or complexity. It can record more than 100 minutes of speech and sound. By using this device Jacqueline can communicate as well as learn in school.

During her last visit to Boston Children's Hospital Jacqueline's speech pathologist recommended a camp called "Camp Chatterbox". Camp Chatterbox is an intensive therapy camp for children, ages 5 – 16, who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. It is also a training program for their parents and accepts siblings as well. Founded in 1992, it is sponsored by the Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, NJ. Camp Chatterbox gives children an opportunity to interact with other children using AAC systems while learning to use their devices in functional activities.

The camp sounded like a dream come true but the fee seemed out of reach. On the advice of Jacqueline's social worker Jacqueline's Mom, Laura Petrucelli contacted the Molly Ann Tango Memorial Foundation where families of special needs children can receive assistance. Their need was met and off Jacqueline and her family went on the adventure of a lifetime.

Upon returning from camp Laura writes: "I just want to let you know how GREAT Camp Chatterbox was for Jacqueline!!! Not only for her, but for my other two children as well. We ALL learned something in those 6 days. I can't stress to you how great it was! In a real camp setting, there were children with various degrees of disabilities and challenges, who all got to go to camp, sing songs, play games, and meet new friends.

It was truly an unforgettable experience! Jacqueline benefited so much from her camp experience. She was able to use her AAC device in a functional way - while having great fun! I too learned so much about her device as well as about how others use their devices in the real world. It was such an eye-opener.

I can't thank you and your organization enough for your support in order to make this happen for us".

To learn more about Camp Chatterbox go to their site: www.campchatterbox.com. The Molly Ann Tango Memorial Foundation can be reached at 203-431-4180, PO Box 15 Ridgefield, CT and www.mollytango.org.