



# Beyond Akeela

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Newsletter / March 2014

Dear Beyond Akeela campers and parents,

We are so excited to send you this update about Beyond Akeela. As you know, Beyond Akeela has undergone some major changes since last summer, going from a base-camp experience to a full-fledged travel program. This has been a wonderful process for us and we can't wait for it to become a reality. In this newsletter, you'll find some tentative details about what to expect from each day of your trip. What's not reflected in those itineraries, but which you can absolutely count on, is lots of time to relax and hang out with friends. You'll also have all kinds of opportunities to practice for life after high school: shopping, cooking, budgeting, planning, and much more!

Like every part of camp, Beyond Akeela is at its core about *people*. Sure, the itinerary is thrilling and the program goals are inspiring. But the experience will be that much more rewarding and unforgettable because of the other campers and staff with whom you share it. Many of you will be exploring new challenges with old camp friends. Some of you haven't been to Akeela before and are looking forward to forging new friendships. We are confident that *all* of you will come away from this summer with a special bond that can never be broken.

We could not be more proud of the staff that we're hiring for Beyond Akeela. Below, you will find brief introductions to Joe and Andie, two of our Senior Staff members who will be leading the way. They are truly two of the most outstanding camp professionals we've ever worked with – you're going to love them!

If you have any questions between now and the summer, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at any time. Hopefully, this newsletter will address some of the things you might be curious about.

Best,

*Debbie, Eric and Kevin*

## Meet the Beyond Akeela Senior Staff



**Joe Torok**  
Beyond Akeela Director

Joe lives in Ypsilanti, Michigan (that's below the thumb on the pad of your palm). This will be his second consecutive year as the Director of Beyond Akeela. Joe teaches freshman writing at Wayne State University, and he has also taught a number of writing, reading, and student development classes at Eastern Michigan University and Lansing Community College. Joe has also written for a newspaper as a restaurant critic and reporter, done a little college sports reporting, and worked for a time with the most wonderful kids in the world (besides Akeela campers!) at a special education school in Lansing, Michigan.

Favorite Book: A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy

Place I'd Like to Visit: Budapest

Favorite Camp Food: Fajitas



**Andie Charkow**  
Beyond Akeela Nurse

Andie is originally from San Antonio and grew a little further south in Mission, Texas, right on the border of Mexico and the Gulf. She currently lives in Durham, North Carolina, where she is an emergency department nurse at Duke Regional Hospital. Andie is incredible grateful to her best friend, John-Robert Iruegas (Akeela staff '09 – '13), for introducing her to Camp Akeela! This will be her second Akeela summer and she could not be more excited. She looks forward to a new and amazing experience with the Beyond Akeela campers, and cannot wait to reconnect with everyone in the community!

Favorite Books: The Notebook by Nicholas Sparks and

If You Give a Mouse A Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff

Place I'd Like to Visit: Athens, Greece

Favorite Camp Food: Everything!

## Itinerary and Accommodations

Date	Selected Highlights of the Day	Accommodations
Mon, June 30	Arrive at Boston Logan Airport	Dartmouth Outing Club Cabin in Lyme, NH
Tue, July 1	Orientation and fun at Camp Akeela	Dartmouth Outing Club Cabin in Lyme, NH
Wed, July 2	Hiking and swimming in Franconia Notch	Condo near North Conway, NH
Thu, July 3	Explore Portland, Maine and play at Funtown/Splashtown USA	Hotel near Portland, ME
Fri, July 4	Desert of Maine, Freeport and Portland Sea Dogs Baseball Game (w/ fireworks!)	Hotel near Portland, ME
Sat, July 5	Portland to Bar Harbor, Maine. Lobster dinner	KOA Woodlands, Mt. Desert Island, ME
Sun, July 6	Explore the natural wonders of Acadia National Park	KOA Woodlands, Mt. Desert Island, ME
Mon, July 7	Say goodbye to Acadia and head to The Forks, Maine, with a stop in Bangor	Cabins at The Forks Outdoor Fun Resort
Tue, July 8	White Water Rafting on the Kennebec River with Three Rivers Whitewater Co.	Cabins at The Forks Outdoor Fun Resort
Wed, July 9	Explore Quebec City's historical sites and fortifications	Laval University dormitories
Thu, July 10	Treetop adventures and majestic waterfalls (taller than Niagara Falls!) in Quebec	Laval University dormitories
Fri, July 11	Relax and discover old Montreal	McGill University dormitories
Sat, July 12	Biodome and Bateau-Mouche in Montreal	McGill University dormitories
Sun, July 13	Back to the USA ... Adirondack Mountains, New York	House rental in Lake Placid
Mon, July 14	Olympic village, Whiteface Mountain and more in Lake Placid, NY	House rental in Lake Placid
Tue, July 15	Choose your own Adirondack adventure: hike, climb, boat, even learn to bike ride!	House rental in Lake Placid
Wed, July 16	Settle in and enjoy Burlington, Vermont	St. Michael's College townhouses
Thu, July 17	Community Service in and around Burlington, VT	St. Michael's College townhouses
Fri, July 18	Community Service in and around Burlington, VT	St. Michael's College townhouses
Sat, July 19	Community Service in and around Burlington, VT	St. Michael's College townhouses
Sun, July 20	Carnival, swim, banquet and closing campfire at Camp Akeela	Camp Akeela
Mon, July 21	Departure from Camp Akeela or Boston Logan Airport	

*Note: Activities and accommodations are subject to change. We will be "scouting" the trip this spring, visiting each location to ensure that every item on the final itinerary meets our standards and supports Beyond Akeela's program goals. Also, because we fully expect to find new and exciting opportunities as we explore these destinations, the itineraries above reflect only a portion of the options that will be available to Beyond Akeela campers this summer!*

Activities



Friendship



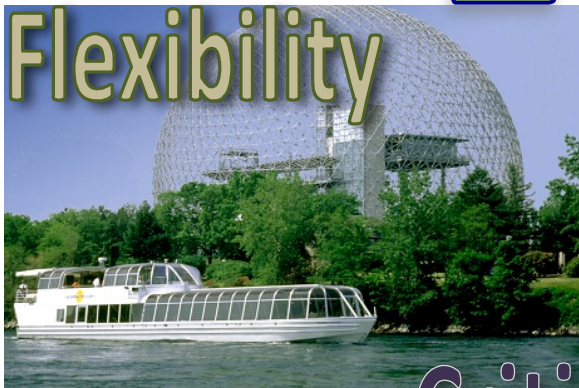
Teamwork



Leadership



Adventure



Flexibility



Resilience

Critical Thinking



Memories  
New ones



Service

# COMING SOON: Beyond Akeela Parent Handbook

Those of you with "veteran" campers know that this is the time of year we typically send information about camp forms, policies and logistics. Don't worry, we haven't forgotten you! We're currently putting together a Beyond Akeela Parent Handbook, which will include:

- ✓ Forms checklist
- ✓ Drop-off and pick-up information
- ✓ Packing list
- ✓ Communication details (with your camper and our staff)
- ✓ Electronics policy
- ✓ Health care information
- ✓ Lots more to help you and your camper prepare for Beyond Akeela!

In the meantime, the following FAQ should answer many of the questions that you may have on your mind!

## Beyond Akeela FAQ

### **1. Where will my campers be staying during the trip?**

They will be staying in a variety of settings. The majority of nights will be either in cabins/houses or dormitory accommodations, with a roughly even split between the two. Mixed in along the way will be a few nights of more traditional hotels and good old-fashioned campsites! In every case, each camper will have his/her own bed (or sleeping bag) in a single-sex room (or tent).

### **2. How will my camper's medications be handled during the trip?**

Andie Charkow is a licensed nurse and was on our nursing staff at Akeela last summer. She will play a huge role in Beyond Akeela, including administering all of the campers' medications and attending to any medical needs that arise on the trip.

We require that ALL of your child's daily medications (including vitamins, supplements, over-the-counter meds, etc.) are dispensed to us through CampMeds. CampMeds pre-packages medications with the camper's name, time, and dosage on it. More information about CampMeds and how to register for their services is forthcoming.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's health during the trip, you can contact us at camp and we will coordinate with Andie, our on-site nurses, and our on-call pediatrician, as needed.

### **3. How much staff supervision will there be on the trip?**

The camper-to-staff ration in Beyond Akeela is better than 3-to-1. While the program is an opportunity for your teenager to practice independence, our first priority will always be safety. The staff members leading the trip are mature, capable individuals who passionately care about the well-being and growth of their campers. They understand and embrace the responsibility of caring for your children.

As the trip progresses, campers will be given the opportunity to demonstrate to the staff their ability to safely handle increased levels of independence. These privileges will be granted at the discretion of the Beyond Akeela Director; it will no doubt vary from camper to camper and situation to situation. Most importantly, we will *always* err on the side of caution.

### **4. Should we pack a cell phone?**

Yes, in fact cell phones will play an important role in our communication and emergency plans while on the trip. However, our staff will hold onto the phones and provide them to campers for specific times and uses.

### **5. What about other electronics?**

Just like our traditional camp program for younger children, we feel that Beyond Akeela is an excellent chance for campers to take a "break" from their electronics. Gaming and devices that access the Internet will not be a part of this experience.

### **6. How will I keep abreast of how my child is doing?**

The Beyond Akeela director will be your primary point of contact during the camp session. In addition to regular updates that he will provide you, we want you to feel comfortable checking in with him as often as would make you feel comfortable. You can leave Joe a message and he will call you back. Please keep in mind that Joe will be personally leading each component of the trip but will return your calls as soon as he can find an appropriate time. You will have his cell phone number in case of a true emergency.

Of course, Debbie and Eric will be intimately involved in Beyond Akeela and are always available to chat with you about your camper. We will post as many news updates and photos as we can on the camp's parent-only website.

Lastly, we will provide you with an email address to which you can send messages directly to your camper. They will have a regular "mail call" every day.