

Dr. Keller's Blog
Friday, June 19, 2009

We had a great day yesterday. After the students went to their morning classes, they had lunch and then left for the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. The tour starts with a short film about life in Birmingham throughout its history, especially in the 50's and 60's. Guests then travel in time learning about civil rights in the United States from the past to the present. The tour ends with a look at current civil rights issues in the world, and one can look out the window and see the 16th Street Baptist Church where four young girls were killed in a racially-motivated bombing in September of 1963. This experience was very moving for many of the students.

After they returned to Samford, the students donned their AGS T-shirts and headed to Regions Park for the Birmingham Barons' baseball game. Students dined on barbecued chicken and pork, green beans, and mac and cheese washed down by lots of water and soft drinks (it was really hot at the beginning of the game). The Barons took an early 3-0 lead on the Huntsville Stars as the game moved at a rapid pace. Huntsville scored four unearned runs in the seventh inning, though, to take a 4-3 lead. In the ninth, a Huntsville error allowed a Birmingham base runner with one out. Robbie Hudson stole second and then third, while the batter whiffed for the second out. Birmingham tied the score with a double to left. Huntsville then intentionally walked the next batter (Tyler Flowers, who had homered earlier in the game) to put runners on first and second with two outs. The next batter, Dayan Viciedo ripped a sinking liner to left that fell in for a game-winning single. What a way to end the evening!

Tonight we have one of my favorite AGS events: the Talent Show. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in either serious or frivolous categories. Imported judges decide on the top three, who win fabulous prizes. This year's judges are Randy, Paula, and Simon (just kidding – no snarky comments are allowed here).

Two more notes. I received some information from the National Youth Science Camp held annually in Bartow, West Virginia. The camp admits delegates from all over the United States for in depth research projects, lectures and discussions from prominent scientists (including Nobel Prize winners), and trip to Washington, DC to meet with Congressmen and Senators. There are also outdoor recreation activities in the Potomac Highlands. Green Bank Radio Observatory is located nearby. More information can be found at their website <http://www.nysc.org/index2.html>.

Also, remember that you are invited to the closing ceremony of the Governor's School on Friday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m. in Brock Recital Hall, the same location as the opening ceremony. There will be a reception following the ceremony, though because of the heat, it will be indoors this time. The closing ceremony will last around two hours, while the students tell about what they did in their courses. The highlight will be the world premiere of the 2009 AGS DVD filmed, produced, and edited by the Lights, Camera, Action class. Orders for the DVD will be taken at the ceremony. For those of you from the Mobile area who may want to spend Thursday night in Birmingham, there is a list of hotels with special rates for Samford visitors at http://www.samford.edu/admission/travel_lodging.html.

We will go to Oak Mountain for a picnic, horseback riding, hiking, and pedal-boating tomorrow with the AGS Olympics after dinner. We will have plenty of water on hand for the participants.