



# Camp Akeela<sup>SM</sup> Circular



## Letter From The Directors



Dear Akeela Families,

Fall is often a time a reflection for those of us in the year round camp world. It marks a time for us to look back on our fondest memories of the summer, and to set new goals as we move forward with planning another amazing camp season. It is, in essence, the camp equivalent of New Year's Day. For both of us this is a particularly exciting fall season, as we focus on continuing to grow the strong community you all have helped create. We especially want to thank those of you who took the time to complete the camp surveys, which has us eager to build upon the success of the past two summers. There is clearly a passion for this community that we are looking forward to learning from and adding to!

Speaking of surveys... after looking through the wonderful feedback you all provided us, here are some of the common trends we found:

•**Better in-season communication:**

Our communication with parents about their child's progress at camp, along with photos and news from camp, are among the most important parts of our summer. We hear from your surveys that more communication and news/photo posting would be helpful for parents.

*What can you expect in 2019:* More communication! We are dedicated to not only providing a life-changing experience for our campers, but also to our camp families. You can look forward to more camp photos, more detailed camp news, and consistent updates from your child's head counselor to give you a clear view of his or her success over the summer.

•**More teen-appropriate activities:**

We heard from parents and campers that having more activities that are geared toward teens would be a welcome addition to camp.

*What you can expect in 2019:* As we dedicate camp to a more focused group of ages (6th-10th grade), it gives us the opportunity to build more teen-appropriate activities in the schedule. While we're early in the program planning process, we already have ideas for adding teen talks on relevant subjects like relationships and social media use, further developing the awesome news casting program, and providing transferable trainings as activity options (think First Aid/CPR, Jr. Lifeguard, etc). Stay tuned for more updates on these!

•**Increased confidence and independence:**

We LOVED reading about the increased confidence and independence campers displayed when they returned home. These are some of the most important things we can promote as camp professionals, and we are so proud to read that campers came home with the feeling of social accomplishment and independence. We encourage campers to keep the magic of camp going by keeping in touch with camp friends, and trying something new this school year!

Fondly,



# MIKE'S MIC

Greetings Akeela Campers,

I hope the start of your school year has gone well. I know sometimes the transition from camp to the "real world" and school can be difficult, with new classes, teachers, and peers to figure out. In the moments when life is moving too fast this year, I hope you can all reflect on your camp family to calm the storm. For me, participating in the Akeela staff fantasy football league (Go Packers!) helps me stay in touch with my camp friends during the fall and winter.

I am very excited to join your camp family this summer in Wisconsin! Over my years at summer camp, I have found that there is really no other place that can help you take new risks, while also feeling supported as you take them. Camp has been a magical place for me and my family, and I am looking forward to sharing the experience with you. My goal is to help each person, camper or staff, create their own camp magic and share those moments with new or old friends.

Soon I'll be reaching out to your family so we can get to know each other before the summer arrives. I am looking forward to meeting everyone over the course of this year and hearing how you all are doing, and can't wait to see you back at camp next summer!

## POISE-A-THON

We are proud to announce that through their participation in our POISE-a-thon community service events, Akeela campers (at our Wisconsin and Vermont locations) raised over \$15,000 for charity this summer. All of these donations will go directly to camper scholarships at Akeela, MGH Aspire or other similar camp programs. Thank you all for your participation and generosity.

(If your child participated in the POISE-a-thon and you have not yet had an opportunity to send your corresponding donation, it's not too late! Please visit [www.poisescholarship.org](http://www.poisescholarship.org) to make your contribution. Thanks!)



POISE

# Kev's Korner



As we look forward to the upcoming camp season, I think of the word "pride." While running the Beyond Akeela program alongside Akeela Wisconsin, I saw the immense amount of pride our campers took in creating this community. Looking back through pictures and surveys at the end of the summer only confirmed that sense of ownership our campers have over Akeela. That's what camp is all about. Having a place that we can call home, that is unique, sacred, and filled with people who care for one another. When we feel that sense of pride, we are more likely to step out of our comfort zone in a new activity, more likely to be goofy during the talent show, and more likely to pick up a friend when they are down.

So how do we keep this momentum going in the fall? How do we maintain the pride we feel over the summer? Here are a few things you can do at home!

- Get in touch with a friend from camp: Use the camp directory (we can send a new one if you need it!), connect with a friend through an online game, set up a FaceTime or Skype, or get in touch in another way that works for you! Any chance you have to keep in touch with your Akeela friends is a good one, and just because we're not at camp now doesn't mean we can't talk about how much fun we had together over the summer!
- Scroll through camp photos: Camp photos are still online through the parent portal in CampMinder. Take some time to look through old camp photos and relive some of your best memories! Storytelling is a great way to keep the camp magic alive.

Belonging to a community like this can be easily taken for granted. We are so lucky to have reminders every day that we have a network of Akeela families who take pride in their summer home. I hope that you all can find moments during this "off-season" to remember what made your summer at Akeela so special, and remember the sense of pride you feel for this community!

## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS...

Samuel B, October 8  
Lucas T, October 10  
Harrison M, October 12  
Miranda G, October 17  
Gabriel S, October 22  
Tess S, October 23  
Jacob B, October 25  
Addison M, October 26  
Nathan O, October 26  
Zachary H, October 28  
Matteo G, October 30  
Keeghan D, November 4



Leo H, November 5  
Jose B, November 7  
Ricky R, November 17  
Rider D, November 17  
Katina P, November 18  
Michael K, November 30  
Max S, December 6  
Elijah C, December 10  
Nelson S, December 11  
Eva T, December 29  
Cadence K, December 30



# Summer 2018 Highlights

Kevin had the opportunity to be around Akeela Wisconsin this summer and he could feel the magic of camp around him! Check out these photos for a stroll back down memory lane...







**THANK YOU  
FOR A  
WONDERFUL  
SUMMER!**



# Beyond Akeela Recap

We're thrilled to announce that Kristin (soon-to-be) Trimble will be the Director of Beyond Akeela this summer, along with Kevin. We were so lucky to have her join the Beyond Akeela team last summer and couldn't be more excited to have her even more involved this year.

We are still reflecting on the amazing summer we had with our Beyond Akeela teens. Beyond Akeela gives our teens space to take more initiative and control over their summer camp experience, and we were so proud of how they managed their newfound responsibility and independence, all while having a whole lot of fun! Check out some highlight photos here, and feel free to reach out to us if you're curious to learn more about this program!





# Mark your Calendars!

We'll be in your area for the following events, and would love to see you there.

**October 21 - Glencoe, IL** - Directors Meet & Greet! Mike and Kevin will be at the Watt's Center in Chicagoland to meet camp families. RSVP to [kevin@campakeela.com](mailto:kevin@campakeela.com).

**October 23 - Wheaton, IL** - Options Fair. Kevin will be meeting lots of prospective families at Wheaton Warrenville South High School. The fair focuses on post-secondary options for teens with a variety of special needs. Stop by the booth to say hello, it's a free event! More information on the Options Fair can be found here: <http://optionsfair.org/>

**January 26 - St. Louis, MO** - Summer Opportunities Fair. Kevin will be meeting with prospective families at John Burroughs School. The fair focuses on summer programs for children and teens in the St. Louis metropolitan area, nationally, and internationally. It's a free event, so come by and say hello! More information on the Summer Opportunities Fair can be found here: <http://www.summeropportunitiesfair.org/>.

**February 15-16 - Glencoe, IL** - Camper Reunion! Mike and Kevin will be at the Watt's/Takiff Center to welcome all campers for a camper reunion. We will likely be hosting an information session about camp this weekend, too. If you know families who may be interested in joining the Akeela community, this weekend will be a great time for them to meet us!

*\*\*Our spring schedule is in flux and we will keep you posted as we learn more about where we'll be when!\*\**



## RE-ENROLLMENT REMINDER (WITH EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT)

Being a returning camper is incredibly special – seeing all your old friends, knowing how to get from place to place on campus, and being a leader and role model for new campers. Don't forget to take advantage of our early enrollment discount – sign your camper up by Wednesday, October 31 at last year's prices! If you have any questions, please contact Kevin ASAP at [kevin@campakeela.com](mailto:kevin@campakeela.com) or 866-680-4744.