



AKEELA NEWS

OCTOBER 2022

Summer 2023 Enrollment is Open!

Session 1: June 24 - July 17

Session 2: July 20 - August 12

[ENROLL NOW](#)

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A Note from Debbie & Eric: The Results Are In!

This past summer was our 15th season as Akeela's directors and we are as in love with camp as ever! It was such an extraordinary summer, filled with sunshine, laughter, growth and friendship. We could not be prouder of our campers, a fun-loving and kind group of young people who pushed themselves to be their best every day. Likewise, our staff was absolutely wonderful; they expertly created meaningful, challenging and fun experiences for all of our campers.

Our pride in last summer doesn't mean that we aren't always thinking about ways to make camp even better. To that end, we sent post-camp surveys to parents and guardians. Thank you so much to those of you were able to complete that survey.

What Families Said About Akeela

Akeela fulfilled all of our hopes and dreams -- it was just what we were looking for! She found the place where the other kids and the staff "get" her and she can't wait to go back!

He is more confident and more independent. He has new ways to express his needs and how he feels. He has a better sense of who he is and who he wants to be.

He had a remarkable experience. From my point of view, as a parent who did sleepover camp for over ten years and then worked on staff, I really wanted him to have the kind of life-changing experience I did. Finally we found a place where he can.

We Hear You!

We appreciate the overwhelmingly positive feedback we've gotten from these surveys, and it's the few pieces of constructive criticism that we pay closest attention to. As a direct result of these comments, we are planning the following changes for 2023:

- We will be partnering with a different medication packaging service: PackMyRx.
- We will be sending home more information about camper's in-cabin counselors and specialists just prior to, or at the start of, the camp session.
- We'll provide more options for how parents and guardians receive communication from their camper's Head Counselor during the summer.

CAMPER UPDATES

Sofia M & Leah S. (1st, Bunk 11) met up in NYC for a trip to the Museum of Natural History (below)!

Henry Y. & Jackson W. (2nd, Bunk 5) also enjoyed a trip to the Museum of Natural History together >>



Sam H. and Henry H. celebrated Ben P.'s Bar Mitzvah with him in Massachusetts (all 2nd, Bunk 17).

Tessa B., Nola X., & Lilly M. (all 2nd, Bunk 13) met up (below) to celebrate Tessa's 13th birthday (below). HBD Tessa!



Maxi L. (2nd, Bunk 3) has joined his school choir and is looking forward to performing at the end of the year!

Henry Y. (above) (2nd, Bunk 5) was cast as Snug in his high school's A Midsummer Night's Dream...as a freshman!!

Holden W. (1st, Bunk 5) traveled to New Orleans to celebrate his 16th birthday and have Bananas Foster at Brennan's Restaurant.



Ajay G. (2nd, Bunk 7) went down by 4.20 mins in Cross Country on his high school JV team - the biggest change on his entire team!

Finn N. and Daniel K. (1st, Bunk 7) met up with their pups, Ozzy and Teddy and went for a riverfront hike & lunch.

Declan B. (1st, Bunk 5) was named student of the month, and is setting new PRs for himself in Cross Country!

Aidan R. (2nd, Bunk 3) started 8th grade, is rocking high school math, and is moving into a new house!

Omri K. (1st, Bunk 18) met up with Parker (1, 18) to hang out and play Scrabble. He's also been playing a lot of Magic The Gathering!

Patrick W-M. (1st, Bunk 16) vacationed in Virginia and caught fish & crabs. His birthday is coming up soon!

Devan (2nd, Bunk 16) vacationed in Copenhagen and Norway, seeing fjords, forests and so much more! >>



John S. (1st, Bunk 2) took a vacation to Italy, enjoyed seeing new sights, trying new foods, and adding to his flag collection!

Kate B. (1st, Bunk 6) started a new school, is taking tap, ballet, musical theater and voice lessons, and got her first phone for her birthday!

After camp, Nola J. (2nd, Bunk 11) visited France & London where she hiked the Alps, saw Big Ben, and crossed Abbey Road >>



Gabe R. (1st, Bunk 17) has started high school, joined the Robotics team and is taking college classes. He also has a part-time job!

Joshua C. >> (2nd, Bunk 4) has been playing percussion in Marching Band, winning 3 comps so far this season!



Erin's First Summer at Camp Akeela

As I packed up my tie-dye tees, sunscreen, and hiking boots in May, I was filled with excitement, anticipation, and nerves. I had been working at camps for 10 years and with Debbie and Eric for 6 months, but even though I was pretty well-prepared for what camp is, and I was SUPER excited, I still felt some anxiety about spending my summer in a new place with lots of new people!



What will the food be like? Will my bed be comfy? *Will people like me?*

And then I realized, “Huh! These are probably the same thoughts campers are having!”

Just like our campers, I made my way to Vermont, to Camp Akeela, and to my cabin. The summer of a lifetime started! I made so many connections as the first group of staff came together to set camp up. We cleaned every bathroom, we repaired holes in the soccer nets, we mowed the lawns, we fixed fences, we balanced chlorine levels. But more importantly, we joked around, we played games, we ate delicious food, and we built friendships. More staff arrived, and more friendships began. The amazing thing about the Camp Akeela staff is how we all come from far and wide, and have so many diverse and different skills to offer!

By the time campers arrived, I felt right at home. Even though Camp Akeela has over 400 acres, the campus where we live and play is small and so it's easy to learn where everything is. Especially for younger campers who typically live on the Main Lawn, you can see the Dining Hall, Office, pool, and lake right from your cabin porch!

One of my most special memories is our first campfire of the summer. Campfire has always been an activity I love, so I was excited to see how Akeela does them. We sang goofy songs, typical campfire songs, and told stories. I got to sing my favorite repeat-after-me song, “Get Loose”, and it's always so fun to see campers taking part and laughing along with me! It was the perfect kick-off to a summer of zipping through the trees, paddling on the lake, laughing my head off at camper plays and talent shows, and being in awe of the kindness, intelligence, and bravery that all members of our community display.

The best thing that happened to me this summer was getting to know our campers. Coming from a decade of single-gender, one-week programs, Akeela was a new population for me. In spending time with these diverse, quirky campers...I fell in love. The 3.5-week session means we have real time together, which of course makes saying goodbye pretty hard. Connecting with these kids in this space has been an experience that I would not change for anything – they have made me laugh harder than ever, feel joy in a way I didn't know was possible, and know in my bones that **camp changes lives**.

2022 is in the books, and I can't wait for 2023. And for those nervous campers who might feel like I did at the start of summer... having dessert every single day is pretty special, I slept better than ever, and at Akeela, people don't just like you, they **love** you!

CAMPLAUNCHER FUNDRAISER RESULTS



We are proud to announce that through their participation in our two Launch-a-thons this summer, Akeela campers raised over \$22,000 for the CampLauncher charity! Thank you all for your participation and generosity. If your child participated in the Launch-a-thon and you have not yet had an opportunity to send your corresponding donation, it's not too late! Please visit <https://www.camplauncher.org/donate/>



NEW IN-CAMP OVERNIGHT PROGRAM A HUGE SUCCESS!



Last spring, Keefe built a beautiful new overnight camping area in the woods behind the amphitheater. His amazing handiwork yielded two large lean-tos, a large campfire ring and an area for tents. This new facility allowed us to introduce our new ICON (In Camp OverNight) program, which proved to be a fantastic addition to the Akeela community. Every single camper got to spend a night at the ICON site, making dinner and s'mores over the open fire, playing games and telling stories around the campfire, and sleeping under the stars. We're so proud of the outdoor adventure staff that made it all happen and the Akeela campers who jumped right into a new experience with such enthusiasm.



AKEELA GEAR FOR THE HOLIDAYS!



With the potential for supply chain issues and longer lead times, it's never too early to start thinking about your holiday shopping. The CampSpot is Akeela's official outfitter and has a variety of gifts for the camp lovers in your family, including winter hats, flannel pants, sweatshirts & sweatpants, pillows and camp chairs!

STAFF UPDATES

MG (Bunks 6 & 18) has been busy - she is the new co-chair for a student-run medical clinic in Portland, OR. She oversees lots of programs, fundraising, and liaising with the Board of Directors. She is loving being back at college!

Courtney (Junior Camp Head Counselor) was nominated as Teacher of the Week across the entire state of North Carolina! Her students are extremely lucky to have her!

Amy (Bunks 6, 13 & 5) visited **Joe** (Bunks 14 & 16) in the U.K. and together they hiked Mount Snowdon, which is the tallest mountain in Wales! The weather didn't allow them the amazing views that were promised but they persevered and got to the top!



Congratulations to **Erin** (Assistant Director & Upper Camp Head Counselor) and her new fiancée, Amy! Amy lived at camp this summer and decided that it was so great, she needed a reason to stick around forever!



Aidan, Sam M., Jonathan, Desmond, Nick, Catherine, Charlotte, Will E., Katie, and Jackson (too many bunks to name!) all got together in Ohio to celebrate Katie, as she directed a play, Eurydice (written by Sarah Ruhl), which she actually started working on while at camp.

Maggie (Waterfront Director) made a permanent move to Vermont! She now lives in Burlington and works as a Middle School Behavior Specialist, with summers off to work at Akeela!



Do you know someone who would make an amazing camp counselor? We're hiring for Summer 2023! Our counselors are typically college Jrs & Srs, interested in education or psychology, patient, fun, and excellent communicators! Send them to [our website](#) to apply.