



CAMP AWAKENING

ANNUAL
REPORT 2013

ABOUT US

Each summer youth with physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy and amputation attend one of Camp Awakening's integrated outdoor recreation programs.

Our traditional Summer Camp Programs for boys & girls 9-18 years of age operate out of mainstream camps in Ontario – Kilcoo Camp for boys and Camp Oconto for girls. We are just one cabin group of youth with physical disabilities in mainstream camps of more than 200 people! Campers enjoy wilderness adventures through the canoe tripping program, and numerous in-camp activities like swimming, sailing, kayaking, rock wall, land sports & games, archery and handicrafts. One of the outstanding benefits of these programs is the integration, friendships and understanding generated between able-bodied campers from our host camps and Awakening campers with physical disabilities.

For the second year in a row and in partnership with March of Dimes Canada, Camp Awakening hosted the Youth Leadership Development (YLD) Retreat at YMCA Geneva Park. This program for youth 19-24 years is a unique combination of learning conference & wilderness retreat with a strong focus on goal-setting for the future.

Finally, 2013 saw the introduction of our newest initiative - Family Camp Weekend! We created an opportunity for Awakening campers, siblings and parents, as well as those potential new camper families keen to learn more about our programs, to enjoy stress-free time together exploring the great outdoors; trying new activities; building special memories; and networking with other families of children with special needs.



Our Mission:

1. To provide camping programs for children with physical disabilities.
2. To offer challenging canoe tripping experiences to a population for whom wilderness opportunities have been minimal.
3. To teach children with physical disabilities the skills that will allow them to participate in mainstream recreational activities.
4. To offer a safe and structured environment within which campers can test their perceived limitations.
5. To increase awareness of the capabilities of people with physical disabilities.
6. To integrate campers with physical disabilities with able-bodied campers.
7. To create an atmosphere in which campers can have fun



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you for giving kids with physical disabilities the experience of a lifetime!

For more than 30 years, Camp Awakening has been a leader in summer camp and outdoor recreation programming for children and youth with physical disabilities. Our traditional summer camps, and now new leadership & family programs, offer profound and often life-changing experiences because of you.

Thanks to your help, young people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy and amputation are encouraged to unplug from the constant buzz of cell phones & computers to make genuine face-to-face connections; learn to lead healthy, active lives; discover the wonders of nature; and challenge their perceived limitations. Just one session at camp has campers building important life & social skills and realizing greater independence. Most importantly, they're having a ton of fun and making great new friends!

Camp Awakening does not receive any government funding and as a registered charity relies on the generosity of our caring community to make camp happen each summer. With over 65% of camper families requiring financial assistance your support during our 32nd camping season is more meaningful than ever.

Happy Paddling!

Sincerely,

Adam Chamberlain

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Tracy Morley

Executive Director

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2013 HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

The summer of 2013 marked 31 summers at Kilcoo Camp for boys and 12 summers at Camp Oconto for girls. *The girls' program has been in operation since 1989 and moved to Oconto in 2002 upon the closing of Camp GV.*



Camp Awakening outdoor recreation programs have grown 50% in the past 2 summers thanks to the introduction of the *Youth Leadership Development (YLD) Retreat* in 2012 and our newest initiative – Family Camp Weekend in 2013!

And The Award Goes To...Camp Awakening! At a ceremony in Toronto on September 27, 2013, Camp Awakening was awarded the prestigious Community Partnership Award by March of Dimes Canada. This annual award is presented to "an organization or community group for outstanding collaboration with March of Dimes Canada in support of people with physical disabilities". We were thrilled to be recognized for our joint Youth Leadership Development (YLD) Retreat.



The Jordana Lokash Foundation hosted a *Family Hockey Challenge* at the UCC rink on April 20, 2013 raising \$9,000.

The 26th Annual *Winter Reunion* was held on Saturday, December 21st. The winter reunion provides a "booster-shot" of camp for camper families and alumni with swimming, arts & crafts and the highly anticipated summer slideshow.

Camp Awakening awarded its first internship! Helping out the Executive Director in the office over the summer, Melissa Patania took on the brand new role of *Fund Development Intern* researching potential granting and fundraising opportunities.



We were selected to participate in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon's Charity Challenge on October 20, 2013 for the first time. Our initial goal was \$3,000, but our amazing runners raised over \$6,800 via peer-to-peer online fundraising!

The mission of ParaSport Ontario is to support the development and promotion of the Paralympic movement in Ontario. The Ready, Willing & Able program provided wheelchair basketball equipment to camp twice during the summer of 2013 thanks to the financial support of ParticipACTION's Teen Challenge, The Charles H. Ivey Foundation and The Harold E. Ballard Foundation.



2013 STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

REVENUE	Total 2013	Total 2012
Camp Fees	41,058	40,374
Donations		
Corporations	11,087	4,268
Foundations	93,892	74,900
Individuals	46,379	45,864
Others	12,319	14,007
Special Events	31,765	32,440
Investment Income	78,131	51,428
TOTAL REVENUE	314,6312	263,281

EXPENSES	Total 2013	Total 2012
Camp Equipment & Operations	5,118	12,213
Camp Fees	83,798	88,925
Fundraising	8,736	16,912
Insurance	6,706	7,922
Rent	6,000	3,800
Office Expenses & Promotion	11,320	7,997
Professional Fees	9,575	8,650
Recruitment & Promotion	6,489	5,309
Salaries & Benefits	105,159	98,385
Staff Training	1,984	2,585
Transportation	15,256	15,372
Investment Management Fee	7,314	2,784
Other	24,115	
TOTAL REVENUE	291,570	270,854
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	23,061	-7,573



NEW THIS YEAR – FAMILY CAMP!

Following on the successful implementation of a Youth Leadership Development Retreat for young adults with physical disabilities in 2012, we introduced another brand new program that campers & families have been asking for and which fulfills one of the goals of our strategic plan – the creation of additional innovative & integrated in-camp & year-round programs for youth with physical disabilities. Our newest initiative - Family Camp Weekend – had a great positive impact on not just kids with physical disabilities, but on entire families!

Even today, too many children with physical disabilities see themselves as different and somehow removed from mainstream society. Often their parents are very protective. For more than 30 years Camp Awakening has provided an environment and stimulus for these children to learn to lead healthier, more active lives; to discover the wonders of nature; to explore their potential & challenge their perceived limitations; and to have a lot of fun while doing so!

The next step for positive youth development was to give our campers the opportunity to showcase these new skills to their parents & siblings in an environment only they are familiar with. We wanted them to show off their camp expertise! More than that, we wanted the whole family to enjoy stress-free time together exploring the great outdoors; trying new activities; building special memories and networking with other families of children with special needs.

The inaugural Family Camp Weekend was held June 14-16, 2013 at Kilcoo Camp in Minden, ON. We plan to alternate this program in the future between all of our host camps.



A LETTER FROM A FIRST TIME CAMPER PARENT

"I just want to let you know that Sarah* had an awesome time at her first week with Camp Awakening. She can't wait to go back next year.

Sarah has had a pretty exceptional life in her 10 years. Half of those years had been very unstable, while the latter half had been trying to mend what her previous 5 years entailed. And on top of all of these underlying issues, that no one can physically see; Sarah has to deal with the physical issues that everyone can see. There is nothing wrong with Sarah - she has cerebral palsy and scoliosis and she wears braces on her legs. But that is the question that is always asked of Sarah by her peers.... "what's wrong with you?" When someone is asked what's wrong with them over and over, they start believing it.

We had never tried to limit Sarah. She played soccer, she took piano, she takes swimming lessons, she took dance. But it was an awkward cycle. She was excited to participate with her peers, but that excitement quickly turned to frustration. She was noticing that she wasn't able to run as fast as the others, she wasn't able to be as co-ordinated with the piano, it took her twice as long to pass her swimming tests, she wasn't able to balance or do a cartwheel like the other dancers. There were many times when she was so discouraged that she would stop, look and run to me and bury her head with her eyes full of tears. I would give her the usual pep talk, about how great she was doing. I, myself could feel her frustration because I couldn't do anything to change her situation. But the one thing about Sarah that I admire is her persistence to keep on going. She had never quit anything. We had to make some decisions for her in a roundabout way to move on. The fact that the piano teacher saw that Sarah was getting more frustrated than enjoying piano (because her left hand could not keep up with her right). The look of defeat on her face when all the other little girls were doing cartwheels, handstands and were able to point their toes; the proper way. We realized that this may be causing more harm than good. We had to find something for Sarah that would be hers. Something or somewhere she would fit in.

Just by chance, I found Camp Awakening one night while surfing the net. I knew this was going to "make or break her" (for lack of a better term). Well, Camp Awakening changed her life. Sarah had a spark. A confidence that I knew was in her but it never had the chance to come out. Sarah was able to experience and participate in so many different things, and not feel defeated. She was able to be herself and not be judged. The fact that Sarah was able to make new friends without them already having a preconceived idea of who or what Sarah is all about was the best feeling. They took her for her.

It wasn't about how much fun she was having, or how she was able to get a bulls-eye in archery or how she loved riding the horses. It wasn't about how she was able to canoe, kayak, surf, swim, dive off the high board; participating in fashion shows and a play where she had a chronic yawning disorder...lol. It wasn't about how she was able to find a good friend and share the nickname "S-Squared". It was all about how all these wonderful experiences made her feel. How it built her up; to give her the confidence and build up her self-esteem that she desperately needed. It was all about how she felt like she finally had a place where she belonged, where she was wanted.

I cannot thank you enough for opening up the world to my daughter..."

*Camper names have been changed to protect their privacy.



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

The following cash & in-kind donations were made to Camp Awakening between January 1 – December 31, 2013

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