

Annual Report

"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."
-Matthew 16:24



Introduction

I want to start by saying thank you. Thank you for believing in me. Thank you for allowing me the privilege to serve this place that we all love so much. Thank you for serving alongside me to further the Kingdom. Thank you for the wisdom you have imparted upon me. Thank you for the unending support and words of affirmation. This job is impossible without the camp family. The blessings and lessons in this role are never ending. There were moments that brought me to my knees and there were moments that allowed me to beam with pride. The theme of this summer was "Audience of One," in other words, "God has to be your leader for you to be a leader." The goal is for us as a staff to remember who our Father is and allow Him to be our leader, so we can lead others. I can assuredly say that overall I felt that leaders and staff members took this theme to heart and tried to lead through the Father. This summer was a very humbling experience as I learned my strengths a bit better and my weaknesses. I hope that through this report, the summer is properly summarized and areas of growth are well received.

With Gratitude,
Caitlin Thorington

Registration



Camper Stats

1,690 total campers for the summer with a 98% registration rate. Every girl spot was filled and six weeks were overbooked. There was a waitlist for girls every single week. For boys, three weeks were not completely filled (SC, 1st, 4th). Every Chico session had a waitlist.



Areas of Growth

- Continue to recruit and serve minorities to include diversity at camp.
- Implement initiatives to retain older boy campers.



Camperships & Complimentary

FOW provided funds for 14 camperships, which totals \$7,015.

There were 10 complimentary staff sessions and 27 complimentary nurse sessions given this summer to children.

Program Specialists & Staff

Program Specialists

9 total – 5 returning, 4 new

1 Administrative Specialist – new

Overall, they showed the staff what leadership looks like and were an asset to the summer. There are 2-3 that are planning on returning next year.



Staff

We ended the summer with 10 Blackfeet & 23 Comanches.

Blackfeet:

3 Third years
3 Second years
4 First years

Comanches:

3 Third years
10 Second years
10 First years

Around 11 plan on returning next year to be on staff & 5 plan on returning to be a PS.

Accomplishments:

- Staff led Bible studies amongst one another to lead each other and cultivate a Christ-centered culture.
- This staff got along with one another exceptionally well. I have not seen this dynamic between college aged people, ever.
- This staff continuously had suggestions for improvement and new ideas for how to do things.



Areas of Growth:

- Better prepare Program Specialists and Staff members in program responsibilities.
- Create mentorships within the camp family for spiritual leadership and accountability.
- Have maintenance as a program rotation for consistency.
- Add Blackfeet to cleaning rotations.
- Increase pay for all staff members.

Leaders

- 67 First Year Leaders
 - 18 boys, 49 girls
- 53 Second Year Leaders
 - 13 boys, 40 girls
- 32 Third Year Leaders
 - 15 boys, 17 girls
- 1 Fourth Year Leader (girl)
- 4 LITs bumped to Leader (boys)

157 total leaders
50 boys & 107 girls



Accomplishments:

- New boy leaders recruited by existing boy leaders and continued to come back additional weeks!
- We had a total of 30 spladers this summer and out of those, 24 were recommended for hire if they apply for staff.
- Hut moms continued to show tremendous leadership to their fellow leaders and to the boy campers. I truly believe this is beneficial, even if it is done in a bind.

Suggestions:

- Conduct in-person interviews for first year leaders at Camp.
- Have a leadership training and a make-up training that is not virtual.
- Conduct recruitment events and/or meetings to increase boy leader numbers.
- Pay senior leaders and have a minimum time requirement.
- Pay dishwashers.

Program



Boats

We added Corcls to the boats program this summer and I feel as though they were overall a success. Campers of course request to get in the water, but the staff does a wonderful job with making this program fun and getting the opportunity to know campers better.

Crafts

We added the Glowforge to the crafts program this summer. Camp also provided every camper with a Camp Winnataska bandana to tie dye which was a success for campers and helpful to staff as well. An additional drying rack for crafts was added and was very helpful.



Horses

According to camper surveys, horses continues to be a camper favorite across age groups. The continued struggle is maximizing camper time. This group of staff was exceptionally attentive to safety.



Areas of Growth

Boats

- Build a more secure/durable dock that matches the height of the other.
- Build additional space for Corcls.
- Assess condition of existing life jackets and invest in new ones.

Crafts

- Find a permanent home for the Glowforge that is not the Camp Office.
- Continue to work towards project style crafts for boy campers.

Horses

- Assess current scheduling and figure out how to maximize camper time with horses. Continues to be a struggle.
- Complete the new Pony Grove project where land was cleared.

Program



Outdoors

According to camper surveys, Outdoors is scored the highest by Creek campers. A successful addition to outdoors was our partnership with Land & Sea Animals for our younger huts on Wednesdays. Campout fluctuated between Rushton and the Legend Night site due to weather and safety. However, campers had great campout experiences.

Pool

According to camper surveys, Pool is a continual camper favorite. Pool added two new basketball goals, repaired the water line to the slide, and purchased a four square volleyball net. Our pool staff also went through instruction with Dollie on how to teach swim lessons.



Recreation

Recreation continues to and will always be a camper favorite... canteen! The program added a deep freezer for ice cream, large rolling drawers under the stage for night activity storage. Stockham green continued to be used for day programming and night activity.



Areas of Growth

Outdoors

- Include survival and basic camp/outdoor life skills into programming.
- Work towards safety measures for campout & preparing our staff for unsafe scenarios.

Pool

- Conduct mock safety routines to keep lifeguards in practice with what to do in case of an emergency.
- Add additional portable lifeguard chairs, instead of Adirondack chairs that are currently used.

Recreation

- Move the stage stairs to the back of the stage.
- Adding milk crate storage to bat cave for staff belongings at night activity.

Program



Ropes

According to camper surveys, ropes continues to be a camper favorite. This is across camper ages, but especially with Navajos. The ropes staff did a great job leading campers to complete challenging activities while lifting them up.

Shooting Sports

According to camper surveys, Navajos consistently scored shooting sports higher than other huts. New target covers were added this year. The progressive programming was easy to implement in this program area.



Sustainability

Sustainability had two additions this summer: butterfly garden and a pizza oven! The butterfly garden was a hit, but after a storm, many of the butterflies died. The pizza oven needs to be utilized more often, as it was only used during Friday choice day.

Areas of Growth

Ropes

- I believe that our best investment would be to make routine repairs to maintain our existing course, while also adding additional elements.

Shooting Sports

- Continue to build the progressive programming plan for this area.

Sustainability

- Build a more permanent roof structure on the butterfly garden to protect from storms.
- Include the pizza oven for more usage.

Health

- Of 1,690 campers served this summer, 30-40% of these campers turned in medication to the nurses on Sundays that were to be taken routinely throughout the week.
- 2 Campers were taken to the Children's Hospital Emergency Room during the summer, both injuries from the black tube swing.
- 2 Staff Members were taken to Emergency Rooms during the summer.
- 8 Incident Reports were completed for the summer.
- Total of 18 nurses this summer – 5 were new.



Things to work on:

- Inconsistencies across nurses allowing campers to call home when homesick, not communicating with camp director when parents were called for sick campers.

Suggestions:

- Training for new and returning nurses – preferably weekend of Director Convention so that some of the information they receive is consistent.
- Hire 1 nurse to be in Health Hut for the full summer or 2 nurses splitting the summer in half to provide consistency within the Health Hut.
- Add mental health, behavioral health, sensory processing questions to health form.

Camp Store



Report from Elin Glenn representing FOW



The Camp Store reopened in Strickland Lodge this summer, to the great delight of parents and alumni. Not only was it a place to purchase merchandise, it also served as a volunteer opportunity for alumni and a place for parents to cool off! It served 843 patrons, and brought in \$31,395, and offered 12 different volunteers an opportunity to help. Though the store did not make a huge profit during the camping season, FOW believes that Mother-Daughter Weekend, online sales and fall events will offer an opportunity to increase sales.

The largest benefit Camp Winnataska receives from Friends of Winnataska running the store is consistency in branding and quality of merchandise. There is variety without an overwhelming number of items and inventory. Items utilize our vast archive of logos and images. There is also room to grow standardization of designs. Consistency in management leads to purchasing larger quantities of standard items, and supplementing with seasonal specialty designs. This model will also keep costs down, and increase profits.

A permanent home for the Camp Store would make sales easier at monthly events, which would increase opportunities for volunteer involvement as well as sales. There was only one day when the internet did not function. While it was difficult, FOW utilized Venmo, cash, and check sales to make it through. More stable internet is needed to serve our parents in the current world financial climate. When Strickland Lodge renovations are considered, relocation of the camp store will also need to be considered. Elin has plans to continue to streamline mail sorting to benefit camp staff efficiency. Any physical store merchandising and display items would be constructed with the intent that they be portable and could be utilized in a new store location. All in all FOW running the store was a positive experience and I recommend it continue into the future.



Day to Day Function/Updates



- Photo iPad - An iPad was purchased mid-summer for Weekly Directors to drop their photos to, which was very convenient and beneficial to directors and the office. The Administrative Specialist can edit the photos and directly upload them from this iPad. Additionally, the staff member doing dry goods inventory can air drop to this iPad so that all of those inventories are stored in one place.
- Red Flag Feelings/Green Flag Feelings - Implementation of this general language across Weekly Directors, Staff, Leaders, and Campers in order to continue to foster a culture of abuse prevention.
- Weekly Director Convention - It is imperative that Weekly Directors attend this half of a day of training. There were inconsistencies throughout the summer of expectations for Hut Staff and Leaders. However, one way to improve this is to consider recreating the Weekly Director binders that were used under MaryMargaret and Ann.
- Night Activities/Traditions Committee - The summer operations committee is beginning the process of reevaluating camp traditions to ensure our actions are carrying out Camp's vision and mission.
- Quest - Camp race type activity for Navajos & Seminoles with putting meaning behind the knights that are in the Pageant of the Holy Grail. However, it's execution was lacking in organization and staff buy-in. I think that it has great components but am hopeful that the new PD will invest more logistical thinking into the process, as well as buy in from staff.
- Communication with Graham - I feel as though Graham and I have a successful working relationship and look forward to continuing to grow our communication as we work towards the betterment of Camp.



Other Suggestions



- Bats - We need to invest time and supplies into better sealing huts and preventing bats. They continued to be a problem, especially in the first half of the summer. I also received parent emails and phone calls regarding them, at least once a week.
- Executive Director - I think it is wise of camp to pursue the creation of a job description and search for an Executive Director. There are many things that cannot be completed by an employee that is not at camp full-time.
- Offer Letters - Provide offer letters to each Staff member & PS that state start date, finish date, and pay.
- Mental Health - Having a plan for mental health crisis and a committee or support group that can help with making these decisions. There were many situations this summer when this could have been beneficial, although I do think we worked through these situations as well as possible.
- Safety Plan - Discuss a safety plan and come up with possible scenarios in order to be able to best prepare staff and leaders for swift decision making in the event of an unsafe situation.
- Front Gate - Placement of an automated front gate in order to provide additional secure measures. There are many cars that come into camp weekly, almost daily while campers are making their way to programs.