

Dear Holiday Home Camp Family,

While Spring is indeed popping and the sun and longer days are warming the earth and making things grow, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented uncertainty, angst and great loss for so many. At Holiday Home Camp our thoughts and prayers are with all of those who are suffering the consequences of this virus – either from being ill, the loss of a loved one, loss of employment, financial strain, inability to see family and friends and a multitude of other hardships.



Due to the extended “shelter in place” orders in Wisconsin and other states and the uncertainty many will feel even when some of these restrictions are relaxed, **we have decided to postpone our June 6th annual gala**. At this point, we have re-scheduled the event for Saturday, August 1st to be held at camp. Final decisions about summer camp operations have not been made – we hope to do so by May 15th, but we remain optimistic that we will still hold camp – likely with a modified schedule that will begin later in the summer.

Now, more than ever, the kids who attend Holiday Home Camp for fresh air summer camp experiences need your support. Our annual gala typically raises more than \$300,000, which represents almost a third of our total operating budget – this vital cash flow in early June each year allows us to operate seamlessly.

As a valued supporter of Holiday Home Camp and our annual gala – we passionately encourage you to make a gift now that will help us maintain our 133 year old tradition. If you have been an annual sponsor in the past, adopted a camper during our gala paddle raise, bought tickets to the event or even just provided a general donation, we truly hope that you will make this same commitment in honor of our postponed event. Please consider continuing your support – to ensure that we can continue our worthwhile mission of providing fresh air summer camp experiences to disadvantaged youth from Chicago and Southeastern Wisconsin.

Please keep an eye out for additional information about our **re-scheduled event on August 1st**. In the meantime, we hope you and your families can stay safe and healthy.

On behalf of the board of directors, the gala committee, the staff and especially the children we serve, thank you for helping us fulfill our mission that makes such a positive impact on so many young lives and allows HHC and the LGFAA to continue to move Onward and Upward!

Molly Keller
LGFAA Board of Directors

MORE WAYS TO GIVE BACK...

For supporters that want to give the perfect gift directly to campers programs, please visit our wish list on **amazon.com**

When you shop on **Smile.Amazon.com** and select the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association as your charity, a percentage of your normal shopping will be donated to us by Amazon!

amazonsmile

Some items naturally fall outside our annual budget range, for these items we look to our community for leads and assistance. We could use your help finding the items below.

- Commercial Kitchen ovens
- Towable Water Mat for boating
- Compact Tractor
- Hydraulic Auto lift



Our dedicated Corporate Sponsors
continue to help make the HHC
magic possible!



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROGRESS



Dear Camp and Capital Campaign supporters,

Your show of generous support is nothing short of amazing! Its clear to us that contributors take our success seriously. Want proof? We are officially over half way to realizing our goal and have raised over 1M dollars! The Capital Campaign is well on its way to our 2M goal, and the team continues to move forward with some very exciting projects based on early donations!

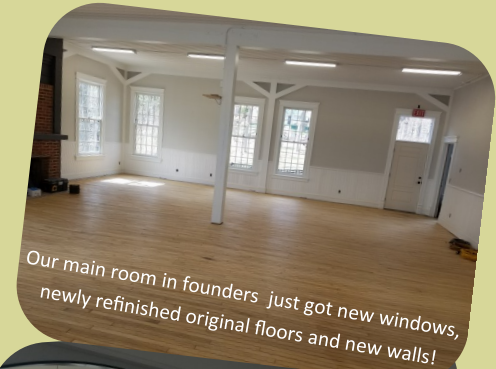
We are on the path to successfully accomplishing our objectives, but still have some great strides ahead of us. To accomplish all of our program goals we still need your help.

The purpose of the campaign is to help ensure the growth potential and sustainability of Holiday Home Camp, OWLS, and the Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association thru investment into our programs and facility. With record breaking growth summer after summer we have officially **DOUBLED** the amount of campers we serve compared to just 6 years ago! 104% growth means that we must carefully plan key focuses within the campaign that keeps evolving to meet the needs of our kids!

With a target of \$2 Million there are still plenty of ways to get involved and show your support. Sponsorship opportunities can be recognized with your family or companies name proudly displayed on a natural looking plaque or stone near the project. Some of our feature projects include building a new activity pavilion, renovating inside and outside of our beloved Founders Hall, updating the Crane Max staff building, winterizing girls village and much more!

If your interested in helping with a project please reach out us at 262-245-5161. A range of lead sponsorship opportunities still exist and Brad would be happy to discuss all of the possibilities. Lead gifts can even be pledged over 5 years! No amount is too big or too small, as we appreciate them all!

THANK YOU!



Our Founders Building exterior is showing off a new patio area, fire pit, accessibility ramp, new doors, and updated paint!

HHC - more than a location

Our HHC camp community is where we turn when times get tough. We call our oldest camp friends, we plan and attend virtual events, and we support our peers who are doing everything they can to make sure kids have a place to go this summer. We need these connections because nothing could have prepared us for life during a pandemic like COVID-19. From the fear and grief, to the uncertainty, isolation, and economic insecurity, the stressors we are facing are real and intense. As we look ahead to a summer in which we all aspire to return to some semblance of normalcy, camp will be needed more than ever because it can help us find our footing again.

COVID-19 has taken away our routines, upended our schedules, and thrown our sense of normalcy out the window. The good news is that, for children, camp provides a respite from the chaos in the form of familiar routines, activities, and traditions. And to those reeling from a loss of order – whether they're campers or staff members – the experience of camp this year will be like salve to a wounded spirit.

Right now, time is moving slowly, one day runs into another, and kids may feel like they have nothing to look forward to. Their normal routines have been thrown out of whack and this can be extremely isolating. Camp facilitates the in-person connections that we all crave – especially now. It provides an opportunity to find joy during difficult times. Camps give everyone – staff and campers alike – a safe space to process and heal.

We've already seen a number of conversations on camp forums about ways to make sure that campers feel safe in dealing with the new trauma induced by COVID-19. This summer, camps can provide a break from the stream of information, a safe space to grieve and process, and an opportunity for mental and emotional restoration. This season, camp staff and directors will have to prepare to help campers process these distressing emotions and experiences. As camps bring together so many young people with diverse experiences, they'll be able to help everyone connect and unpack their experiences. For some campers, COVID-19 may have been a distant issue that was limited to upending their school year and sports activities. Others may have experienced it more acutely, feeling the direct impact of COVID-19 on their families or communities. Supporting this range of experiences will be challenging, there should be no doubt that camp staff members are well-positioned to help kids process their feelings. Camp is, and always has been, that safe place – and it will be a healing environment for a lot of campers in the summer of 2020.

Running camp this summer, however different it may be from a normal summer, will be a lesson in resilience and determination. Camps are facing unprecedented challenges in preparing to adjust to a new reality, and we are working together like never before to provide resources and support for our teams and each other. This resilience trickles down to staff and campers as lessons in how to adapt to the unexpected. Camp activities are full of practices that can be applied to life, and many camp alumni credit their camp experiences with giving them the tools to succeed as adults. The way we have rallied together to make camp happen during the summer after COVID-19 will surely make that list.

We're all waking up to the reality every day that we can't see our friends or go out in public for anything except essential needs. With school closings, kids are feeling a sense of social isolation, perhaps even more intensely than adults, because they are used to being surrounded by peers everyday. If camp is prepared to do anything this summer, it's to reconnect people with their friends and mentors – and this includes campers, staff

members, and leaders. Even first-time campers will benefit from being surrounded by peers, adapting to a daily routine, and having their days filled with productive and fun activities. The social distancing orders created long stretches of unfilled time, leaving children hungry for creative and intellectually stimulating activities – a void that camp is exceptionally well-prepared to fill.

Six feet of distance can feel like so much more, and video calls can't replace the feeling of connecting face-to-face, a connection amplified by the bonds that Holiday Home Camp creates through shared experiences in an unforgettable setting. These camp memories solidify connections and can last well beyond someone's camp years, which will certainly be true of the 2020 camp season.

Camp is always important, but this summer we think it's more essential than ever.

Future World and Local Leaders at Work and Play

We are incredible! As humans have an incredible ability to adapt to changing settings and situations. At OWLS, we use a novel setting, challenges, and risk as tools to help facilitate adaptation and problem-solving. I have seen firsthand how we can adapt, take new roles, and work together. Together apart we will get through this.

Last fall, OWLS finished our season with some incredible custom programs. In October, we welcomed Rotary district 6450's program, Rotary Youth Leadership Activities (RYLA). Over four days, we incorporated an amazing race, two full days packed with experiential-based leadership development, hosted a multitude of speakers from international non-profits. RYLA brings out 80 high school students from all over the Chicagoland area. Sixteen of those are international exchange students. One amazing aspect of RYLA is that Rotary measures their OWLS program's outcomes by tracking student success through teacher evaluation of specific leadership qualities. RYLA has been an OWLS client for over ten years, which speaks to our fantastic custom outcome-driven programs. Our final program of the 2019 year took place in mid-November was Countryside Day School. This group has been clients of OWLS for many years. A small group of around fifteen 7th and 8th grade students joins us for a cohesive program full of self-discovery, personal development, and leadership awareness. Over 3.5 days, our team facilitated every high climbing element, incorporated journaling, and provided a safe place for growth from failure. The focus of this legacy program is to provide these young leaders with experiential lessons that can be carried into the classroom and connected to the Montessori Method of Education.

While we are continuing to experience this awful virus, we will get through this by experiencing, reflecting, processing, and applying what we learn. I will note that hope is not a method. While it can help us in hard times, we need to lead by following guidelines and staying home. For many of us, the world feels as though it is on pause. Now is the time to not waste time. Get through that stack of books that you have desired to read. Sign up for a digital class. Always wanted to learn an instrument, you have time. Now is the time to learn and act.

We care deeply about our community and would like to take a line to thank anyone who is reading this newsletter. You mean the world to our association.



Mark Feldman
Assoc. Director OWLS



Lake Geneva Fresh Air Association
Holiday Home Camp • Owls Leadership



The Waterfront

Spring 2020



HOLIDAY HOME SUMMER CAMP

We're slowly saying goodbye to winter as we approach our favorite time of year and preparations are well on the way to making it another great summer at HHC. While we progress into our camp season, I have some exciting updates to let you in on.

As we build our 2020 team, I want to thank our those involved for a successful recruitment period so far. I'm very proud to welcome back several members of our 2019 team to join us once again this summer along with some wonderful new recruits! We have an all but complete team of counselors, as well as some enthusiastic support staff. It's so important to find the perfect balance between new and returning staff and it's this mixture that allows us to continue our traditions and maintain the strong camp culture we're so proud of here at HHC.

Each year we are able to see the importance of our ELITE Teen Program in many ways. Last summer we had more staff members who were previously ELITES than ever before. This year, we aim to increase that number once again and give our teens a platform to show the skills they acquired during their time as ELITES by becoming staff members in a variety of roles. Having once been Counselors in Training (CIT), they now have the opportunity to guide their own CITs through the program and help to achieve their goals in both personal and professional development.

We host our ELITES at camp for several weekend events throughout the school year and our February meeting held the theme of 'Coping & Succeeding'. Our theme aimed to address how teens can learn to balance their time and not allow the pressures of life to interfere with their ability to succeed. Our goal is to help promote necessary skills for our ELITES to take into the real world. There were many stories of failure turned success thanks to our program and the teens spoke on how camp has helped them through tough situations at home, and in school. This group really bonded with a great show of support and love. We always enjoy completing our weekends by letting loose and this time it was Karaoke night! Almost all got up to share charismatic versions of their favorite songs along with some wonderful originals! As always, thank you to the staff who ensure these weekends are a success without whom we would not be able to do what we do. We now begin preparations for our May event where many will be graduating the ELITE Program. While we send these graduates off, we say welcome to 16 former campers who will be joining the ELITE program!

I want to welcome Amar Chouhan, Haley Burton and Ryer Peace as new Leadership Team members for summer 2020! All three have shown exceptional effort throughout their years at HHC and the step up to Leadership is something that is fully deserved. Cierrae and I now work alongside our new team members to create another exciting staff training period that begins on June 3rd.

Everyone now eagerly awaits the look on the campers faces as they see our new and improved facilities for the first time! Thank you to all who have made this possible, your contributions will never go unnoticed and we greatly appreciate the support. I'm excited to let you all in on another incredible summer at HHC in our Fall newsletter.



George Pascoulis
HH Camp Director

