



*The Camp Outlook Newsletter — Fall 2015*

**Why We Do Outlook**

**Bernadette Copeland, referrer and longtime friend of Camp Outlook**

Over the past few years, since I became acquainted with this program, I have helped send over 30 plus campers to this experience. More often than not, as I am transporting these youth to camp, they are very anxious, nervous and apprehensive. They are not quite sure what exactly awaits them and if they will be able to manage the expectations. As it often happens with our youth, their self esteem and outlook is fairly low. Social skills capacity building and working as part of a team is not something most are familiar or successful with. The one thing they do have in common is a willingness to try.

When we arrive at the various pick up locations, every one of our youth is greeted warmly and quickly engaged in their peer group. I leave them with encouraging words and wishes for a great week. When I pick them up at the end of their trips, I often feel as if I am picking up a different youth. The confidence they have gained, and the challenges they have overcome, is absolutely evident in the smiles and desire to linger a bit longer. Many wish to return as either a camper or a leader in training. As we drive home again, the car is filled with laughter, and stories of their adventures. It is an absolutely amazing thing to witness! The feedback from the camp leaders is always positive and encouraging as well.

Not only do I have this privilege, but the families benefit as well. For the majority of our families, an experience such as this would not be possible otherwise.

Many families struggle with the issues and behaviors their youth present. When they return from a Camp Outlook trip, families are astonished that not only did their youth endure, but came back with a better attitude. They are able to see that their children can be successful and persevere under some challenging conditions. In fact, some of our youth, once they have had this experience with Camp Outlook, it then becomes the only program they want to be involved with the following year. They feel safe, accepted and un-judged for whatever limitations they believe they have. I have received many letters from family workers/ social workers and families who are so thankful their youth had this experience.

It has made such a difference and I look forward to working with this program every year. ☀

**Winter Update**

**Mariana Borsuk-Gudz and Marc Ondercin, WCD 2015-2016**

Hello alumni and friends!

We hope that this newsletter finds you well, and that you are happily settling in to the chilly season that's been gradually sneaking up on us. We are excited to let you in on how the fall/winter season has been going so far.

We have 18 wonderful new staff this year and 5 executives. At the Carlson's we had a fantastic training weekend, spending a lot of time together learning about Outlook and each other. The farmhouse is as beautiful as ever, and we continue to greatly appreciate the Carlson's generosity.

We sent out our first trip this season on September 19-20, and we have more and more campers signed up each week, almost filling all our spots every time. Our last trip of 2015 will be November 28-29, and then we'll start up again in the new year. We have the ever iconic bus taking these trips to and from Frontenac Park, keeping some of the familiarity of Summer Outlook for our returning campers (which is exciting for them every single time!)

Something totally new this year: we're taking a step in a new direction with the ratification of Outlook as a club under the SGPS. We are excited to work with them and appreciate their partnership and support, and looking forward to seeing where this goes!

We have some new initiatives in our fundraising efforts. Our fundraising staff have split themselves up into portfolios, and are each spearheading their own projects, including **Continued on page 2...**

### Winter update continued...

seeking sponsorships and corporate support. Still, we're keeping true to our roots, and continuing to keep the small efforts going, like selling hotdogs in front of Queen's establishments on these dark chilly nights. We're looking forward to seeing where these new initiatives take us! Everyone is equally as excited as we are, and really motivated to find new avenues of financial support for Outlook.

We are excited as always to continue sending out all the trips we can, and are looking forward to seeing the snow fall and being able to send out our first winter trip of the season. It's been a great year so far, and we're all anticipating more good things to come! ☀

### Summer Update

Katie Ahlin, Brian Hendery, and Sarah Wolinsky, SCD 2015

Sitting here in the dreary darkness of a November evening, nothing makes me feel sunnier than thinking back to the summer. I think I speak for all of us when I say that this past summer has been a phenomenal experience.

The frenetic pace of the summer program only highlights the amount that we were able to accomplish in three months, and how powerful it is to bring together a bunch of people who care a lot about something really awesome.

### Keep in touch!

Questions? Comments? Change of address? Email us!

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Our staff came from all corners of the globe and all walks of life, bringing with them a huge range of interests and abilities, from social justice to environmentally sustainable camping, wilderness survival to child and youth care. Among us were some awesome cooks, amazing musicians, and incredible solo canoeists; all of us were united by Camp Outlook's mission and goals, and all of us were blown away by the tenacity and energy of our campers.

This year we were pleased to incorporate inREACH devices to our safety repertoire. Staff reported that they felt safer and better supported by us, and we were able to communicate much more effectively with groups on trip, to help them through sticky situations or give them a little morale boost when they needed it most. We also appreciated having a third summer director – this allowed us to have someone "on call" when one director was on trip and another was driving the bus. Overall we feel that Outlook has made great strides towards increasing effective communication across the summer team, and we hope that this continues into the next summer.

For me, personally, I cannot underscore how big Outlook has been in my life. I don't know what kind of person I'd be today if I hadn't, on impulse, looked into the website advertised on a poster in the basement of Jeffrey Hall on Queen's campus back in 2011. That decision took me on a journey that included three full-time summers, one year as a fall/winter staff, and this past summer as a Summer Director. I'm so grateful that Outlook provides opportunities not only for our campers, but for our staff as well – breaking into the wilderness industry takes a lot of time and some fairly expensive certifications, and working with Outlook allows passionate people who care about kids to get the training they need.

On my last trip this past summer we took a rest day on a west-facing campsite on Burnt Island lake, on the seventh of nine days. Ironically, we were doing the same route from my first camper trip back in 2011, only backwards; it felt like an appropriate way to wrap up my summer. As we made some really great dahl, I caught myself looking out to the water, towards home and the future. Today I'm writing this on break between teaching outdoor education and leadership classes at a private school, and I owe that to Outlook. Whether I'm talking to my grade 9s about their YPI project in support of local charities, or explaining to an inquisitive sixth grader what the bracelets on my arm represent, Outlook is a big part of who I am and it always will be.

Here's to 45 more summers! ☀

### Thank you!!

We would like to extend a **BIG THANK YOU** for your support! Outlook is made possible by the donations, time, energy, dedication, thoughts, and well wishes that are generously contributed by the camp's friends and alumni.



100% of donations support Camp Outlook campers and volunteers and are tax deductible. Contributions can also be sent by mail; gift cheque made payable to:

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