Camper Profile:
Henry DeAngelis, age 13
Des Moines, Iowa

If you're looking for a kid who is more enthusiastic about attending summer camp, you would be hard-pressed to find someone more excited than Henry DeAngelis.

At birth, Henry was diagnosed with epidermolysis bullosa (EB), a severe skin condition that makes the skin extremely fragile and prone to painful blisters and open sores. Due to the medical needs of his condition, Henry rarely gets to participate in the same types of activities as other children his age.

Yet, summer camp is different. For the past three years, Henry has attended the American Academy of Dermatology’s Camp Discovery where he has the opportunity to experience typical summer camp activities. Henry rode a horse – something he never dreamed he would be able to do. He also will happily brag about his bulls-eye on the archery range. And each year he looks forward to the camp dance.

These may seem like average accomplishments at summer camp, but for Henry these are extraordinary, life-changing triumphs. And that’s what Camp Discovery is all about: helping children and teens with chronic skin conditions enjoy summer camp.

Henry has numerous dressings on his body that must be changed every other day. His hands have scarred into fists and it is hard for him to walk long distances or to stand for a long time. Sometimes he has trouble eating or swallowing. Thanks to the efforts of dermatologists, nurses, other medical professionals, parent volunteers and experienced camp counselors, children, like Henry, can enjoy a week-long summer camp experience while still receiving their daily medical treatment.

And at Camp Discovery, Henry can meet other kids with EB – kids who understand what it means to be different and challenged by every day activities. Together, they can support and encourage each other as they try new activities, play team sports, and work on arts and crafts projects.

For the past 20 years, Camp Discovery has been making a difference in the lives of these campers. At no cost to their families – thanks to the Academy, its members and other supporters – Camp Discovery provides a positive, life-changing summer camp experience for children and teens with chronic skin conditions.

To learn more about the American Academy of Dermatology’s Camp Discovery, visit www.campdiscovery.org.