

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

A photograph of two young Black girls smiling and posing outdoors. The girl on the right is wearing a blue t-shirt with the word "undefeated" in yellow script and a white outline of a person in a dynamic pose. The girl on the left is wearing a peach-colored t-shirt with "GENERATION 2023" and a silhouette of a crowd. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a paved area. The image is framed by a yellow torn-edge border at the top and bottom, and a blue torn-edge border at the bottom.

*Your Impact ...*  
**Changed Lives!**





# A Life of Impact

***Daniel McKinnon July 17, 2006-February 7, 2023***

**H**e was supposed to come to camp last summer, but tragically, Daniel passed away before it could happen. It quickly became apparent that this “relatively quiet, sometimes mischievous young man with a contagious laugh,” as his family and friends say, impacted *so many* in life.

Daniel loved God ... and sports. He was also known for making sure no one was ever excluded and for creating and selling *awesome* t-shirts, with sayings like “Don’t let anyone out work you!”

To honor his legacy and powerful impact, Daniel’s family used the money from t-shirt sales and other gifts coming in his memory to send a bus full of kids to KAA this past summer. A total of 48 kids arrived at camp wearing one of Daniel’s famous shirts!

Even after his death, Daniel is still changing lives, as many of those 48 experienced Jesus for the first time at KAA ...

Jaliyah was nervous at first, but she loved every minute of camp! She says, “KAA is peaceful, you can be in the worst position of your life, but you will find God here.” Ann found healing at camp. She had experienced loss and abandonment at a young age. The devil had her convinced that her circumstances were her fault. God had a good plan for Ann at KAA. Her counselor surrounded her with love, prayer, and biblical truth. Ann shares, “Satan wants you to believe bad things only happen to you because you are a bad person, but God doesn’t. He loves you!”

*In honor of Daniel, The McKinnon Family would like to continue sending a bus of campers to KAA.*

*You can help offset transportation and registration fees by purchasing one of Daniel’s famous t-shirts here.*



Scan here →

# *A Personal Word from* **Randy Odom, President and CEO**



**T**he countdown is on!

KAA is gearing up for one of the *best summers* since the pandemic. More than 2,184 campers have already registered, putting us on track to potentially welcome over 5,500 campers!

We are currently recruiting 500 Christ-centered summer staff to minister, encourage, and pour into campers. The college-age students hired this summer will not only work at KAA but receive discipleship and mentoring. It is a powerful win-win!

Two years ago, we launched KAA Elite, a gospel-centered high school sports team camp. This summer we expect to host more than 150 athletes and 20 coaches. This is a vital ministry to reach unchurched urban youth. 90% of the KAA Elite campers we've welcomed so far were unchurched. More than 75% of these young men responded to the gospel at camp!

The ministry has continued post-camp with one team. KAA Connect coordinator, David Arechiga, is serving as a chaplain for James Madison High School, continuing to pour into and mentor that team. Stay tuned for more news on KAA Elite in the coming year!

Even though summer camp '24 is several months away, God continues to move and *change lives*. I had the opportunity to spend a few days in East L.A., with some campers and their Kaleos. This group of kids had a rough go at camp in '23, but God revealed His enduring mercy, which has forever impacted them. You'll read all about it on page 5.

As we look forward to a massive summer of ministry, please remember ...

- Your gift of \$800 will provide a camper a full scholarship to camp this summer.
- \$1,000 provides a full scholarship and transportation for a camper.
- \$8,000 will sponsor an entire cabin of 10 campers.

There is much to thank God and our friends for, as we reflect on 2023 and look ahead to 2024 and beyond. Thanks for being loyal partners and thank you for keeping KAA in your prayers as we prepare to impact even more kids for Jesus this year.



**Camp by the Numbers: 3,751 campers**

# Putting the Pieces

# Back Together

**J**R wanted to go to a camp, so he asked his pastor if he knew of any good ones.

Nothing came to mind at first, but JR's pastor didn't want this young man to lose interest, so he quickly replied, "I know a guy I can ask!" Wink, wink. He began praying for God to lead him to just the right place for JR, and God led him to KAA.

JR checked us out online ... and he was hooked! It was a no-brainer — the activities looked amazing — plus JR knew camp was the place to get back to God, shed old, bad habits, and create new, life-giving ones.

Before he left for camp, he told his church family that he was going to come back "somebody they had never met before, somebody better!"

Soon after arriving at KAA, JR knew: God had picked the perfect camp for him! He got to try new things — tubing, jumping on the blob, swinging off the trapeze at the pool, conquering the challenge course — plus some of his favorite classics, like playing baseball and basketball.

All the activities were awesome, but it was the interactions he had with his counselors and fellow campers that ministered to, and softened, his heart.

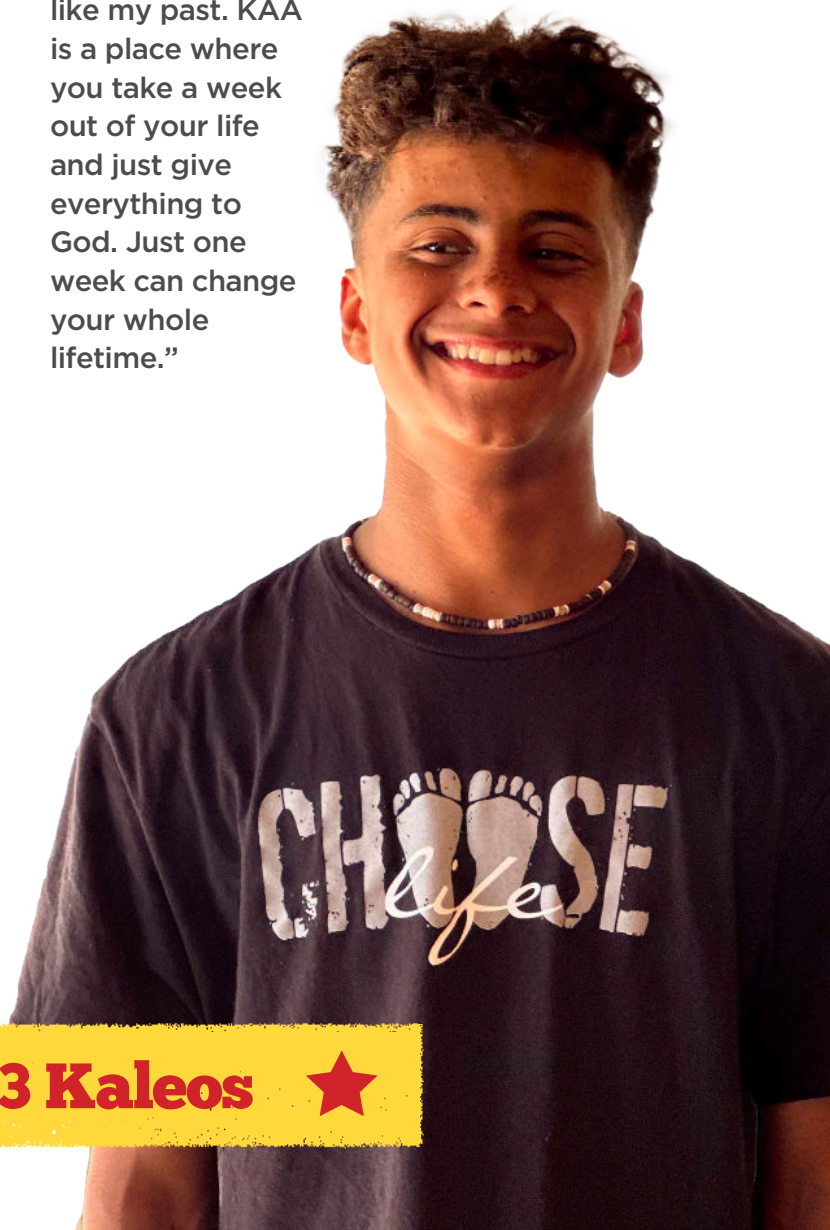
Back home, JR goes back and forth between two households — dealing with two sets of parents. His relationship with his

dad and stepdad were equally broken.

But he says, *"God put the pieces back together at camp."*

His counselors spent time advising him, pouring scripture into him, praying with him, and encouraging him. At Cross Talk, the last piece was placed when JR rededicated his life to Jesus!

"No one knows the future," JR shares, "but I can tell you right now, it is not going to be like my past. KAA is a place where you take a week out of your life and just give everything to God. Just one week can change your whole lifetime."







# East L.A. Camper Update: From Trouble to Triumph!

By Randy Odom, President/CEO

**G**od is still in the miracle business at KAA!

We hosted a group of teens from La Habra, California (East L.A.) last summer, and their time with us started out rocky, to say the least! But God changed hearts over a weeks' time. Hunter Wadman, the KAA 2 Assistant Director, and I ministered to the young men during their stay at camp. As we promised when they left us, we recently visited the boys.

As our plane began its descent at the LAX airport, I wondered if they remembered what they learned at camp? Do they still believe that God loves them? I wondered what life was like for them and if they would be surprised

to see us. (We did not tell them we were coming — only their Kaleo David Greer, knew.)

I quickly got my answers!

One of the boys, named Bo, had this to say about KAA, "I wanted to go to KAA, but at the same time, I didn't. I had never been in the woods or on a boat or on a lake, with people I never met who did not look like me. But at camp, I learned Jesus loves me and is with me always. I found God at that camp, and I want to go back."

What a beautiful answer to prayer! I couldn't help but remember what Bo said before he surrendered his life to Christ — "I hate this

camp. Why am I here? I hate y'all." Before departing KAA last summer, Bo retracted his words. And months later, he is still on the right track!

Before we left Bo and the others that day, he said, "I love y'all!" And of course, we replied:

"We love you, too! See you at camp soon."

This is what Jesus does at camp. He changes hearts, He changes lives, and He gives hope and a purpose. We can't wait to welcome Bo, the "East Los" crew, and their wonderful Kaleos this summer.

*Thanks for making it possible for kids like this to find Jesus at KAA!*



**Camp by the Numbers: 28 states, 383 cities represented**

# Breakthrough Moments *Never Get Old!*

**B**arbara Waiters-White was listening to James Dobson's radio program 25 years ago when she heard about KAA for the first time.

She knew this was the place the kids she worked with at Teenfire Children Services needed to go!

She brought her first group that next summer ... and has returned year after year. Altogether, she and other Kaleos have brought more than 700 kids to camp!

"I haven't heard of even one kid that left camp without knowing the Lord!" Barbara shares.

The transformation they experience at camp is always the highlight for Barbara.

Maybe it is the chants. Maybe it's the hype. Or it just might be the counselors.

Whatever it is — God uses camp to impact kids for Christ.

This past summer was no different. Cross Talk provided yet another breakthrough moment for Barbara's kids ...

"A window of heaven opened up," she describes. "God was present."

Devon had one of those breakthrough moments. He did not want to come to camp but quickly realized it offered more than he thought. Devon discovered the true mercy and love of Jesus. "No matter what, God will always forgive you because that's how much He loves you!"

What a precious moment! Now, imagine that 700+ times over 24 years. The lives transformed. The hearts won for Jesus. *It never gets old.* To God be the glory!







## *Double Impact*

# God Ministers to Campers & Staff

**T**hey work as cooks, dishwashers, health center staff, counselors, office assistants, boat drivers, challenge course facilitators, specialty coaches, photographers and more ... and they make an incredible impact in the lives of the kids and teens we serve!

Every summer 400-500 students arrive at KAA from colleges and universities across the nation to serve as staff, sacrificing their summer break to minister the love of Jesus to campers.

In the off season, our KAA directors trek to college fairs sharing summer work opportunities. They also utilize Athletes in Action and Fellowship of Christian Athletes to promote summer staff openings. It's long hours on the road and tons of work ... but vital to the ministry of KAA. Campers need exposure to the right role models — young adults living out their faith and pursuing excellence.

Counselors, especially, spend so much time with campers — pouring into them, loving on them, as well as taking care of their daily needs while at camp.

Breasha Powe is one example. She heard about camp through FCA. She loves Jesus and basketball — a perfect combination!

In her freshman year, Breasha started for Mississippi State University's Women's Basketball Team. She jumped when she heard about the chance to share Jesus with kids.

Breasha fondly recalls one camper she had in her cabin. Kayla's attitude at the start of the week was bad. By the end ... Kayla did not want to leave. She was reading her Bible faithfully and couldn't wait to share what she learned! Breasha played a direct role in Kayla's "180."

God used Breasha to minister His love and His Word to Kayla and other campers.

God used camp to minister His love and His Word to Breasha, too! She was surrounded with hundreds of young men and women her age who love Jesus. In her words, the experience was "amazing."

"I've grown in consistency," she says. College life is hectic — practice, class, homework, gym workouts. Just like Kayla, at camp Breasha learned the importance of making time for Jesus every day to get in His Word.

Praise God for sending young men and women to minister the love of Jesus to kids, and *praise God* that while they are at camp, they receive ministry, too.

**If you know a young man or woman in college that would be a perfect fit for summer staff work, please encourage them to reach out to Titus Goodrich at [Titus@kaakamps.org](mailto:Titus@kaakamps.org).**

# UPDATE: Higher Ground

Higher Ground is a three-year Christian leadership camp designed to encourage and equip high school students with a primary focus on biblical disciple-making and servant-leadership development.

## Higher Ground on Mission: Training Tomorrow's Christian Leaders

It was a special summer for our third-year Higher Ground (HG) campers! As a culmination to our three-year HG camping experience, focused on servant-leader discipleship, they went on a week-long mission's trip to assist Urban Youth Impact — the only faith-based organization serving the most at-risk inner-city youth in Palm Beach County, Florida — primarily through an award-winning after-school program.

First year HG campers do a deep dive into the Word and go on a local mission trip. Second year campers continue expanding their biblical knowledge, and assist with KAA Connect on the road, and third year HG campers continue learning and take a week-long mission trip to come alongside another ministry doing Kingdom work in the US.

"The perception is you have to leave the country," explains Jenson Newton, HG Director, "but through HG, we want to show campers various mission opportunities right here."

One of the HG campers pursuing culinary arts used her talents and knowledge in Urban Youth Impact's after-school culinary program.

Another 3rd year HG camper, Grace, says she will never forget the names and faces of the kids she served. The trip even gave her a new outlook on what she wants to do in ministry throughout her life. "This mission trip was like the final exam for HG, but the best final exam I've ever had."





## Higher Ground Adds *HG Work*

**HG** has trained over 4,000 campers from 30 states across the country. Many past graduates have become Summer Staff at KAA and are highly sought after for their integrity and leadership skills.

This past summer, HG officially launched *HG Work* — an opportunity for HG campers to work paid summer staff positions while still in the program. We want them to experience what servant leadership really looks like in action, learn responsibility and

humility, and discover how to best use their God-given gifts and talents in ministry.

Several HG Work participants used their earnings to offset their individual cost for the West Palm Beach mission.

HG Work is just one more way we can pour into young lives and empower their futures. *Thank you for standing with KAA to reach the next generation of godly leaders!*

## In the Kitchen with Mama Stone

**F**rances “Mama” Stone is no stranger in the kitchen!

She loves preparing delicious and nutritious meals. For more than a decade, Mama Stone has closed her salon during the summer to serve in one of the four KAA kitchens.

Mama Frances and her small kitchen staff understand the importance of food ministry during camp and “keep the joy of the Lord present” while preparing the meals.

She and her kitchen crew begin around 5 am each day, making breakfast and prepping for lunch and dinner. Thursday lunch of fried chicken and mashed potatoes is one of the most lauded camp meals. By 9:30 am on Thursdays, they’ve already fried 250 pieces of chicken!

And the campers and staff love it!

For some of our campers, three square meals a day is not the norm.

“It is a blessing when they come into the dining hall,” Mama Stone says,

“Their eyes get big as they’re looking to see what’s being served. It just blesses my heart!”

### And the “critics” say...

“At KAA, you will have lots of fun and learn more about God *and* you get to eat a lot of good food.” —Dyniah

“The food here — don’t even get me started! The Booyah burgers, the pizza, the pasta — *so good!*” —Domonique

“It was like a Thanksgiving dinner. We had delicious chicken wings, mashed potatoes, green beans, and bread. Oh! It was so good!!” —Annabelle





## KAA Elite: Growing Athletes for Christ!

**KAA** Elite had another successful summer in 2023. Elite was able to reach over 100 football players from Lake Providence, L.A., and Dallas. 90% of the High School athletes in attendance came from unchurched backgrounds. Many of the athletes made a commitment to professing the Lord as their Savior, as well as some of the coaches that brought them.

General Trass High School's Football Team attended KAA Elite for the second year. Five out of the 22 players made decisions for Christ at camp!

Joshua, who plays offensive/defensive tackle for the team, said he did not want to come last year. He just "wasn't feeling it." This year was a different story ...

Josh soaked up every minute — from the team building activities, to drills, to tubing, and meeting kids from all over the nation. He also heard God's voice speak to his heart and made a first-time decision to follow Christ! "I'm ready to express Jesus to other people," he shared. "That's another thing I'm going to take back home."

Kids Across America is excited to bring back KAA Elite for its third summer, and this year, we will extend Elite to three sessions, hosting teams from Texas, Louisiana, Kansas, Tennessee, Michigan, and Minnesota. The goal for KAA Elite is to reach even more high school football players and their coaches for Christ.







## KAA Konnect: KAA on the Road!

Inflatables, a rock wall, dance classes ... and so much more!

This is what KAA Konnect looked like in Little Rock and Atlanta this past summer. And of course, it all centered around Jesus!

Not only did day campers have a BLAST, but many of them came to know Christ as Lord and Savior. Our Konnect counselors poured out love, encouragement, and God's Word.

When parents would drop them off for

the next day's sessions, they reported the kids coming home the night before and sharing chants and Bible verses with anyone who would listen!

In summer 2024, KAA Konnect will hit the road again, adding Memphis to the list of Konnect cities.

*This camp outreach is vital to impact kids who can't make it to KAA. Thanks for making it happen!*



**Camp by the Numbers: 46% Groups Attending 5+ Years**



**17% Groups Attending 10+ Years**

## Board Member Profile:

### *Pastor Allen “Mac” McFarland*



**F**or more than 30 years — Calvary Baptist, helmed by Pastor Allan McFarland, has been sending kids and teens to camp.

In 2003, he joined the Kids Across America Board and has been a member since.

“Serving with KAA has been and still is a privilege,” he shares. “God encourages my heart by being in the presence of men and women of God who also serve at KAA.”

Pastor “Mac,” as he is affectionately referred, is a Bible preaching, teaching, minister of the Word of God. He started his career as a Program Specialist for the federal government. In 1972, while reading Isaiah 52:7, he answered the call to preach the gospel.

With now more than 50 years in ministry, Pastor Mac has impacted the Kingdom in multiple ways ...

He has served on multiple boards, including Liberty University (where he also adjuncts theology courses), Rawlings School of Divinity, KAA, and the Southern Baptist Convention of Virginia. He founded and serves as the chancellor of the Angelos Bible College in Portsmouth.

His contributions to both academia and ministry earned him the distinguished honor of being named among the Nation’s 70 Most Influential Black Christian History Makers by Black Christian News Network, alongside noted leaders, such as Dr. Tony Evans, Dr. Ben Carson, and Alveda King.

Pastor McFarland and Doris, his wife of 56 years, have four daughters, one son and 16 grandchildren. KAA is thankful for the godly influence and leadership of Pastor McFarland!

#### **Pastor Mac’s Favorite Verse:**

**“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.” Psalms 84:11**







## Don't Just Utilize, Maximize!

Imagine a warehouse full of shelves floor to ceiling stocked with a sundry of items — everything from hygiene products to home fixtures, to socks, sheets, and linens.

This past summer, KAA began not just utilizing, but *maximizing* its 12,000 square feet warehouse.

Ninety percent of the inventory in the warehouse has been donated. Last year, camp received over one million dollars' worth of in-kind donations with little out of pocket.

"The first benefit of having this warehouse space is to KAA," says Dave Janke, KAA Director of Support Operations. "Camp is able to put to good use in-kind donated items, such as hot water heaters and hand soap. Then, what isn't needed can be offered to other ministries."

To maximize the space and share products not needed at camp, Kaleos now

have the chance to "shop" in the warehouse for items their ministries back home might need.

Summer staff member, John Charles "JC" Stanley III, helped launch the outreach. His main goal was to set protocols for receiving/pick-up.

"The idea is to not keep items on the shelf very long but to find someone who really needs that specific item in Kingdom ministry and make sure it gets to their hand," JC explains.

In its first year, our warehouse outreach will impact more than 8,000 kids in communities across the US!

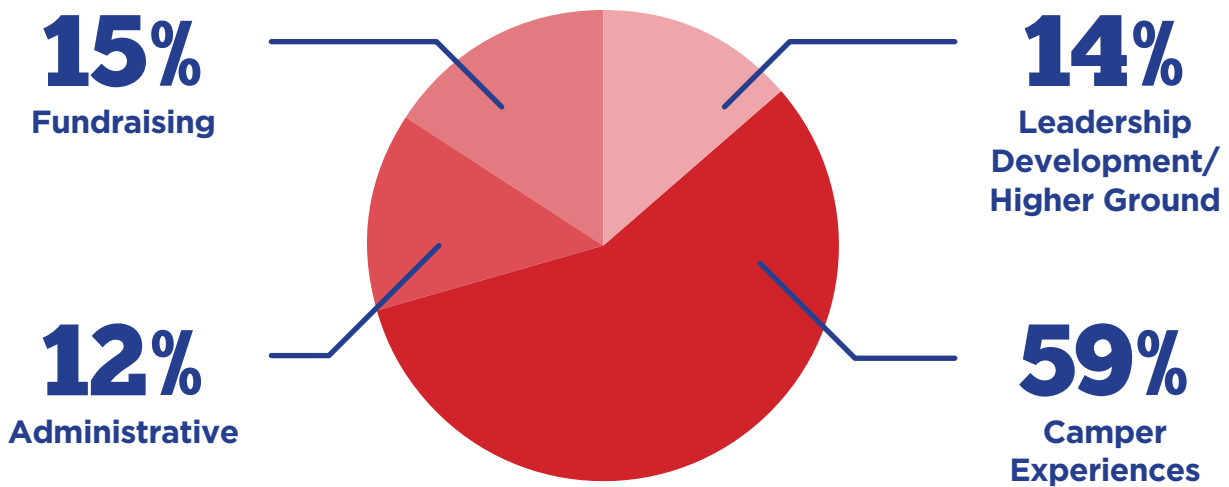
**If you or your business has products or in-kind donations, such as vehicles or other personal property assets to give, please reach out to Dave Janke at [dave@kaakamps.org](mailto:dave@kaakamps.org).**



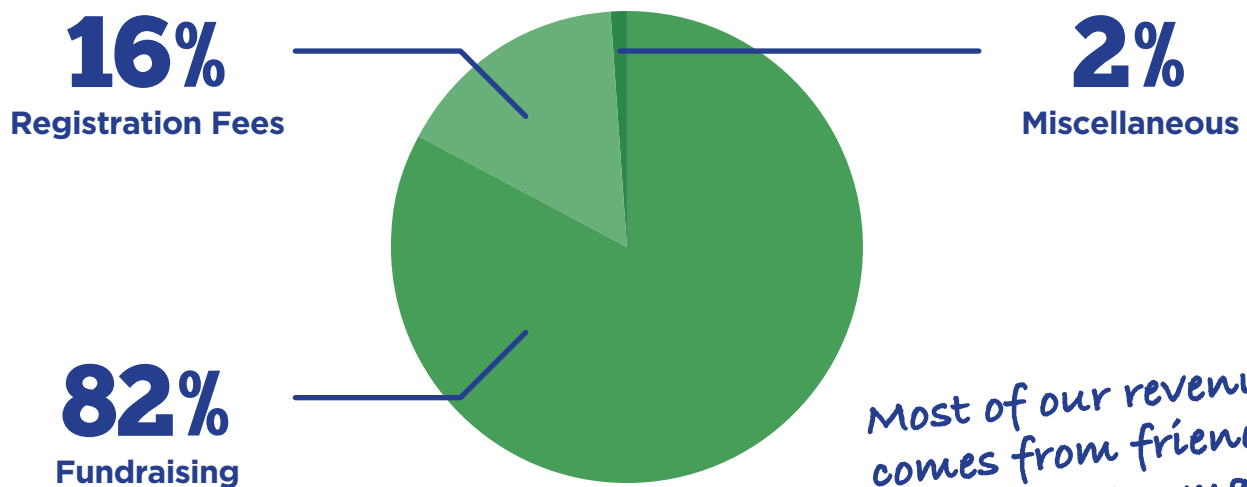
# *A Look Ahead*

## 2024 Budgeted Goals

### Expenses:



### Revenue:



*Most of our revenue comes from friends like you. You make camp a reality! Thank you!*





**2024 Fundraising Goal \$6,106,000 ▼**



**▲ Actual YTD (As of 12/31/23) \$2,049,120**

## **Vision for Summer '24**

According to the census bureau there are more than 43 million youth ages 10-19 living in the United States and based on a poll by the Pew Research Center, about a third of U.S. teens (32%) say they are atheists, agnostics, or nothing in particular.

Based on this statistic — that equates to nearly 14 million kids and teens who do not know the love and hope of Jesus!

### **These are the kids we want to reach at KAA!**

It seems like a big number, but we serve a BIG God! And God is preparing us for a BIG summer in 2024 ...

- More than 2,184 campers are already enrolled. We are confident that this summer KAA will have over 5,500 campers.
- KAA Elite will extend to three sessions. We anticipate hosting teams from Texas, Louisiana,

Kansas, Tennessee, Michigan, and Minnesota.

- KAA Konnect is going on the road to Little Rock, Atlanta, and Memphis this summer.

Thanks for being a vital part of all we do at KAA, as we equip, encourage, and empower our campers, coaches, and Kaleos. You are an invaluable member of TEAM KAA!

# Golf with Us... Great courses, fellowship, & fun!

Our KAA Golf Outings provide unique experiences to enjoy the game of golf on beautiful courses with other players who share your heart and want to make a difference in the lives of youth from under-resourced communities.

If you love golf and KAA, you are invited to join us for one or more of these phenomenal events. There is a suggested donation amount for each event.

- Dallas Golf Outing — Spring 2024
- Payne Stewart Memorial/KAA Cup (Branson) — June 16-18, 2024
- Sonoma Golf Club (CA) — Sept/Oct 2024 (For Couples)
- Tulsa Golf Outing — Fall 2024

For more information or to participate in one or more golf outings, contact Mark Parry at 417-263-0128 or [mark@kaakamps.org](mailto:mark@kaakamps.org).



## KAA Pheasant Hunt

You are invited to join KAA Outfitters for an awe-inspiring excursion outdoors! Plan now to participate in one of our upcoming hunts — where encouraging relationships are built, and funds are raised to send campers for a life-changing week at KAA. These events have a suggested donation amount. For questions or to book your outdoor adventure, contact Dave Janke at 417-263-1800 or visit [kaakamps.org/outfitters](http://kaakamps.org/outfitters).

**Pheasant Hunting in Hanston, Kansas:**  
**February 25-27, 2024 Arriving for dinner at**  
**6 p.m. through lunch on February 27**  
**\*Sign up soon—only 5 spots available as of press time.**



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