

Camp Winnataska Annual Report

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Introduction

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another..” - Hebrews 10:24-25

We both learned early in life that serving at Winnataska is all-at-once humbling, rewarding, demanding, and never boring. Summer 2021 was no exception. From downed power lines and sweeping illnesses to a successful ACA visit and campers accepting salvation in Christ, the summer camping season was filled with joy, hard work, growth, and so much more. It was a remarkable challenge and a tremendous honor to serve as the Directors; we left feeling exhausted and fulfilled, and we can honestly say that we gave it everything we had, every single day.

This report contains further information about Summer 2021, including both notable achievements and recommendations for improvement. We spend countless hours praying, thinking, and dreaming about what is best for camp, and that is always at the forefront of our hearts and minds when we reflect on the past and look to the future. We hope this report will be received with the same sentiment. Our intent is to be forthright about the ways we can all work together to make Winnataska better. We have a unique perspective as the people who are entrusted to lead and to serve, and we appreciate the opportunity to share that point of view. So many who have come before us gave their best efforts to carry out the mission of “Christian Camping at its Best,” and we owe it to all who hold camp in their hearts to do what we earnestly believe is our best work and God’s will for camp.

Thank you for dedicating your time and talents to The Camp that We Love the Best of All. Winnataska is served so well by its extensive network of alumni and volunteers, and we are humbled to join you in this endeavor.

Gratefully,
Blake & Aubrey Huynh

Registration

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” -Proverbs 22:6

Camp Winnataska welcomed 1,614 campers for Summer 2021:

- Returning Campers*:
822 (51%) / New Campers = 792 (49%)
- 66 Complimentary Sessions
(100% Discount)
- 14 Camperships
(\$8,085 in Scholarships Provided by FOW)



Achievements:

- Registered campers reached 96% capacity overall.
- Seven hundred ninety-two new faces got to experience camp for the first time!

Recommendations for Improvement:

- Reduce the number of complimentary sessions given to Nurses (currently two per Nurse - a value of \$3,540 per week at the 2022 rate), and encourage Nurses, Weekly Directors, and others to “return” their complimentary session if it will not be used for a family member.
- Promote inclusion by dedicating a certain percentage of registrations per week to camperships (ACA Standard CR.2.1).

**Data may be misrepresented due to Summer 2020 cancellation.*

Staff & Program Specialists

“We remember before God your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord.” -1 Thessalonians 1:3



There were 36 college Staff members in 2021:

- 14 Blackfeet / 22 Comanches
- 11 First-Years / 12 Second-Years / 13 Third-Years

Our acceptance rates for Staff applicants were:

- Blackfeet - 82%
- Comanches - 79%
- Overall - 80%

There were eight Program Specialists and one Administrative Specialist in 2021. Four PS's were returning to the position from Summer 2020.

Though it is still too early to determine with certainty, we currently predict that approximately fifteen Staff members and five Program Specialists will apply for Summer 2022.

Achievements:

- At least one throughout the summer, every Staff member (and several Program Specialists) were mentioned on camper surveys as someone who made the camper feel special.
- Because of Summer 2020 being cancelled, 64% of the Staff members were essentially first-years. Their hard work and willingness to learn how to run camp (with campers) was extremely impressive.
- Overall, Program Specialists did an excellent job of serving as professional mentors to the Staff members in their program areas.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- Hire at least one full-time Administrative Specialist or two part-time Administrative Specialists. An Administrative Specialist is needed on site at all times, including nights and weekends.
- Hold certification trainings before Pre-Camp in order to provide more focused, camp-specific training during Pre-Camp.



Leaders

“Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly - not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God.” -1 Peter 5:2

Winnataska was served by 154 students who volunteered as Leaders in Summer 2021:

- 101 Female Leaders / 53 Male Leaders
- 31 Returning Leaders / 123 First-Time Leaders

Of those 154 Leaders, 30 served as Special Leaders at least once during the summer.



Achievements:

- New procedures were put into place that allowed Spladers to get a more comprehensive view of what is involved with being on Staff. We are hopeful that this will lead to better prepared first-year Staff members.
- Staff members were very intentional about mentoring and teaching Leaders this year. Overall, Hut Staff was able to address most issues in the hut before they became a significant problem.
- Eighty percent of the Leaders this summer were first-time Leaders. Most of those who had experience had only been Leaders for 1-2 weeks. We all survived.
- New systems were put into place that enabled Leaders to receive specific and timely feedback about their performance, as well as instruction as to how to improve.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- Enlist help from the camp family to implement recruitment initiatives for male Leaders. Not having enough male Leaders continues to be a significant issue in terms of adequate camper supervision, and there were several occasions this summer when Blackfeet had to serve as Leaders.
- Provide more focused training for Leaders prior to their week at camp.

Program & Night Activity

“...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” -John 10:10

Program areas and night activities continue to receive high marks on camper surveys. Summer 2021 was the first year that campers were able to experience several new additions to program areas, as well as Wacky Tacky Carnival Night.



Achievements:

- Sustainability, the new component of the Outdoors program, was a huge hit with kids and adults alike.
- Campers were able to use the new tactical field for various recreational activities.
- The Low Ropes Course was relocated; new elements were added and old favorites were restored.



Recommendations for Improvement:

- The laser tag guns need to be repaired in order to function effectively for program and off season groups.
- Continue to develop the Sustainability program and consider giving this area its own spot in the schedule, separate from Outdoors.
- Shooting Sports is still a relatively new program, and needs some facility improvements, including expanding the range behind the office.



Summer Ops & Rental Group Facilities

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.” -Psalm 127:1

Achievements:

- New facilities on Chico Hill were well-tested this summer and received countless compliments from campers and parents.
- Comanches and Blackfeet fundraised to make improvements to Reimel and the Blackfoot Hut. The common room of Pogue was cleaned out to provide a break area for Program Specialists.
- A maintenance ticket system was implemented to ensure that Graham was not bombarded by requests from everyone in camp.



Recommendations for Improvement:

- The dining hall and kitchen continue to be a barrier for growth at camp. We simply do not have the appropriate infrastructure for the number of meals being prepared and served.
- Renovating the right wing of Strickland would benefit lodging arrangements during the summer and provide additional income for off season rentals.
- Pueblo is an eyesore and uninhabitable, and it is the first building parents see when they cross the bridge on Sundays. We feel that this area could be better utilized by building a “half hut” (one wing with sinks and Leaders quarters) for male LIT’s. A hut of that nature would also be

beneficial in the grassy area by Navajo, for female LIT’s. These additions would allow us to increase our enrollment and provide more focused training for future Leaders.

- Septic issues were a noticeable and recurring issue this summer. This was discussed during the July 2021 board meeting.

Health & Safety

“A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” -Proverbs 17:22



Achievements:

- No campers were involved in major injuries this summer! Staff injuries were minimal in number.
- Staggering check-in alphabetically made the health check process more efficient.
- Program Specialists and Staff members were trained on what to do in the event of a potential injury, and executed well when needed.
- Out of 1,614 campers, only 7 (<.05%) tested positive for COVID-19, and we believe that the initial case was not contracted at camp.
- Staff members did an excellent job implementing new COVID-19 protocols.
- As always, the Health Hut was kept in great condition by the Thorington family.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- This year marked our second Norovirus outbreak in four summers (three if excluding 2020). While we believe that both of these outbreaks were handled well by camp leadership, it is likely that a recurring issue of this nature will begin to raise red flags among parents and others. We feel that it would be beneficial for camp to invest in measures that would help us determine if environmental factors at camp are contributing to this issue, before next summer.
- Staffing the Health Hut was challenging this summer, and there were multiple weeks when Weekly Directors had to fill in because there were not enough nurses. There were also multiple weeks when at least one of the nurses had never been to camp before, which proved to be a difficult obstacle, especially during situations when the nurses were needed outside the Health Hut. We would recommend that we start recruiting camp nurses earlier in the off season.
- With a new Camp Director, a new medical advisor, and numerous new camp nurses, there were often glitches in communication between these parties (and the Healthcare Coordinator). During this off season, Aubrey will work with Drew and Susan to more clearly define the communications process regarding incidents in the Health Hut during the summer season.

Food Service

“They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.” -Acts 2:46

Switching to an in-house model for food service brought great change in Summer 2021.

Achievements:

- Food quality was notably improved. This was reflected in feedback from Staff, Leaders, and campers.
- The kitchen and dining hall saw increased efficiency, despite new COVID-19 protocols.
- We saw a significant reduction in food waste, thanks to monitoring from the kitchen staff and a new system that allowed campers to indicate their choice of entree for each meal.
- The total cost for food service in 2021 was \$119,991.99, representing a savings of \$91,645.01 as compared to 2019.



Recommendations for Improvement:

- We need to invest in the kitchen and provide our kitchen staff with better and more reliable equipment.
- We will be making a few minor adjustments to the menu based on feedback from campers and others.
- Continue to employ Stephanie Lawson as Kitchen Manager, and allow her to implement further procedures that will improve the overall food service.
- The dining hall and kitchen continue to be a barrier for growth at camp. We simply do not have the appropriate infrastructure for the number of meals being prepared and served.



Camp Store

“...as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” -Colossians 3:12

Achievements:

- Utilizing Program Specialists to run the Camp Store increased efficiency and flexibility, and was cost-effective.
- Opening the online store through the camp website brought increased income during the off season.
- Limiting items in the store to clothing and water bottles made the store more efficient and profitable.

Sales (September 2020 - Present): \$40,254

Expenses:

Staffing - \$1,400 (run through payroll)

Cost of Goods - \$17,827

Graphic Designer - \$2,240

Profit: \$18,787



Recommendations for Improvement:

- The Camp Store could benefit from being housed in a different area in camp. Strickland is not conducive to the function of the store, and does not allow the merchandise to be secured.

Off Season

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven...” -Ecclesiastes 3:1



Achievements:

- Despite the pandemic, camp profited approximately \$12,000 from rental groups.
- Events held during the off season led to increased involvement from the camp family and profited approximately \$19,000 for camp.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- We believe that the ultimate goal for camp would be to have an employee who was responsible for overseeing all events and groups during the off season. We have made great strides in using camp throughout the year, but there is still great potential that cannot be reached without someone dedicated to this endeavor.

ACA

“I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.” -Genesis 12:3

Achievements:

- Our ACA accreditation visit was very successful. We only lost 1 point for not requiring campers to wear long pants while riding horses, which we knew would be the case. We will receive official scores in October.

Recommendations for Improvement:

- Continue to maintain ACA standards practices and documentation during non-accreditation years so that preparing for the visit will not be so cumbersome.

