Are You Ready for the Adventure

Of Your

**LIFE?**

(“Learning Independence, Feeling Empowered”)

**What is LIFE?**

* 5 week residential training program for high school-aged blind and vision impaired youth
* Provides basic training in the skills of blindness and in advocacy skills
* Helps students become responsible for their lives
* Provides students with opportunities to explore employment and college goals
* Provides an opportunity to gain real world work experience or additional skills of blindness training
* Affords opportunities to participate in physical fitness and confidence building activities
* Offers opportunities to network with successful mentors who are blind or vision-impaired
* Helps students develop positive strategies for dealing with misconceptions about blindness
* Provides daily opportunities to have LOTS of fun!

**Dates to remember for LIFE:**

* Application Deadline: June 5, 2017, or until program is full
* Program Begins: 1:00 p.m., July 9, 2017
* Program Ends: 12:00 p.m., August 11, 2017
* Student/parent meeting with staff: 8:15 - 10:00 a.m., August 11, 2017
* Student and parent wrap-up meetings: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., August 11, 2017
* Graduation Ceremony: 11:00 a.m., August 11, 2017

**Daily LIFE**

**Classes:**

* Braille
* Cooking
* Personal and Home Management
* Travel
* Keyboarding/Computers
* Access Technology
* Physical Fitness and Wellness Instruction
* College 101
* Job Readiness
* Work Experience
* Conversations about Blindness

**Confidence Building Activities:**

* High Ropes Adventure Course
* Formal Dinner/Dance
* Rock Climbing
* You “Auto” Know
* Movies
* Grilling
* Hiking
* Business Networking Skills
* Whitewater Rafting
* Swimming
* And much more!

**Work Experience:**

* Students work part-time in a community-based setting during the last three weeks of LIFE.
* In some instances staff will recommend that a student continue to focus on blindness skills (Travel, Braille, Access Technology, and Cooking) during the last three weeks of the program.

**Requirements for LIFE**

Students must:

* Be at least 14 years old and be returning to a high school academic program in the fall of 2017
* Be blind or vision impaired
* Be able to actively participate in all five weeks of the program
* Be able to participate in a group structured program
* Be able to take care of personal care needs independently, including managing and self-administering medications
* Have a valid State of Virginia ID card

**What is the application process for LIFE?**

* Go to <https://www.vrcbvi.org/YSprograms.htm> and you will find three documents: 1) 2017 LIFE application, 2) DBVI health checklist/general medical form, and 3) DBVI eye report form. The application may be completed by a participant’s parent(s) or DBVI VR counselor. The health checklist and eye report MUST be completed by a medical professional and be dated within one year of the date of the student’s 2017 LIFE application. If a student attended a summer program at VRCBVI in 2016, the health form submitted for that program is acceptable, provided the parent(s) submit a statement that the student’s 2016 health information has not changed and is still accurate.
* Once these forms are complete, they can be scanned and e-mailed to Greg.Chittum@dbvi.virginia.gov no later than June 5, 2017, or until the program is full. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
* Student and parent(s) will participate in an informational interview by phone with VRCBVI staff, which will be scheduled by Greg Chittum, Special Projects Coordinator.
* After the **complete** application packet has been reviewed and the interview with parent(s) and applicant has been conducted, the VR Counselor and parent(s) are notified within one week whether the applicant is accepted into the program.
* Get your application in quickly, as a maximum of 22 participants will be accepted into the program.

For additional information about the LIFE Program, or to schedule a tour of VRCBVI, please contact:

Greg Chittum, Special Projects Coordinator

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<https://www.vrcbvi.org/>