



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



## A Letter From The Directors

Is it really May already? This year seems to have passed more quickly – it feels like just yesterday we were singing “Friends” at our final Family Camp campfire and feeling sad that another summer was over. Well, as our camp song says, “Seasons spin around again and summer’s here at last!” We, along with Kevin and Margo and Julia, are very excited to see many of you in just a few short weeks at our Open House (June 7th) and even more of you when the camp sessions start in June and July!

While we’re all looking forward to being up on Miller Pond, we also feel a bit anxious about our transition. Debbie especially always gets “butterflies” in her stomach when she leaves home. When she was a camper, she always got a bit homesick when she went to camp and, even now as a grownup, she still feels nervous about the first few days of camp. We want our campers to know that all of these feelings – being excited, nervous, sad, anxious – are all normal and once at camp, our community will be there to support them. Debbie can attest to the fact that after the initial settling-in period, camp feels like a second home and time flies by faster than we’d like!

Many people ask us what we do during a typical day at camp ... and our answer is that “it depends”! Between June 1st and the 12th, we’ll welcome the first wave of staff who will be moving up to camp to be a part of our “pre-camp” crew readying the physical site. Eric and Kevin spend a great deal of time supervising that work and supporting our newly arrived staff members. Debbie spends her first week at camp making final preparations for staff training, settling in the Sasson family and welcoming staff to camp. On the 12th, our Leadership Team will arrive and we start orientation for our Program and Head Counseling teams. We’ll spend time building our own sense of trust and community while we work on specific training goals. Finally, the general staff will arrive between June 14th and 17th (depending on their job) and will we then be leading our full Staff Orientation & Training right up until the moment we’ve all been waiting for: campers’ arrival!

During a typical camp day, we spend as much time as possible on campus with our campers and staff (rather than in the camp office, which is why we rarely answer the phone during the camp season.) Our primary responsibility - and our favorite thing to do - is to make sure everyone at camp is safe and happy. One of the most wonderful aspects of our job is that we never know exactly what each day will bring; we make ourselves available to the people who need us most at any given moment. That includes those of you at home who have trusted us with the care of your children! You should expect to hear most often from your camper’s Head Counselor, who will call with updates and concerns, and will return your incoming phone calls. However, you can always feel free to send us an email or call the office and ask to leave a message for Debbie or Eric. We generally return parent phone calls in the evenings, after our campers are in bed.

We can’t wait to kick off the summer of 2015, Akeela’s eighth summer and the best one yet!

Debbie Eric

### WHAT’S INSIDE

What to Expect on the First Day of Camp.....	2
Blayne’s Bulletin.....	3
Welcome Quinn .....	3
Baker Wedding.....	3
What’s new for 2015.....	4
What are Head Counselors..	4
How we assign counselors..	4
Camp Forms.....	5
Open House.....	5
Pen Pals.....	5
Baggage.....	5
Optional Outdoor Adventure Trips.....	6
Geography Update.....	6
POISE-a-thon.....	6
Clothing Orders.....	6
Welcome New Campers.....	7
Upcoming Birthdays.....	7
Introductions to the Leadership Team.....	8-10
Important Reminders.....	11

### 2015 DATES

FIRST SESSION:  
June 27 - July 20

SECOND SESSION:  
July 23 - August 15

VISITING DAYS:  
July 20 & August 15

FAMILY CAMP:  
August 17 - 23

# What to Expect on the First Day of Camp

Dear Akeela Camper,

Summer is almost here and we hope you are excited about camp, even if you're also feeling a little nervous about it. Many kids go away for part of the summer. Some visit family, some go on teen travel or community service programs, and some go to sleep-away camps. Almost everybody worries about how they will like a place that's new to them. It's OK to feel that way and we're here to help make your transition to camp as easy and smooth as possible. We think that one way to do that is to help you know what to expect ...



If you're taking one of the camp buses to camp, you and your parents will meet some of our counselors at the bus pick-up location. They will be there to welcome you and to introduce you to other campers. They will help you find a seat on the bus with a new friend and will be there to answer any questions you might have. The travel time from NY is approximately 5 hours and the time from Boston is approximately 2.5 hours. You will bring lunch on the bus and there are bathrooms on both buses!

Those of you flying to Boston on Opening Day will be met at the airport by Akeela staff members. They will be there to greet you and to introduce you to other campers who have also flown in! You and your new friends will be driven by our staff in a camp van directly to camp. It will take approximately 2.5 hours to get to Akeela. If your parents are driving you to camp, you will be dropped off at 1:30. Your counselors will be there to meet you at your car and help you carry any last-minute items you have brought with you that day. You, your parents, and counselors will go to your cabin, where you'll see all of your belongings have been unpacked and organized for you so you can easily find your bed. You'll then say goodbye to your family and begin your camp adventure!

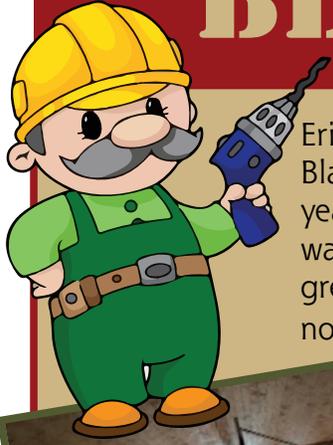
- Regardless of how you get to camp, here's what you can expect to happen the rest of that first day:
- You will have a chance to see what camp looks like and enjoy some planned activities with your bunkmates. You might take a tour, play some games, or jump on the jumping pillow.
- You'll also meet our nurses so that they can give you a quick "health check" to make sure you're healthy!
- Our great Chef Grant will give you a small preview of his culinary expertise and provide a delicious snack for you and your new friends to enjoy.
- There will be some time after everyone arrives for each bunk to start spending some time together before we meet for dinner. This is a great time to get to know your bunkmates and counselors, and talk about "bunk expectations," so you know what to expect from each other.
- We will all have dinner and Evening Meeting together as a community. You'll eat dinner with your cabin, just like you will for all your meals at camp! Evening Meeting will be at the amphitheatre and you'll get to hear from Eric and Debbie, and have a chance to make announcements about the new friends you've already made!
- Then it will be time for our opening campfire and evening snack. We'll sing songs and do skits as a community by the fire. It's one of our favorite parts of camp!
- Before bedtime, you will preview the next day's schedule and then Debbie or Eric and your Head Counselor will stop by to say good night. Before you know it, your first day will be over and we will all be getting ready for bed!

Many campers worry that they might be sad or homesick on the first night of camp. That is very normal. All of our counselors will be right in your bunk with you to help you. In addition to talking to them, you might want to look at photos from home, write a letter to your family or read a book. We know that after a short time, you will be having such a great time at Akeela, it will feel like your second home.

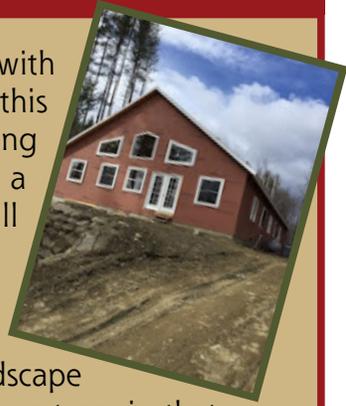
We can't wait to see you at camp. Many of you will be joining us for our Open House on June 7th. If you're not able to attend Open House, you'll be able to see photos of the event on the camp website. We're so excited for an amazing summer at Camp Akeela. See you soon!



# BLAYNE'S BULLETIN



Eric had a chance to spend a few days at camp in late April, visiting with Blayne (our amazing Site Manager) and checking on the progress of this year's construction projects. The new 2800 square foot Lodge building was nearly complete and is absolutely stunning. It's going to have a great impact on the camp program - including on rainy days - and will no doubt become many campers' favorite place in camp.



Elsewhere in camp, the Main Lawn is getting a big upgrade. We are adding more grassy areas, changing the landscape in front of bunks 16 - 18, and planting more than 30 young trees in that area alone! These changes will ensure that the Main Lawn continues to be a comfortable and inviting central gathering place for our community for many years to come.



## Welcome Quinn Deutschman!

We are thrilled to announce the birth of another "Akeela Baby"! Mike (counselor and Head Counselor '10 - '14) and Naomi (Nurse '10 - '14) Deutschman welcomed Quinn Catherine this February. Big Brother Noah ('14) seems (mostly) happy with the new addition and we couldn't be more thrilled for all of them. We hope to have them all back at camp in the near future!



## Baker Wedding

We are always proud when our staff members leave camp and go on to do wonderful things with their lives – we are especially proud when they choose to spend the rest of those lives together! We are excited to announce that David Baker ('10-'14) and Katie Obrycki ('11 – '14) will be getting married in May and will both be returning to camp as Head Counselors in our Second Session. Dave and Katie are actually couple #5 to get married after meeting as staff members at Camp Akeela! Other marriages: Maggie and Glen (met in 2008), Amanda and Owen (met in 2009), Mike and Naomi (met in 2010), and Laura and Duncan (met in 2011). Congratulations to all of our amazing friends – we wish all of them a lifetime of love and happiness (and hope they'll be back at Akeela soon)!





**NEW**

## What's New for 2015...

Just a few new and exciting things to look forward to at camp this summer:

- More choice built into the daily schedule for our older campers
- Horseback Riding ... spaces are filling fast, so if you're interested, please sign up soon!
- Eric and Blayne just finalized plans for a new low ropes element that everyone is going to love!



## WHAT ARE HEAD COUNSELORS?

Lots of people get confused about the actual role of these important leaders in our community. Perhaps it's the title that's misleading ... Head Counselors are not the wonderful staff members who live in your child's bunk. Those are Cabin Counselors and Specialists. Our Head Counselors are adults who live in our community and who supervise 4 or 5 cabins. They oversee the well-being of the campers and staff in those bunks and are the primary "point person" for you to call when you have a question about your child's success at camp.

Our Head Counselors spend all day out in camp with their campers and staff, providing ongoing support and feedback. They check messages a few times a day and return parent calls (usually in the evening). They are a wonderful resource to us as camp directors and serve as our eyes and ears, as we cannot be everywhere at once! While we oversee the entire community (115 campers and close to 100 staff members), the Head Counselors focus on their 4 or 5 cabin groups.

Please let us know if you have any questions about your child's Head Counselor this summer. (You will find profiles of our Head Counselors later in this newsletter.)



## How We Assign Counselors to Bunks

Often, parents and campers ask us who their counselors will be for the upcoming summer. Something you may not know about is how we decide which staff members will work with which campers. We actually don't determine counselor placement until 4 or 5 days before campers arrive. We first take time to get to know each staff member, see how they work with others, get a sense of their strengths and actually take the time to ask THEM with which age group they feel most passionately about working. Only then does our Senior Staff assign staff members into co-counselor groupings and assign them their bunks. It is probably the day the staff look forward to the most during their training. We will post an online news item with photos of the staff members who will be working most closely with your camper(s).



# CAMP FORMS

Most of this year's camp forms are available online only.

## TO ACCESS THEM:

1. Go to the camp home page, [www.campakeela.com](http://www.campakeela.com)
2. Near the top right corner, click on "Parent Log In"
3. If you don't know your password, click on "Retrieve/Set Password" and enter your email address; it will be sent to you.
4. Log in and click on "Forms and Documents"

Forms with a computer icon are to be completed and submitted online. Those with a downward facing arrow are to be printed, completed and mailed back to the camp office (as of June 1, to our Vermont address, please). Please note that the Physician's Examination Form requires a physician's signature AND the "As Needed" Medication Form requires a physician's signature IF your camper takes "as needed" medications not listed on the form. If you haven't already made a doctor's appointment, please do so right away. (These forms don't necessarily require an additional physical if your child has had one within 12 months of their arrival at camp; however some physicians won't sign the form based on a previous physical.)

In addition to these online forms, you should have received in the mail: a Parent Handbook (with packing list), the Amerasport catalog, and a flyer from our preferred label retailer. Please be sure to look carefully at these items.

We know you understand that all of this information is collected to ensure that your child has a safe and rewarding summer at camp. Thanks for your cooperation and let us know if you need any help!



## PEN PALS

It's really helpful to know someone before you arrive at a new place. A few weeks before your camp session begins, we will send you the email address and phone number of one of your bunkmates. (It will get sent to an adult in your house and he/she will share that information with you.) We know that it's not always an easy thing to do, but we ask that you please make contact with your pen pal so that everyone at camp feels connected to someone else.

### NOTE TO PARENTS & GUARDIANS:

If you would NOT like us to share your contact information with other camp families, please call or email us right away to opt out of the Pen Pal program.

## Open House Reminder - Please RSVP



We hope to see many of you at this year's Open House on Sunday, June 7th between 10AM and 4PM. Please note that you do not need to arrive exactly at 10AM. In true open house fashion, there will be on-going tours and activities taking place all morning, including an optional Q&A with Debbie and Eric at 11:30. At noon, we'll enjoy a big BBQ lunch together on the main lawn. After lunch, everyone is invited for a few "work projects" to help get camp ready for opening day! This is a great opportunity to meet other camp families, for your campers to see their new bunks, and for new campers to get oriented to the camp setting.

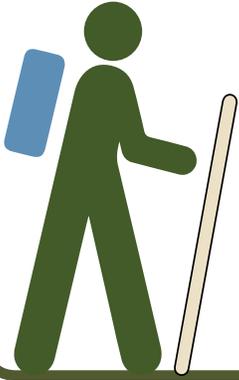
To RSVP for this event, please complete the online form available on the Forms page of the Current Families section of our website. Thank you!

## A note about... BAGGAGE

Please remember that **ALL** baggage must be sent to camp before your camper arrives. Baggage should arrive four days before the start of your camper's session. If you prefer not to use R&B shipping or if they do not pick up in your area, feel free to use UPS or FedEx Ground. We will be happy to assist you in having your child's bags shipped home AFTER camp as well. (We ask that you bring your credit card with you on closing day so that we can use that information in arranging a delivery back to your home.)



## OPTIONAL OUTDOOR ADVENTURE TRIPS



Campers looking for a little extra adventure in their summer can sign up (in advance, with parental permission) for one or more optional Outdoor Adventure Trips. Each session, we are offering a bike ride along a scenic rail trail, a canoe trek down the Connecticut River and an over-night camping trip.

Details, prices and registration instructions were included in the online form. Spots are filling up quickly, if you're interested please get us your trip form soon!



## GEOGRAPHY UPDATE

For the past 6 years, we've published articles listing all of our campers' home states. Each summer, we found that our campers represented more than 20 US states and several other countries as well. We're proud of Akeela's diversity so we counted again this year ... and we got a similar result: 21 states (including the District of Columbia) and 4 other countries!

Here's the entire list, as of the beginning of May: Alabama, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, Vermont, and Washington D.C. We also have campers coming from Canada, the UK, Bolivia, and Norway.



## POISE-A-THON

We are delighted to tell you about the fifth annual Camp Akeela POISE-a-thon. This will be a fun and exciting community service project offered as a special event in each of our two camp sessions.

Campers will choose their method of participation, all of which will help raise money in support of a great cause.

Details and pledge forms forms will be mailed out soon, and can also be found on the Forms Dashboard via the Parent Log In today! Donations in support of your child's participation can be made directly to POISE at:

[www.poisescholarship.org](http://www.poisescholarship.org)



POISE

## CLOTHING ORDERS

Our official camp outfitter, Amerasport, tells us that it takes 14-21 days to process orders. Please allow enough time to receive and label your items before camp begins.

We also want to clarify that campers are only required to have ONE t-shirt (grey or white) ordered from Amerasport. Everything else in the Amerasport catalog – while wonderful products – is optional.



# WELCOME NEW CAMPERS!

One of our favorite parts of camp is having so many campers return summer after summer. We love what that tells us about how they feel about each other, our staff and the Akeela community. At the same time, nothing excites us more than being able to share the Akeela experience with first-time campers. Soon, there will be no distinction between "old-timers" and "first-timers", as we all become one community. In the meantime, we wanted to welcome the following campers to the Akeela family:

## FIRST SESSION

Aaron A, Tallahassee, FL  
 Ruben A, Bremen, GA  
 Blake B, Tiburon, CA  
 Kyle B, Exeter, NH  
 Maya B, Allison Park, PA  
 Myles B, Wellesley, MA  
 Ben B, Wayne, PA  
 Sophie B, Sunnyside, NY  
 Anna C, New York, NY  
 Ryan D, Chatham, NJ  
 Nicolas D-C, La Paz, Bolivia  
 Daniel E, Weston, FL  
 Aidan F, Norwich, CT  
 Danny G, Brockport, NY  
 Dylan G, Miami Beach, FL  
 Louis H, Phoenix, AZ  
 Ricky H, Newton, MA  
 Thomas H, Harrisburg, PA  
 Noah J, Fort Lee, NJ  
 Andrew K, New York, NY  
 Ethan K, New York, NY  
 Nathaniel L, Scarsdale, NY  
 Thomas L, Westmount, QC  
 Cole M, Holden, MA  
 Peter M, Waban, MA  
 Elizabeth M, Falmouth, ME  
 Clare M, Hastings, NY

William M, Pound Ridge, NY  
 Eli M-A, Miami, FL  
 Jacob N, Wilton, CT  
 Yoedy O, Ambler, PA  
 Charlotte P, Weston, MA  
 Henry P, Concord, MA  
 Sara P, St. Louis, MO  
 Xany P, Livingston, NJ  
 Luke P, Rutherford, NJ  
 Hudson P, Dallas, TX  
 Ben R, Newbury, MA  
 William R, Gray, ME  
 Cian R, Watchung, NJ  
 Skylar R, Gladwyne, PA  
 Charlotte R-B, Weston, MA  
 Jessica S, Stonington, CT  
 Justin S, Sudbury, MA  
 Max S, Chappaqua, NY  
 Andy T, Sudbury, MA  
 Brayden T, Byfield, MA  
 Grant T, New York, NY  
 Rayna T, Walpole, MA  
 Celina T-K, Oslo, Norway  
 Joey V, Summit, NJ  
 Dylan W, Roslyn, NY  
 William W, Lexington, MA

## SECOND SESSION

• Harish A, Staten Island, NY  
 • Lucas B, Newton, MA  
 • Darian B, Houston, TX  
 • Hali B, New York, NY  
 • Yoni B, New York, NY  
 • Eric C, Jamaica Plain, MA  
 • Andrew D, Arlington, VA  
 • Cameron D, Portland, ME  
 • Evan F, Fanwood, NJ  
 • Andrew G, Stamford, CT  
 • Benjamin G, Weston, MA  
 • James G, Hamden, CT  
 • Nate G, Hingham, MA  
 • Jack G, Ellicott City, MD  
 • Emma G, Beverly Hills, CA  
 • Steven H, Woodbine, MD  
 • Alex H, Hankins, NY  
 • Noah J-T, Highland Mills, NY  
 • Asa K, Truro, MA  
 • Eli K, Waban, MA  
 • Casey K, Berkeley Heights, NJ  
 • Zach K, Lima, OH  
 • Jonah L, Havertown, PA  
 • Michael L, Haymarket, VA  
 • Dennis M, Sharon, MA  
 • Sean M, Portsmouth, NH  
 • Ronit N, Cobham, UK

Jonathan P, Colchester, VT  
 Kyle R, Reading, MA  
 Natalie R, New York, NY  
 Michael R, Ottawa, ON  
 Patrick R, Merrimack, NH  
 Johannes S, Belmont, MA  
 Bianca S, Ridgewood, NJ  
 Alec T, Washington, DC  
 Amanda T, Oyster Bay, NY  
 Ben U, Burlingame, CA  
 Felix W, Dobbs Ferry, NY  
 Samantha W, West Newton, MA



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS...

### CAMPER BIRTHDAYS

Myles B, May 2	Kyle B, May 25
Ian R, May 5	Sara P, May 25
Brooke M, May 6	Thomas H, May 28
Jake N, May 6	Peter M, May 29
Yoni B, May 6	Wyatt M, June 1
Andrew D, May 7	Ben R, June 1
Luke P, May 7	Cole M, June 3
Matthew B, May 9	William R, June 3
Alexander S, May 13	Gideon L, June 5
Colin M, May 14	Ethan S, June 5
Andy T, May 15	Allison O, June 6
Carter L, May 17	Olivia R, June 6
Austin G, May 19	Joseph T, June 6
Lydia K, May 19	Anna C, June 7
Michael R, May 20	Jonah K, June 7
Aaron A, May 22	Rosie P, June 7
Asa K, May 22	Joshua K, June 9
Xany P, May 22	Spencer S, June 9
Jacob N, May 24	Darian B, June 10

Jacob G, June 10  
 Joe S, June 11  
 Thomas H, May 28  
 Peter M, May 29  
 Jonah L, June 13  
 Hope T, June 16  
 Axel G, June 18  
 Kevin C, June 19  
 Matthew G, June 20  
 Marshall G, June 20  
 Patrick R, June 21  
 Danny G, June 22  
 Eitan R, June 20  
 Riley D, June 27

### STAFF BIRTHDAYS

Jacob T, May 2  
 Maricruz H, May 3  
 Jaime B, May 10  
 Theo G, May 15



Nancy C, May 21  
 David L, May 22  
 Angie C, May 26  
 Kelsey D, May 31  
 Isabella J, June 2  
 Debbie S, June 7  
 Eduardo R, June 7  
 Cass M, June 9  
 Gregory W, June 11  
 Mallerie S, June 14  
 Katherine D, June 16  
 Margaret G, June 28  
 Scott B, June 29

# INTRODUCTIONS TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

We would like to introduce you to our wonderful Leadership Team at camp this year, which includes our Head Counselors and Program Director. These professionals provide support to our amazing counselors and specialists and also directly work with our campers throughout the summer. The Leadership Team will be your go to people for hearing about your camper's amazing summer!



## Kevin Trimble

## Head Counselor and Beyond Akeela Director

Kevin Trimble lives in Philadelphia and has worked at Akeela for five summers. He started in 2009 as an accounting intern, and has spent his other summers as a counselor, Program Director and Head Counselor. In October 2013, he joined Akeela's full-time staff as Assistant Director. He is responsible for finding and hiring the amazing counselors who work with your campers. Kevin also helps with camper recruitment, program planning, staff training, communication with camp families, and everything else that goes into making Akeela run smoothly.

Kevin is from Palo Alto, California. He played basketball at Palo Alto High School and was a member of the 2006 State championship team. He then went on to graduate from Wake Forest University with a bachelors and masters degree in Accountancy. After spending a year at Ernst & Young, the call to return to camp was too strong to ignore. He left his young accounting career behind to follow his passion here at Akeela. When he's not working on camp stuff, Kevin enjoys playing basketball and traveling to see friends.

**Favorite Book:** *The Book of Basketball* by Bill Simmons

**Favorite Camp Food:** Chicken Patties

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Greece



## Mallerie Sailer

## Head Counselor

This will be Mallerie's first summer at Camp Akeela and she is overjoyed to be a part of such a great camp filled with a proud sense of community, personal growth, inspiration and fun! (Debbie and Eric were first struck by how warm and welcoming Mallerie is and how easily they connected when they first met!) Professionally, Mallerie is passionate about working with children and families and therefore, is looking forward to getting to know the campers and their families this summer. When Mallerie isn't focused on her career, she enjoys spending time with friends and family and taking regular trips to Disney World!

Mallerie lives in Titusville, Florida, a small town just east of Orlando. She has a Bachelors of Science degree in Family and Child Sciences. Since receiving her bachelor's degree, she has worked in the fields of childhood development and family education. She has also provided training to other professionals on caring for both children typically developing and those with special needs. Mallerie is currently finishing her second year as a graduate student studying Clinical Mental Health Counseling and looks forward to a career counseling children and families with mental illness and other special needs.

**Favorite Book:** *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

**Favorite Camp Food:** Sandwiches and Salads

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Paris, France

# INTRODUCTIONS TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM continued from previous page



## Keith Young

## Head Counselor

Keith Young is from western Ireland. He graduated university in 2011 with a degree in education. His thesis focused on Asperger's Syndrome and he is now completing PhD research in the same area. Keith's research and practice involve helping teachers to work with students with ASD. He loves the outdoors and in his spare time goes hiking and climbing whenever he can. Last summer, he proudly wore an Akeela t-shirt to the top of Africa's highest mountain, Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Keith worked at Camp Akeela for 4 summers (2009 – 2012; campers from that era will remember Keith as "the leprechaun"! ) Camp has had a profound impact on Keith's life and he missed it dearly during the two summers he was away. He is delighted to be coming back to Akeela as a Head Counselor this year. He can't wait to work with our amazing campers, parents, and counselors to make this summer an incredible experience!

**Favorite Book:** *The Black Magician Trilogy* by Trudi Canavan

**Favorite Camp Food:** Pigs in a Blanket

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Nepal



## Rob Glyn-Jones

## Program Director

Rob Glyn-Jones lives in the north of England, although he has spent the last eighteen summers working at American summer camps. Rob started his camp career in 1996 as a counselor at Summit Camp in Pennsylvania. He rose through the ranks at Summit and for eight years was a Unit Leader there, working with boys aged between fourteen and eighteen. In 2010 he joined Camp Akeela as a Head Counselor and had an immediate and profound impact on the Akeela campers and staff. He has always been drawn to working with children and believes

that camp is a fantastic environment for encouraging growth and development – as well as having a great time!

During the rest of the year, Rob works as an actor and workshop leader. A lot of this work takes him into schools and colleges to facilitate issue-based presentations on a wide variety of topics such as anti-social behavior, bullying, community cohesion and drug issues. In his spare time he enjoys cooking, reading, swimming and watching Doctor Who!

**Favorite Book:** *The Box of Delights* by John Masefield

**Favorite Camp Food:** Hot Dogs

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Nepal and Tibet



## Joe Torok

## Head Counselor

Joe Torok lives in Ypsilanti, Michigan (that's below the thumb on the pad of your palm). After two years as the Director of Beyond Akeela, Joe will be returning to camp as a Head Counselor this summer. He 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 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

**Favorite Camp Food:** Fajitas

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Budapest

# INTRODUCTIONS TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM continued from previous page



## Dave Baker

## Head Counselor

Dave Baker currently lives in Narragansett, Rhode Island, where he works at Middlebridge School as a Residential Instructor and Teacher. He first came to Akeela in the summer of 2010 and was a cabin counselor & golf specialist through the summer of 2013. In 2014 he spent his summer at camp as an Assistant Head Counselor for the oldest boys cabins.

When he was nine-years-old he went to his first sleep-away camp and went back every summer until he was 16; he attributes his time as a "camp kid" to his current love for all things summer camp!

Dave is a native of Vermont, growing up in St. Johnsbury. He graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy and went on to spend his freshman year in college at the University of New Hampshire before transferring to Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. He graduated Franciscan in December of 2013 with a bachelor's degree in Middle Childhood Education. He is an avid sports fan and that led him to discover his other passion, sports journalism, which he has practiced since his sophomore year in high school. He has been a sportswriter on both the local high school as well as national collegiate level. His other hobbies include playing golf, traveling, playing the guitar and supporting Boston sports teams (Go Sox!)

**Favorite Book:** *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison

**Favorite Camp Food:** Challah or Cook-Out

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Augusta, Georgia (to go to The Masters)



## Katie Obyrcki

## Head Counselor

Katie Obyrcki is originally from Akron, Ohio, and is currently living in Narragansett, Rhode Island where she works as the Lead Behavior Therapist at Momentum Behavioral Services. Although she hails from the Midwest, Katie fell in love with New England during her first year at camp and cannot wait to spend another summer in the woods of Vermont. She is eager to return to the head counseling team and looks forward to helping make every campers' summer the most memorable that it can be.

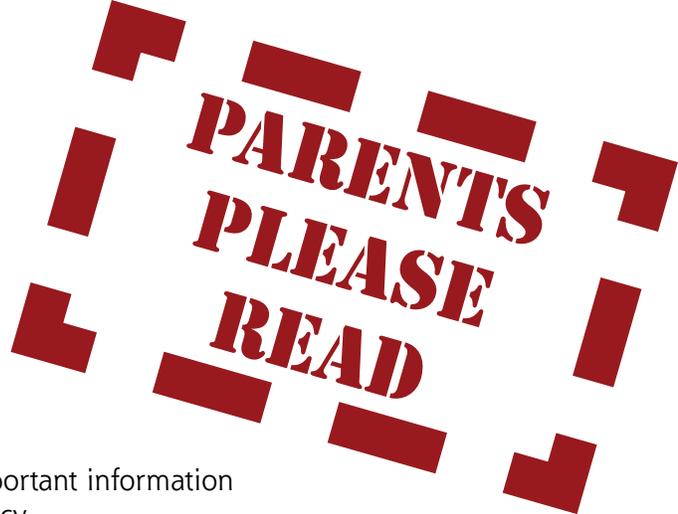
Katie is a 2011 graduate of Miami University in Oxford, OH, with a degree in Family Studies and a minor in Special Education. She joined the staff at Akeela in the summer of 2011 as a cabin counselor and has worked with both the youngest female and male campers as well as the oldest campers with Beyond Akeela. She recently completed her ABA certificate from the University of Cincinnati. She loves hike day, the waterfront, and campfires (especially when there are s'mores!)

**Favorite Book:** *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein

**Favorite Camp Food:** S'Mores

**Place I'd like to Visit:** Iceland

# IMPORTANT REMINDERS



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

Please read through our Parent Handbook carefully. It contains important information about everything from first-day transportation to our phone call policy.

## **SPENDING MONEY**

Parents of campers completing grades 7 - 10 are asked to provide spending money for their camper's one-day trip out of camp. We recommend \$20 - \$30 for 7th and 8th graders and \$40 - \$50 for 9th and 10th graders. That can be mailed as a check to Camp Akeela, marked "spending money", given to a bus counselor on Opening Day, or dropped off at the camp office upon arrival.

## **CAMPER PHONE CALLS**

Please note our camper phone call procedures, outlined in the Parent Handbook. The online schedule system will be activated a couple of weeks before the start of your camp session. At that point, you can use the Parent Log In on our website (the same place you go for forms, photos and news from camp) to schedule one phone call during the camp session. Of course, our team of directors and Head Counselors are ALWAYS available to speak with you about how your child is doing at camp. Call any time and leave a message for us and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

## **SPECIALTY PERIOD SELECTIONS**

Keep an eye on your email box for a link to your camper's first week specialty selection form. Specialties are the individual choice periods that take place each afternoon at camp. As a family, you'll be able to send preferences for the two specialties in week 1. Campers will then make their 2nd and 3rd week selections once they're at camp.

## **PACK AN ITEM FOR TIE-DYEING**

Our art staff is planning to offer tie-dye as an activity. Please pack a shirt (or pillowcase, etc.) that you don't mind coming home multi-colored! We recommend labeling this item for our counselors so they can help have it ready for tie-dye day.

## **\*\*\* REQUIRING YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: CAMPMEDS \*\*\***

Our medication policies require that ALL daily medicine -- including supplements and vitamins -- be dispensed by CampMeds. We want to be clear that we do expect 100% participation in CampMeds from families with campers who will take daily medication at camp. If your camper does not take daily medication, you do not need to register with CampMeds.

You will find details about how to enroll in CampMeds, along with an FAQ, on your family's online Forms Dashboard (accessible through the Parent Log In on Akeela's website). If you have any questions about CampMeds, you can reach them at 954-577-0025 or [www.campmeds.com](http://www.campmeds.com). Any other medication (i.e. items administered on an "as needed" basis) must be mailed to camp in its original packaging at least three days prior to your camper's arrival. Please call the office to notify us if medications will be arriving by mail. It is camp policy not to accept any medication (including vitamins, supplements, etc.) on Opening Day.