



NEWSLETTER | 2022

WHAT

A YEAR IT'S BEEN!

Not only did we reopen Apple Canyon Center for in-person sessions (we served 367 campers this year), but we also celebrated our 40th Birthday Bash at our site. In addition, our fundraising events knocked it out of the park, thanks to you, our committed supporters. Thank you for being a friend of Camp, and enjoy this final newsletter of 2022!



MOLLIE

CAMERON'S LIFELONG JOURNEY

This summer, yet another one of Camp's amazing counselors joined our staff. Mollie Cameron, Camp's new Social Media Manager & Development Associate, is a true Camp "lifer" – her parents were counselors before she was even born! Mollie's mom, Stephanie "Steff" Garcia, was a college student

back in 1983 when a Camp representative came to one of her classes to recruit volunteer counselors. She enjoyed the first session she attended as a counselor so much that she decided to return every summer. Six years after her first session, Steff met Mollie's dad, Rob "Robo" Cameron, and as Mollie puts it, quickly "roped him in." After they married and Mollie and her brother Griffin were born, the family would drive down to Camp from Sacramento every summer, as well as for Camp's annual "work weekends" when volunteers help refurbish Camp's site at Apple Canyon Center.

Mollie recalls one summer up at Camp when she was six and her brother Griffin was eight. They had driven down with Steff to deliver a birthday gift to Rob. When they arrived, Mollie saw her father walking with a child on his shoulders, and the joy she witnessed in that moment made a strong impression on her. So did the closing dance at that session. Soon, Mollie decided that Camp was "the coolest thing ever." So cool, actually, that she decided at that young age that she wanted to support Camp however and whenever she could.

When she was in the 4th Grade, Mollie decided she'd sell scented pencils to her schoolmates and neighbors to raise funds for Camp. She personally delivered the money she raised to Camp's Director, Brian Crater, at a work weekend. She shares, "When I brought him the money, Brian crouched down to meet me at eye level and expressed his appreciation for what I'd done. He didn't speak to me as though I was a child, which made me feel seen." For Mollie, this was another one of those core memories that helped her understand the impact that Camp has on the children it serves.

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Mollie shares that her mother imparted to her and her brother that helping others is important, but that they were free to decide for themselves which organizations they wanted to support. For Mollie, it was Camp all the way. By the time she reached middle school, Mollie had begun bringing her friends to help at work weekends too – often-times an entire carload of friends. By the time she reached high school, she began having intentional conversations with Brian, Program Director Chad Edwards, and then-Site Manager Brad Baille about how she could support Camp as an adult. She emailed Brian about applying to become a counselor as soon as she turned 19 (which is Camp’s minimum age requirement for this position). Eventually, after she became a counselor, Mollie even transferred from Seattle University to Chapman University in Orange so that she could be closer to Camp.

Mollie says that she’s made some of her best friends at Camp, and also learned some of her greatest lessons there. Camp taught her, as she puts it, *“that it’s okay to feel the bad things.”* After graduating from Chapman in 2019, Mollie moved up to Camp to work as seasonal staff that summer. Of course, that was the last summer Camp was in session before the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. But even during the pandemic, Mollie stayed involved with Camp as both a counselor during “Camp at Home” sessions via Zoom and as a team captain for Camp’s annual “Walk for Kids.”

This year, when Camp’s Social Media Manager & Development Associate Brenda Carden was promoted to Marketing Manager for RMHCSC, she reached out to Mollie immediately to encourage her to apply for the position she’d be vacating. For Mollie, this was the sort of opportunity she’d been waiting for, and was prepared for, having worked for two years in the Development Department of San Diego State University.

In reflecting on what Camp means to her, Mollie shares that she often reflects on what Program Director Chad Edwards often says about Camp: If everyone in the world treated each other the way we treat each other up at Camp, the world would be a better place. *“Camp has shaped how I want to move through the world and relate to others,”* Mollie concludes. It’s a sentiment shared by so many.



HEROES FOR HEALING GALA 2022



Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, donors, and guests, we raised more than \$416,000 for Camp at this year’s Heroes for Healing Gala, which was once again held at Vibiana in Downtown Los Angeles. Our “ruby year” festivities will not be forgotten!



FOOD, FRIENDS, & FUN FOR CAMP!

On October 14th, in honor of Latin Heritage Month, the McDonald’s Hispanic Owner Operator Association (MHOA) and the Hispanic Employee Business Network (HEBN) hosted a fundraiser for Campamento Familiar (our Spanish Language Family Camp sessions) at Guelaguetza Restaurante in Los Angeles. Owner and Chef Bricia Lopez led guests through a fascinating (and delicious!) mole and tequila tasting, and when the night was over, more than \$30,000 had been raised for Camp!



FRIENDS OF CAMP SPOTLIGHT

Astrid & Luke Raimondo

By the end of the afternoon, \$10,677 had been raised for Camp! I asked her to share with us a little more about her and Luke and why they decided to throw a party for Camp. Here's what Astrid had to say: "I've lived in L.A. for most of my life, but I escaped to San Francisco for a dozen or so years. I am in marketing and work for Clean Power Alliance (a clean energy company) for LA and Ventura County." Luke is originally from Baltimore but moved to Southern California as a teenager where he finished high school and college. He is a commercial broker for Cushman & Wakefield.

We decided to support because I met you! Also, cancer runs in my family, and I have

seen good friends fight for their children. There were too many reasons to do it, but it was important for us to choose an organization we trusted (we knew you, Jamie, and Mister Frank who vouched for Camp). Also we wanted to invite our amazing friends from our local community in Los Feliz and Silver Lake to get together for a cause that we all have been affected by. We decided on a pool party because we wanted the fundraiser to be casual and kid-friendly. We are trying to instill social responsibility in our two boys."

If you too would like to host a fundraiser for Camp, please contact me at mstang@rmhsc.org

Back in April I (Marlene Stang, Camp's Development Director) met Astrid Raimondo at a birthday party. She asked me about myself and what I do, and I told her about Camp. Without missing a beat, she said she'd love to host a fundraiser for Camp at her home, perhaps in the fall. Fast forward to early October, and that is exactly what Astrid and her husband Luke did! It was a casual, fun pool party with a pupusa station and music, provided by L.A.'s own Frankie Mercado, aka "Hiccups the Clown."



A Message from Camp's Executive Director

Dear Camp Family,

What a fantastic year 2022 has been! It is humbling to reflect back on the past eight months that I have been with Camp - in fact, I'd say they have been truly extraordinary. Notably, we opened our Apple Canyon Center site in June for the first in-person sessions in over two years since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. And now, as the year draws to a close, we have served 367 children and families "back up the mountain." We also celebrated our 40th birthday there this summer, which was as love-filled and joyful as you'd expect a Camp birthday bash to be!

And now, we look forward to 2023. At long last, we will once again hold our annual teen "Winter W.O.L.P." session at Camp over Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. We will also complete construction on our new cabin village, which will serve as a "home away from home" for campers at our 2023 summer sessions. Campers will also once again ride our horses through the beautiful wooded areas around our site. We will also forge ahead with strategizing (and ultimately implementing) the goals outlined in our recently finalized program needs assessment. Our program needs assessment committees are passionate about this work! And finally, it is our goal to serve as many children and families up at Camp as we possibly can, while also keeping everyone safe and healthy under the guidance of our fantastic and committed Medical Committee.

On behalf of Camp's staff, volunteers, and the children and families we serve, I want to wish you the happiest of holidays and a wonderful New Year. YOU make it all possible with your generous support!

Warm regards,

Erica Mangham, Executive Director



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MAKE AN IMPACT



THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

IMPACT

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

With year-end approaching, we need your support to give everyone a chance to laugh, learn and love together at Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times®. But first, we want to give you a gift. Did you know that you can donate stock, save on your finances, AND make an impact on the children and families we serve? Learn why so many donors are choosing this option below, or give today if you're ready to make a difference! Just visit <https://bit.ly/Stock4Camp>. Please contact Development Director Marlene Stang at mstang@rmhsc.org with any questions.

