



Sinclair Hargrave

How did you grow in leadership at Tall Turf?

I was a leader-in-training (LIT) for a summer. We helped lead activities, come up with memory verses, and support the counselors in other ways. I was asked to lead prayer a lot that summer. That was difficult at first because I had only ever prayed by myself and around my family. I had to get comfortable talking with God in front of other people and being expressive in a new way—but after that summer it became easy. I feel comfortable leading prayer at school now.

Without being at Tall Turf, I probably wouldn't have applied to be a resident assistant (RA) at school this year. During orientation at Tall Turf, we went through Love and Logic training. That taught me how to know when to step up and give specific directions and when to step back and give people options. I've had to use those skills as an RA too.

What does Tall Turf's multicultural community mean to you?

The mission of Tall Turf is to demonstrate Christ's ministry of reconciliation. At Tall Turf, kids are part of a community of people who don't always look like them and haven't had the same life experience. I remember having a conversation with a girl who was white about the differences in our lives. I talked about how I always drive five miles under the speed limit because I'm afraid of getting pulled over, and how I don't cover my head when I go into a store. She told me she never had to think about those things. It's important for us to talk to people who are different than us because everybody has a different story. For reconciliation to happen, we need to hear other peoples' stories. We can't fix the problem until we recognize that there is one.

What did you learn about your relationship with God at Tall Turf?

Before coming to Tall Turf, I thought you had to praise and pray to God in a specific way. At Tall Turf I realized prayer is not the only way to connect with God. I realized that I can talk to God through music. I loved to lead songs at camp. Seeing campers singing to the Lord reminded me of how I used to sing to him—not necessarily knowing what I was saying but filled with happiness. I also realized that prayer doesn't have to be formal—it can literally just be a conversation.

Describe the staff culture at Tall Turf.

Staff culture was like family. It was really fun. There wasn't a moment where I was uncomfortable to share what I believed or give a testimony. It's a big age range, too. Some LITs are sixteen and some counselors are in their twenties. You wouldn't expect us to get as close as we did. When you talk about deep things and worship together, you form strong bonds. Everyone has a "soulmate"—someone you can talk about your



spiritual journey with one on one. It was really helpful to process things with my soul mate and learn from her. I still keep in touch with the staff today.

How did Tall turf shape your outlook on life?

After experiencing Tall Turf, I had a lot of hope—hope for myself and for the next generation. I always felt like I wasn't where I was supposed to be in my walk with Christ. At Tall Turf I realized everybody's walk is different, and it's not supposed to be linear. Tall Turf gave me new ways to worship and pray. I got to see the impact Tall Turf had on kids, too. If everyone had the chance to come to Tall Turf, the world would be a different place.

What's your favorite Tall Turf tradition?

The one that stood out for me was "Fools for Christ." The person leading would jump in the lake to show that sometimes you have to look like a fool when you're following Christ.

I also love the sevens game. My family still does it all the time.