



# 2019 Staff Newsletter

Friendship ● Community ● Growth ● Pride ● Fun

## WELCOME TO CAMP AKEELA!

We are so excited to welcome you all to our community this summer. Your passion, enthusiasm, skills and experience separated you from a large pool of applicants and we cannot wait to meet you in person to get the ball rolling on Summer 2019. Not only are we committed to providing "the most incredible, life changing summer experience on the planet" to our campers, we are also committed to the professional growth of our staff members. We know that in working with us this summer you are putting your own professional goals in our hands. One of our goals for the summer is to support your professional growth throughout the summer!

In light of this goal, we know your summer orientation is a key part of creating an incredible camp experience for you. The time we'll spend together during staff orientation will be a lot of work but lots of fun, too! Our focus will be helping you feel confident in your role this summer, while also building a staff community that, together, will have a profound impact on the lives of our campers.

Thank you for sharing your expertise with us this summer. We cannot wait to see the amazing work you will do in our community!

Fondly,  
*Debbie Eric Rob*

WHAT'S INSIDE	
Staff Packing List.....	2
Arrival Dates.....	2
Staff Travel Info.....	2
Weather.....	2
Valuables.....	2
Akeela Gear.....	3
Staff Families.....	3
Pay/Time Off.....	3
Fun with Forms.....	3
Resources.....	3
Specialists.....	4
Communication at Camp.....	4



## STAFF PLACEMENT

**"Who will be my co-counselors this summer? Which age group will I work with? Which bunk will I live in?"**  
**Have these thoughts crossed your mind?**

We like to get to know our staff better before we make the important decision of placing counselors in a bunk and teaming them with co-counselors. This is a complicated process and many factors are considered, including your input. After we have the chance to get to know each of you a little better and see the staff interact as a group, we will have a much better idea of where we believe you will be successful. The overriding goal is that you are placed **where you will have the most success and where you can best help campers thrive.** Most likely, you will be thrilled with your placement. If you have any questions or concerns about staff placement, please don't hesitate to ask.

# STAFF PACKING & TRAVEL

Here is a guideline of what our staff members should bring to camp with them:

- 10-12 t-shirts
- 2-3 long-sleeved t-shirts
- 3-4 pair of jeans/sweatpants
- 5-8 pair shorts
- 2 sweatshirts (1 hooded)
- 2 pair sneakers
- 14 pair underwear
- 14 pair athletic socks
- 1 pair hiking socks
- 1 comforter or 3 wool blankets\*
- 2 sets cot-sized or twin sheets\*
- 6 towels (for shower and swim)\*
- 1 pillow with 2 cases\*
- 1 shower caddy with toiletries
- 2-3 bathing suits (WOMEN: 1 piece suits only!)
- 1 pair flip flops/sandals/Crocs
- 2 hats with brim
- 1 lightweight jacket
- 1 fleece jacket/heavyweight jacket
- 1 rain jacket/poncho
- 1 pair rain boots
- 1 small backpack
- 1 flashlight
- 1 water bottle/canteen
- 1 watch

**\*Camp will loan linens, bedding and towels for international staff**

## Vermont Weather



While most days here at camp are warm and beautiful, it can get quite cold at night and in the

early morning, especially in June and late August. We highly recommend that you bring warm clothes, such as sweaters, jackets and pants. Also, don't forget your rain gear! When it does rain, camp gets muddy quickly, so bring appropriate footwear.

## IMPORTANT STAFF ARRIVAL DATES

### Pre-Camp Crew Arrival:

Tuesday, June 4

### Senior & Support Staff Arrival:

Monday, June 10

### Aquatics Staff Arrival:

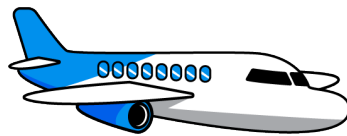
Tuesday, June 11

### All Other Staff Arrival:

Monday, June 17

*\*If you have any questions about your arrival date, please contact us ASAP*

## STAFF TRAVEL



Please complete the online Staff Travel Form, on the forms dashboard of the staff log-in page. You can access that through our website ([campaakeela.com](http://campaakeela.com)). Please submit this form no later than May 25th.

Your expected arrival date is the start date listed on your contract. Camp Vans will be available from Boston Logan Airport on June 17th, departing no later than 2:30 PM. Staff Members arriving at other airports or on different dates are asked to take a Dartmouth Coach bus to Hanover, NH or a Greyhound bus to White River Junction, VT.

Driving directions are available in the Our Programs section of our website. If you're driving to camp, please follow these directions as navigation systems and online trip planners will NOT take you on the best route!

For your return trip, you will be able to leave camp on the morning of the final date of your contract. Please make your travel plans accordingly. If flying out of Boston that day, please plan to fly NO EARLIER than 1:30pm EST. We'll discuss more logistics about post camp travel during the summer.



## A WORD OF CAUTION ABOUT VALUABLES



We discourage staff from bringing valuables or large amounts of cash to camp. While we have absolutely no concerns about theft, camp life is not necessarily friendly to valuables; things tend to get wet, damaged or misplaced.

We can not be responsible for articles such as cameras, iPods or laptops that are stored in camp buildings. We do provide a safe in the camp office to lock up passports, airline tickets and other small valuables.

## Fun with Forms!

There are some forms we'd like you to complete before your arrival! Log on to [campaakeela.com](http://campaakeela.com) and use the Staff Log In in the top right corner to access the following forms:

- Health History Form** - *We want to make sure we keep you healthy this summer!*
- Staff Travel Form** - *So we know when and where to pick you up!*
- Staff T-Shirt Form** - *You're going to need an Akeela T-Shirt to show your Akeela Pride in when the kids arrive!*
- Staff Photo** - *It helps us remember all your smiling faces!*
- I-9 Documentation** - *This will help us pay you for the summer!*
- Certifications** - *Already have a LGT, WFA or Ropes Certification? Please upload them for us!*
- Driver's License** - *Only domestic staff over the age of 21 need to complete this form*



## Akeela Gear

In the past, staff members have told us that they would like to purchase Akeela logo'd clothing. This year, we are working with a clothing company called Camp Outfitters by Lands' End.

To order, go to <http://business.landsend.com/store/campaakeela/> and click on "Packing List". Please call Lands' End's camp business (1-800-995-8711) if you have any questions. Of course, you'll have a staff T-Shirt waiting for you at camp, so no purchases are required for staff.

## Your Akeela Staff Family



We're excited to get to know each other once you arrive in Vermont. One of the ways we do that is through our "staff families". Staff families are groups of staff members,

returning and new, that will be together a lot during staff orientation. This way, you'll have a designated group of people when you arrive that you can get to know better! When you arrive at camp, you'll receive a family identifier.

Family Announcements coming soon: stay tuned!

## Pre-Orientation Resources

Some staff members have asked us to share our favorite Asperger's resources. Here are a few books and films that we've found helpful:

Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals\* - *Tony Attwood*

It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend - *Richard Lavoie*

Aspergirls: Empowering Females with Asperger Syndrome - *Rudy Simone*

*\*We think this is the best overview and a quick read.*



"Temple Grandin"  
"Autism, The Musical"  
"Billy the Kid"  
"Today's Man"



## Time Off

You're going to work a lot at camp, and you're going to work hard! We know that keeping you rested and energized is essential to your role at camp. You can expect to have one of the five activity periods off each day, and you will either have an additional hour off during the day or have the night off. You will also have one day off for each week of camp (six days total) with a group of staff members.

## Pay at Camp

You will be eligible to receive cash advances several times, evenly spread throughout the summer. Your remaining pay will be delivered at the end of the summer in the form of a check.

*\*\*International staff can request to have their checks cashed by our local bank.*



# COMMUNICATION AT CAMP!



Ready to get pumped up for Akeela 2019? Curious about camp?

## Log on to our Akeela Staff 2019 Facebook Group!

Check the group often for updates, important information, and answers to all of your burning questions! We use Facebook as a way of keeping in touch with you and for answering "Frequently Asked Questions". For returning staff, Facebook is a great way to meet all of our new staff members and help them prepare for an amazing summer! New staff, be sure to utilize returning staff members who can help answer most of your questions! We also post camp related stories and photos on our Camp Akeela Facebook page. "Like" us to get all the updates!

## Phone

Please tell your friends and family that you won't be able to take phone calls during the camp day, unless it's an emergency. If you receive a call, our office staff will put a message in your mailbox and you can return the call during your free time. Callers in the U.S. and Canada can reach camp toll-free at 866-680-4744. Overseas callers can dial 1-802-333-4843. Remember there is no cell phone service at camp! The Staff Lounge has landline phones to use during your time off for all domestic calls. Phone cards are available for international calls. The internet is strong enough for internet based calls, too (eg Facebook, FaceTime audio, etc).

## Internet

We have computers with Internet access as well as wireless internet available for staff use in the Staff Lounge. As we told you during the interview process our internet is not the fastest, so be prepared to go without Skype, YouTube, downloading movies or music! Email and Facebook work just fine, though!

## Mail

You'll love getting "old-fashioned" mail while you're at camp! Tell your friends and family to send your mail to:

### Your Name

Your Bunk Number – you'll get that later  
Camp Akeela  
One Thoreau Way  
Thetford Center, VT 05075

## Calling all Specialists!

Camp is just around the corner and it's time to start thinking about your program areas. We hope you are starting to get lots of great ideas about how to make your activity periods the best they can be. Start writing these down – and don't be afraid to think "outside the box" about new and exciting ways to teach campers lifelong skills. We also invite you to bring any tools, guides or teaching aides you might have to help you deliver a fantastic program.

You'll learn a lot more about our program, the schedule and goals for each program area during orientation. Ben, our Program Director, and your individual Program Head will spend time working with you throughout staff orientation to help you plan your program and come up with new ideas. If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns before then, don't hesitate to send Ben an email at: [ben@campakeela.com](mailto:ben@campakeela.com)