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An Interview with Shegan Campbell

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Alternatives in Illinois Education Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2019-001

Shegan Campbell, co-founder of Kids Science Labs in Chicago and the suburbs, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-Alternatives in Education* Oral History project.

Interview Jan 7, 2019 Location: Kids Science Labs, Chicago, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:33 / 1.55 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 14, 2019.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Shegan Campbell, Alternatives in Education, EA-A-L-2019-001

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Shegan Campbell was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1973 and attended Detroit public schools, graduating from Renaissance High School in 1991. While at Renaissance, Shegan played varsity tennis, and also participated in the Model UN, the National Honor Society, and pre-college engineering classes. Upon leaving high school, Shegan attended the University of Michigan, majoring in electrical engineering. Graduating from Michigan in 1996, he next attended Stanford University, earning an MS degree in electrical engineering in 1998. While going to college, Shegan also worked for Nortel (1993) and Intel (1994-98) and served as a teaching assistant at Stanford. Following grad school, Shegan worked for Lucent Technologies, Mahi Network, Clerios Systems, and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. He then moved to Chicago and worked for the Prudential Capital Group while also earning an MBA degree from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business in 2005. In 2010, he became a co-founder and CEO of Kids Science Labs, opening in Lincoln Park, Chicago. Later models were opened in the south loop of Chicago, in Wheaton-Naperville, Northbrook, and Seattle. More sites were planned at the time of the interview. Shegan is a motivational speaker and guest panelist on entrepreneurship, education and leadership institutions. Shegan is a Siebel Scholar, Toigo Fellow, and Hugh Hildreth Skilling Ward recipient.

This interview discusses the creation of the Kids Science Labs (KSL) as a way to increase the love of science education through creativity, curiosity, and problem solving. Geared for ages 2-14, KSL uses a variety of service deliveries to promote its core values of open critical thinking and learning/growing. These systems include summer camps, day camps, programs during breaks, birthday parties, field trips and on-site classes. The sites in Chicago, Northbrook, Wheaton, and Seattle are open 6 days a week. Hands on learning is stressed along with questioning. Campbell discusses how the sites were developed as well as staff selection and training (1/3 each from educators, scientists, and artists), why parents choose KSL, its partnerships and revenue sources.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Kids Science Labs; creation of the Kids Science Labs; promoting science education; science themed summer and day camps; growing up in Detroit during the 1980s; Model UN; Keith Norsym

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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