

PMI Poland Chapter, Gdansk Branch <http://gdansk.pmi.org.pl>

## Volunteers Get Project Experience While Kids Learn Valuable Skills



Above: English Winter Camp participants, sponsors and organizers and volunteers represented more than 11 countries. Right: Malgorzata Kusyk explains quiz rules to participants at the English Winter Camp, sponsored by the PMI Poland Chapter, Gdansk Branch. Below right: Team members worked on a work breakdown structure exercise as part of their preparation for the English Summer Camp 2010 project.

### English Camp Program Expands from Summer to Winter

**THIS STORY** started in 2004, when the PMI Gdansk Potential Chapter decided to run a charity program called English Summer Camp. The goal of the program was to give children from orphanages a chance to participate in holiday English courses, promote a healthy lifestyle and show that hard work pays off.

Apart from the language course, children also took part in additional activities including a life skills program. The best students got an opportunity to learn English during the school year.

Each year's camp is defined by the chapter as a separate project and managed by an experienced project manager. All project team members have a chance to take part in project management workshops and—what is most appreciated among participants—learn how to manage a project through a real-life example.

The initiative reinforces the role of PMI locally by improving the organization's companies, attracting new volunteers and consequently gaining new potential members.

### 14 Days, 100 Activities, 50 Volunteers and Lots of Good Memories

2010 has been an exceptional year for what is now the Gdansk Branch of the PMI Poland Chapter. For the first time, a



winter edition of the English Camp has been organized. The English Winter Camp project team involved more than 50 volunteers, representing more than 11 different countries.

Malgorzata Kusyk, PMP, a member of the Gdansk Branch board, was the project manager of this year's camps. Thirty children from the Tri-City orphanages and foster families, aged 9 to 14 years, were invited to take part. The event was held in Puck, the oldest Slavic harbor on the Baltic Sea, during the February school break.

The children were divided into two groups based on their English knowledge level. The language course was run by experienced teachers Dominika Kosmowska and Marcin Snopek. Mr. Snopek has taken part in all camp sessions since 2004.

Thanks to sponsors, volunteers and partners, the project team prepared a very attractive motivational program. The children visited a chocolate factory and the Thomson Reuters office in Gdynia, Poland. After English lessons, many other activities were planned including sledding, bowling, swimming, football, quizzes, theater, karaoke, games and robotic workshops.

There were also famous guests during the camp. Anna Rybicka, silver medalist in foil from the Sydney Olympic Games

showed her medals, pictures and fencing kit, and also organized matches among the children. Iwona Guzowska, a many-time world and European champion in kickboxing and boxing, talked about her sport and her parliamentary career. By showing a few exercises, she encouraged children to change their lifestyles while building awareness of sport's important role in the lives of young people.

Other guests included musicians from the Big Cyc band and Dariusz Michalczewski, boxer and former light heavy-weight champion.

Additionally, volunteers from various countries visited every day, which proved to be the best exercise for children to speak English. Moreover, the children lost their shyness and understood that language skills are extremely useful and can change their lives.

### The Project

The English Winter Camp project began with creation of a project charter in September 2009 and continued all the way through closing, where lessons learned

were captured. Volunteers had a chance to take part in project management workshops organized by Ms. Kusyk.

Volunteers who joined the project not only had a chance to support the children but also could learn more about project management. The most engaged volunteers had a unique opportunity to be awarded a 10-day project management course (Akademia PMP) provided by PM Experts, a PMI Registered Educational Provider, and partner and sponsor of this program since it started in 2004. This year, Anna Erdmanska and Przemyslaw Kotecki were selected to attend the course.

### Summer 2010 Edition

Many volunteers signed up to join the English Summer Camp 2010 project. The team was divided into four main work streams responsible for specific areas: program, fundraising, logistics and communications.

During the second weekend of May, all volunteers and project team members had a chance to participate in the Introduction to Project Management workshop. Creating a work breakdown structure and schedule was the next step. The camp is taking place in August.

The Gdansk Branch strives to make each edition of the camp even better. In the current summer camp, as a part of the life skills program, children will have an opportunity to find out about projects and project management by taking part in the project management training and workshops.

The Gdansk Branch would like to thank all volunteers, sponsors and partners for their great heart and support in organizing this extraordinary and memorable event. We are happy to share our experience with other PMI chapters, so if you are interested, please contact us at [englishcamp@pmi.org.pl](mailto:englishcamp@pmi.org.pl).

More information on the program and all project documents can be found on the PMI Gdansk Branch website: <http://gdansk.pmi.org.pl/english-summer-camp/test/>.

— Anna Erdmanska and Malgorzata Kusyk, PMP



Left: PMI Gdansk Branch board members include (from left): Przemyslaw Kotecki; Maciej Szymczak; Malgorzata Kusyk, PMP; Magdalena Ladanaj; and Krzysztof Kaminski, PMP. Not shown is Marzena Zimnicka-Zepielska.

Below: Volunteers and project team members for the English Summer Camp 2010 project took part in an Introduction to Project Management workshop in May.

