

KAA 2024 Annual Report

*Transformation
Happens*



We are grateful for all of our donors and recognize these people and groups for their contributions made to KAA in 2024.

2024 Honor Roll

B J Thompson from Sandra Ostram/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Connie Brucato/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Rachel DiBuono/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Nancy Boeck/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Rachel Casey/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Katheryn Cleary/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Ann Glau/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Christine McMenamin/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Melissa Rabener/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson from Barbara Swagler/Bills Mafia
B J Thompson, #53 Damar & #3 Hamlin from Lisa
Sears/Bills Mafia
Buck Long, from The FISH Class, Southaven
Baptist Church
Cameron Alanzo Reeves from Anisa Jones
Christopher Eskridge from Jeremiah Lemke
Denise Smith from Amy and Jay Martin

Henry and Bonnie Wiebe from Rebecca and Chris Maggio
Jala Zinck from Shaun Zinck
John and Wanda Wooley from John II and Shauna Wooley
KAA Campers & Staff from John Michaels
Kelandria Odom from HeatherLea and James Hobson
Madonna Black's Birthday from Mary and Jim Black
Mark Parry from Lance and Jane Woodliff
Our two sons on Father's Day from Steve and Marie
Booren
Randy Odom from Helen and Morgan Brown
Randy Odom from Rithea Jackson
Randall Metz from Lloyd and Lora Brown
Lauren Tew Family from Kanakuk Ministries, Inc.
Tommy and Suzy Bastian from J.J. and Molly Coulter
Tripp Wilson from Zach and Rachel Hughes
Will and Abbie Heydel from Rick and Sally Heydel
Marlene Nash from John and Melissa Everage

2024 Memorial Roll

Bascom Sims from Kathryn and Faron Walker
Cole Tedford from Cade Carroll
Delmar Janke from Regis and Lana Carr
Delmar Janke from Betty Janke
Delmar Janke from Nancy Janke
Delmar Janke from Marie Kaufman
Delmar Janke from Cheri Knittel
Delmar Janke from Terry and Tammy Miller
Delmar Janke from Dianne Axlund
Delmar Janke from Marjory Berreth
Delmar Janke from Chris and Amanda Campbell
Delmar Janke from Beth Clem
Delmar Janke from Mary Beth Dawes
Delmar Janke from Robert and Ginger Erlandson
Delmar Janke from Dale and Margaret Janke
Delmar Janke from Tim and Christi Lytle
Delmar Janke from Tim and Christi Lytle

Delmar Janke from Michael Watson
Delmar Janke from Gavin Zimmerman
Janis Sue Stroms from Anthony and Tarah Riley
Jase David Johnson from Brad and Margaret Boyd
Ken Winterseen from Ross and Dena Herder
Ken Winterseen from Lynn Winterseen
Kenneth Blue from Ty Gordon
Scott Davis from Lori Keller
Steve Griffin from Beki Ainsworth
Steve Griffin from Ray and Kara Arriola
Steve Griffin from Gwendolyn Ayres
Steve Griffin from Keith and Julie Baxter
Steve Griffin from Davidson Foundation, Inc.
Steve Griffin from Donna Hanner
Steve Griffin from Craig and Mary Miller
Steve Griffin from Theophilites Sunday School
Violet Meyerkord from Star Meyerkord



A Personal Word from Randy Odom, President and CEO

As we reflect on all that God did last year, our hearts overflow with gratitude. The impact He made through camp continues in the hearts of our campers, and we're grateful for your continued support.

Since camp ended, the KAA team has been diligently planning for summer 2025. Our theme will be *Apply Pressure*, inspired by James 1:12:

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

God's faithfulness is evident in our growing ministry. We're seeing record-breaking early registrations, with camper numbers significantly above last year. We expect 43% of our summer staff to return ... strengthening our investment in the next generation of Christian leaders.

We're also entering an exciting new chapter as we search for a director of our Higher Ground Leadership camp, which has trained hundreds of young servant leaders over two decades.

Our reach continues to expand through events like the Impact Ministries Conference, where we connected with nearly 1,000 passionate college students. We're also growing the KAA Alumni Collective, bringing our community together in cities nationwide through our new KAA App.

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.
- \$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 2024 and look ahead to 2025 and beyond. Thanks for being a friend and standing with KAA to impact even more kids for Jesus this year.



Randy Odom, President & CEO



From Silent Grief to Sacred Healing:

A Teen's Summer Camp Journey

Tears had not fallen from Quamay's eyes in two years ... not since the day his eldest sister's life was taken by gun violence on Chicago streets. But there on a hillside in the Ozarks, surrounded by the peace of summer camp, the dam finally broke.

At 18, Quamay arrived for his sixth and final year at camp carrying both a college acceptance letter and the weight of unresolved grief. While previous summers had been about fun and friendship, this time was different. "I was on a mission," he said, "and I completed it."

Though he still enjoyed the familiar comforts of "the food, the people, the fun, and the nature," God had deeper plans for Quamay's healing.

His counselors helped him confront the guilt he'd been harboring — the endless replay of questions about why he wasn't there

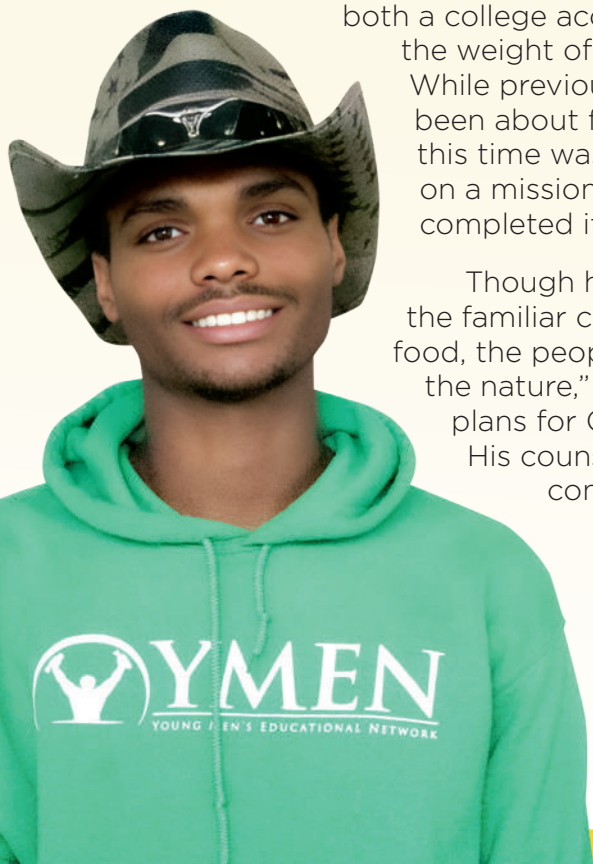
when his sister died, why she had to be alone.

During Cross Talk, something shifted. "That was the first time I had cried in two years," Quamay shared. "Just to let it all out — the grief, the depression — just to give it all to God!"

His counselor, Willie Chatman, observed how, "loss had taken him back, but camp helped him regain that ground." Free from grief's chains, Quamay could finally look toward his future at Northeastern Illinois University with renewed purpose.

"I am now the oldest of six, and I have to be a good big brother," he reflected. "Camp has taught me accountability. I want to do more than just take them to school or cook for them, I want to tell them something that resonates, that changes their life — and not just my siblings, my friends, too!"

Today, Quamay studies at Northeastern Illinois University, focused on his degree and is, in his words, "rolling for Jesus."



Like Father, Like Son:

A Faith Journey Begins with Jiu Jitsu

When Jesse walked into East LA Jiu Jitsu, he was looking for martial arts training — but he found something more. His instructor, Ron Mukai, had a different priority: sharing Christ's love through what he calls “patient evangelism.” Through Ron's quiet example, Jesse discovered faith and chose to follow Jesus, wanting to model this new path for his children.

His son, Devin, watched this transformation with curiosity. When Ron suggested Devin attend a Christian summer camp in Missouri, the teenager took a leap of faith, leaving the familiar streets of East LA for the unknown.

At camp, Devin found more than new friends and swimming adventures — he found Jesus. The daily activities and welcoming atmosphere led him to make his own decision to follow Christ, and upon returning home, he asked to be baptized.

“I've seen my son grow from a kid going into depression, withdrawing — not blossoming — to a young man following God,” Jesse shares. Now Devin leads his friends in prayer before meals and activities, and his peers are taking notice. As his father puts it, they're saying, “I want some of that.”



Generational Impact:

From Camper to Counselor

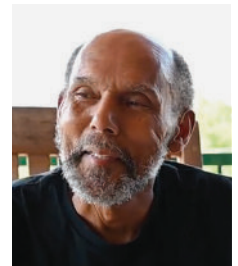


The transformative power of summer camp often comes full circle when former campers return as staff members. In 2024, 27% of KAA's 440 summer staff members were once campers themselves — a testament to camp's lasting impact on young lives.

One such story begins with Granny's House, a Columbia, MO-based ministry that has brought 552



children to KAA over the past 19 years. This safe haven in public housing provides mentoring, homework help, and hope to children who need it most.



Rute Retta's journey exemplifies this transformative cycle. At age 10, she began attending Granny's House, where she first experienced "a real sense of the love of Christ." For five summers, she attended KAA as a camper, deeply touched by her counselors' dedication and care. "KAA brought the love of Christ to life by showing me what true joy looks like," Rute explains.

This past summer, Rute fulfilled her dream of serving as a KAA staff member, working both in food service and as a counselor. During one memorable evening devotional, she witnessed God's powerful movement as her campers experienced a profound moment of repentance and forgiveness. "The beautiful part was seeing the forgiveness fill their hearts and multiply," she shares.

Now studying psychology and sociology at Drury University, Rute reflects, "Even though a week at camp doesn't seem like a lot, so much can happen."



Scholarships Open Doors

to Life-Changing Camp Experience

When First Chance U leaders Chris and Tamara dreamed of bringing kids from Charlotte, NC, and Portsmouth, VA, to KAA camp, the financial barriers seemed insurmountable. Then, a phone call changed everything: a donor wanted to specifically support these children attending camp.

“Our hearts burst with gratitude, knowing that people who do not even know our kids loved them enough to want to finance an opportunity for them to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ,” shares Tamara, who herself experienced KAA’s impact as both a camper and counselor.

Through this generous scholarship support, First Chance U brought 35 campers and Kaleos (teen participants) from Charlotte and Portsmouth to KAA in 2024. For many families, the 17-hour journey and camp fees would have been out of reach without financial assistance.

The results were transformative. Twelve young people had life-changing encounters with Christ during their week at camp.

“God’s Word has been forever embedded in my heart from those precious moments at camp,” Tamara reflects. “It was heartwarming to witness our kids

have a similar encounter with Christ, one that will undoubtedly change their lives forever.”

The impact extends beyond the campers. Parents witnessed such positive changes in their children that 100% of the participants are already signed up to return next year. Word of mouth is spreading through Charlotte and Portsmouth communities about the transformative camp experience.

“As much as the kids were being refreshed, so were we,” Tamara notes. “It was a beautiful time of renewal for all of us.”

This ripple effect of changed lives began with one donor’s decision to provide scholarships. Through their generosity, 35 young people who might never have experienced KAA had the opportunity to encounter Christ in a powerful way, creating memories and spiritual foundations that will last a lifetime.



2024

Year in Review

January

KAA Meet Up and Op/Dev Summit - Dallas

- KAA hosted a reunion in Dallas for Kaleos, alumni, former campers, and full-time staff to celebrate the impact made by Jesus.
- The operations team visited James Madison High School, where they heard testimonies from former campers and attended chapel with middle school students.



February

Pheasant Hunt

- Hunters joined KAA for its annual Pheasant Hunt in Hanston, KS, combining Christian fellowship with raising scholarship funds.
- Summer staff recruitment continued as operations teams visited colleges nationwide to recruit summer staff.



March

Volunteer Groups

- Stonebriar Church continued their 25-year tradition of volunteering to prepare camp.
- Volunteering at KAA is just one way individuals, families, and businesses can impact lives for Jesus! To learn more, contact Eric Peterson at 417-294-7105 or eric@kaakamps.org.



April

Leadership Weekend

- Summer staff leadership teams underwent intensive training to prepare for their roles.
- More than 200 volunteers from James River Church and South Haven Baptist Church helped prep camp ... from power washing boats to organizing the KAA store.



May

Staff Preparation

- All summer staff completed biblical training and workshops for their summer roles.
- During "Uncles and Aunties Weeks," camp facilities underwent final preparations for incoming campers.



June

Camp Begins

- KAA welcomed its first group of campers on June 2.
- The KAA Cup/Payne Stewart Memorial Golf Invitational raised scholarship funds across three renowned golf courses.



July

Camp in Full Swing

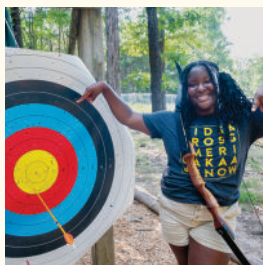
- More than 400 summer staff ministered to nearly 4,000 campers.
- Higher Ground students conducted camp pop-up events in Rockaway Beach, MO, Memphis, and Atlanta.



August

Camp Conclusion

- After nine weeks serving nearly 4,000 kids and teens, camp 2024 concluded.
- Staff winterized facilities and equipment for the off season.



September/October

Recruitment and Alumni Engagement

- Operations staff visited major universities for recruitment.
- KAA Alumni Meetup gathered alumni, donors, and Kaleos for fellowship and encouragement of future staff.



November

Community Outreach and 2025 Preview

- KAA Admin Team conducted mission work in Oklahoma, visiting various community programs.
- Summer 2025 theme announced: *Apply Pressure*, based on James 1:12.



December

Planning and Partnership

- Full-time staff gathered in Branson, MO, for annual summit planning.
- KAA participated in Impact Conference. Randy served as a session speaker, and operations staff connected with alumni and potential summer staff.



Angel Tree Campers:

Children of Incarcerated Parents Find Freedom and Hope at Camp!

Months after they came home from camp ... the thought of their KAA experience still brought smiles to their faces and twinkles to their eyes.

Sisters Londyn (age 10) and Lauryn (age 12) got to experience something they are still talking

about — KAA. The girls came to camp in June with a group from Oklahoma. This group is special because every child who came is an Angel Tree camper (a child of an incarcerated parent).

Camp made quite the impression on both girls. They were still excited to share all about it with KAA Admin Team members last fall when they met with the team in their hometown of Stillwater.

Huge grins spread across their faces, their eyes sparkled,





and they clapped and became animated when describing all the fun they had at camp.

“I get happy when I think about camp,” Londyn shared. “I think about my camp friends every day.” And it is no wonder why. Londyn recounted in detail how she loved meeting her counselors, getting to color, sharing with her cabin mates, joining in a cabin pillow fight, making new friends, tubing for the first time, jumping off the high dive, and most importantly, learning about Jesus.

As soon as she got home, Lauryn ran into her mom’s room and performed all the cheers for her. She told her that camp made her overcome all her fears. Her older sister, Londyn, had an equally rewarding time at KAA. She signed up for the cheer class and said the highlight of camp was performing dance and cheer (especially *P31*, a cheer about being a Proverbs 31 woman) for the other campers.

“At camp, I learned to be honest and talk to God,” Lauryn shared. “When I got there, I started to think about praying to Him and trusting Him.”

Londyn and Lauryn’s mom could not believe the impact camp is still having on her daughters. It is vital to her that her kids get to have fun but also build a life-long relationship with Jesus. “Kids will grow closer to Jesus at KAA. It builds character. Londyn and Lauryn’s character has been amazing after camp,” their mom, Krystal, reported. “I see new maturity and leadership — standing up for what is right. I am so grateful!”

Both girls cannot wait to return to camp this summer. Lauryn entered middle school last fall and has her cabin picture taped on her locker door next to a picture of her family. Londyn is recruiting friends to bring to camp with her. “I tell them, ‘KAA will love to have you, and you will learn about God.’”



Personality Profile:

Dee Miller, KAA Board Member

Dee Miller has been bringing kids to camp for more than 20 years ... impacting the lives of 836 campers and counting. Her life is a testament to her mission: ensuring that everyone she encounters knows Jesus. From prison ministry to children's ministry, Dee's heart for service is evident in all she does.

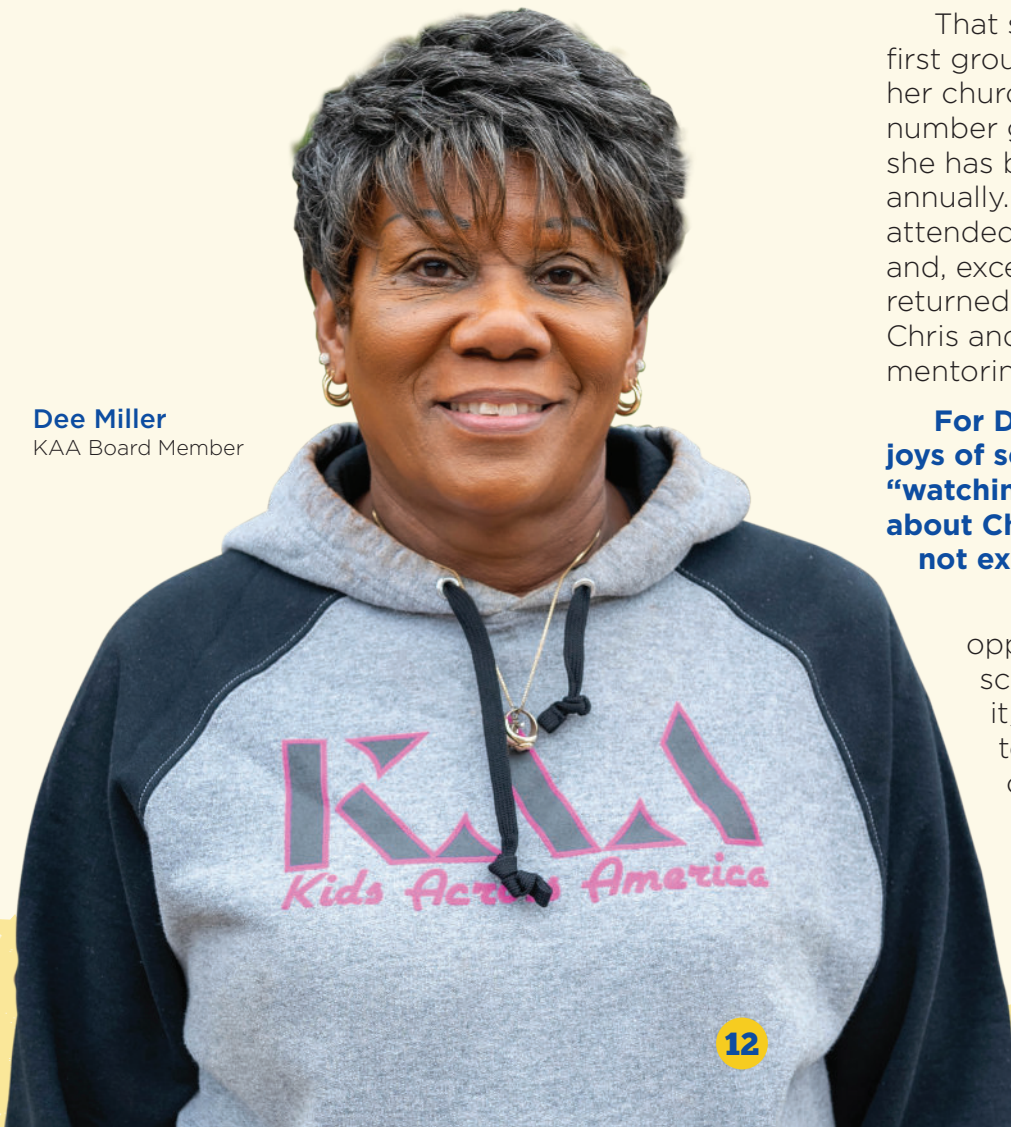
In 2000, Dee's son, Chris, called her from his college dorm, excited about a camp he'd discovered. He called it, "a camp like Kanakuk for black kids." Chris and his brother had attended Kanakuk for four years, so he was thrilled when Kids Across America (KAA) came to his campus recruiting summer staff.

That summer, Dee brought her first group of six campers from her church. The following year, the number grew to 30, and since then, she has brought 50 to 110 campers annually. Her daughter, Crystal, attended as a camper that first year and, except for one summer, has returned every year. Today, both Chris and Crystal join Dee as Kaleos, mentoring young campers.

For Dee, one of the greatest joys of serving as a Kaleo is "watching the kids be excited about Christ in a way that does not exist at home."

She cherishes the opportunity to bring high school-aged campers, calling it, "their last opportunity to be a kid." Many of her campers have had life-changing firsts at KAA — their first time out of state, eating at a large restaurant, or simply

Dee Miller
KAA Board Member





experiencing Christ in a meaningful way. “The little things we provide are a huge blessing to them,” she says.

Dee’s commitment extends beyond camp. She holds a Master’s degree in criminology from Oklahoma State University, a Bachelor of Science in corrections/criminal justice from Langston University, and a Bachelor of Education in secondary physical education from Oklahoma State University.

She served more than 30 years with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, retiring in 2019 as a community sentencing administrator. However, retirement hasn’t slowed her down. She now serves as the director of diversion and rehabilitative services for the Ninth District Attorney’s Office and as program director for The About Face Women’s Program, which helps reduce recidivism through long-term residential treatment and support for women.

Dee also ministers to families affected by incarceration, regardless

of age. Last year, through Light House Academy, a school serving children of incarcerated parents, she organized a group of Angel Tree campers and brought 45 children who desperately needed the experience of camp.

“KAA is a blessing for any person that spends a week on God’s Mountain,” Dee explains. “It’s a place where kids experience Christ in a fun and meaningful environment.”

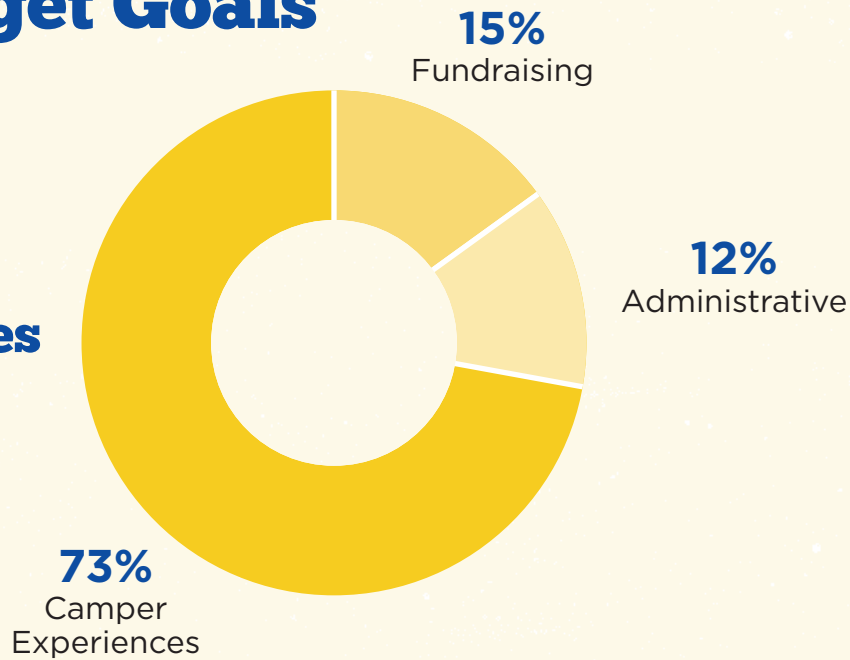
Dee has been married to Calvin Miller, pastor of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Stillwater, for 46 years. They have three children — Ben, Chris, and Crystal — and six grandchildren, three of whom have attended KAA.

“We are extremely grateful for Dee Miller,” says Randy Odom, KAA CEO/President. “Her heart for the Lord and His people has made an indelible mark on our ministry and the Kingdom as a whole, the state of Oklahoma, and the lives of thousands of young people.”

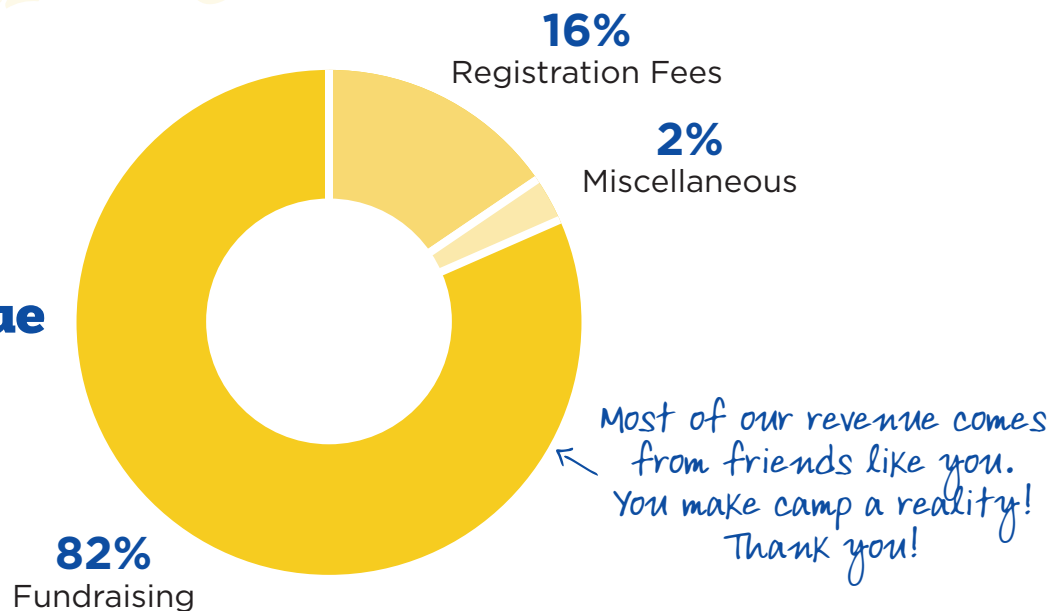
A Look Ahead

2025 Budget Goals

Expenses



Revenue



2025 Fundraising Goal:
\$6,085,000

Actual YTD (As of 12/31/24)
\$2,000,418



Understanding trauma

in summer camp ministry

At KAA, we recognize that every child who walks through our gates carries their own unique story. While some of our campers come from challenging home environments or face difficult circumstances, we see each arrival as a sacred opportunity to minister Christ's grace, love, and mercy. This mission drives everything we do, especially our comprehensive approach to staff training and preparation.

Before the summer season begins, KAA implements a thorough training program that equips our staff to create a safe, nurturing environment for every camper. Beyond essential sports and water safety instruction, all staff members complete our rigorous Child Protection Plan training, which prepares them to prevent, detect, and respond to any form of abuse in our youth programming. In 2024, we enhanced our preparation by adding trauma-informed training, deepening our ability to serve with understanding and compassion.

Trauma, as defined by the American Psychological Association, is an emotional response to devastating events such as accidents, abuse, neglect, violence, or loss of a loved one. These

experiences are measured through Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scores, which help identify youth who may face increased academic, behavioral, and social challenges. By understanding these dynamics, our staff can better serve campers who carry such burdens.

This trauma-informed approach has already made a meaningful difference in how we minister to our campers. Dee, a recent Jackson State University graduate who served on our counseling team this summer, witnessed its impact firsthand.

“Trauma training helped me to walk with campers in explaining their pain experience by not capitalizing too much on the offense but on how they felt in that exact moment,” she shared. “I saw that it helped campers talk through it a little easier when they didn’t have to spill so much at one time.”

Through this comprehensive trauma preparation training, KAA staff and volunteers are equipped to be faithful representatives of Jesus’ love, meeting each child exactly where they are with grace, understanding, and hope.



2025-2026 KAA Events



Golf Outings

Summer KAA/Payne Stewart Memorial Cup June 8-10

Courses: Payne's Valley, Mountain Top, and Buffalo Ridge. Entry includes three rounds of golf, two dinners, two lunches, two breakfasts, and an opportunity to tour KAA.

- Spring Outing:
Dallas Date/Course
TBD
- Fall Outing:
Tulsa Date/Course
TBD

For more information or to register, contact Mark Parry at 417-263-0128 or mark@kaakamps.org.

Pheasant Hunt

Join KAA Outfitters for the Pheasant Hunt, a fundraiser for KAA scholarships.

- January/February 2026 Pheasant Hunt, TBD

For questions or to book your outdoor adventure, contact Dave Janke at 417-263-1800 or dave@kaakamps.org — or visit kaakamps.org/outfitters.

KAA Meet-ups

Connect with KAA alumni, Kaleos, staff, partners, and friends for an amazing evening of fellowship, food, and fun.

- February 20, 2025, Oklahoma City, OK
- March 13, 2025, Memphis, TN
- April 17, 2025, Kansas City, MO

For more information or to RSVP for a meet-up, please contact Daniel Myers at 502-930-8198 or daniel@kaakamps.org.



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