



2025



CAMP SPOFFORD
ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I Love the Humans

Something you may not know about me - My favorite movie is *We Bought a Zoo*. Besides wanting to buy a zoo myself someday, the movie is full of memorable moments—especially one line I return to often: “I like the animals, but I love the humans.”

Camp Spofford is a beautiful place on an amazing stretch of Spofford Lake. Our team works hard to maintain the grounds, offer excellent programs, and create meaningful experiences. We’re grateful to be a sought-after destination for summer camp and year-round retreats, often with waiting lists. But if I’m honest, the real reason Camp Spofford is special isn’t the place—it’s the people.

I like Camp Spofford, but I love the humans.

Two moments from this year especially reminded me of that.

The first was the launch of Week Zero, our new Family Camp week coming next summer. Within 30 minutes of opening registration, most rooms were already taken. But what struck me most were the names—some new families I look forward to meeting, and many familiar ones returning. Former campers, guests, and staff coming back with families of their own filled me with excitement. I love Family Camp because of these relationships and the chance to see new generations grow to know and follow Jesus.

The second moment came when our staff visited Black Rock Church in Fairfield, CT. They run several retreats at Spofford each year and partner with us to scholarship kids for Youth Camp. I wanted our team to see their church and hear firsthand how God is working there. It was a day full of encouragement as their staff shared stories of how Camp Spofford has impacted their church and ministries. I don’t often get to meet many retreat guests, so hearing these stories reminded me how far-reaching this ministry is.

Camp Spofford is a special place because God uses it to gather His people and draw them to Himself. As Deuteronomy 33:3 says:

“Yes, he loved his people, all his holy ones were in his hand; so they followed in your steps, receiving direction from you.”

This year, we set out to highlight stories of the people who make Camp Spofford what it is—all for God’s glory. I hope these stories encourage you, because your partnership helps make every one of them possible.

Thank you for being one of the people who makes Camp Spofford so special!

Dan



MEET THE INTERNS

ALEXANDRA BORKOWITZ

Hi! My name is Alexandra and I am one of the 2025 interns! Camp has been a life changing experience for me through the years. From rededicating my life to Christ as a camper at a small camp in Iowa, to spending 3 of the most fulfilling summers as a counselor, to meeting my fiancé and getting engaged on the gazebo overlooking Spofford Lake, the Lord has used camp to answer so many of my prayers and lead me closer to Him. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve in such a meaningful place, where I witness the Lord at work through guests of all ages.



TYLER MCCLAIN



My first experience with Camp was when I was little and my family and I would come up as guests. We stopped coming for some reason, but then in 2024 my brothers and I came as guests for a week, and this past summer my brother and I came for a couple of days. I wasn't enjoying my current job and I really missed the Camp experience. I decided to quit my job and work at Camp for a couple weeks and I loved it. Being surrounded by Christians daily was super encouraging and helped my faith grow so much just in 3 weeks. I'm currently doing the internship program at Camp and love it. I love the feeling of being surrounded by Christians because we all know the truth of Christ and can build our relationships off of that truth.

THE RUSSELL FAMILY

“Please amputate my son’s leg. We cannot afford the \$11 transportation cost to bring him down to your hospital and we need to return to the North for planting season.”

Despite having already been in Malawi for three months, I was a bit taken aback by the direct nature of this request. While this women’s son had a significant deformity, the leg was certainly able to be saved and just would require a few surgeries, which would be provided free of charge. After explaining to the mother that we could assist with transportation costs, I turned to her 7-year-old son and asked what his preference would be. His response broke my heart. “I just want the kids at school to stop making fun of me.”

We (Mike, Rebekah, Everest (5), Adelaide (3), and Maverick (1)) recently moved to Blantyre, Malawi to partner with CURE International and serve as medical missionaries. I (Mike) serve as a pediatric orthopaedic surgeon with a focus in limb deformity and children with various orthopaedic malignancies. Here the average Malawian makes under 1 dollar per day and unemployment hovers at almost 90%. Hyperinflation and social unrest are rampant, and basic commodities like gasoline and cheese are often impossible to find. With this social and political unrest in the background, it is a huge honor to provide high quality orthopaedic care to our patients, and being able to couple this with a very overt Christian message is a particular blessing.

While this calling towards medical missions may be unique for most, this has become almost a rite of passage for our family. My parents, Gary and Susan Russell, are Family Medicine doctors who have spent the past 20 years doing short term trips around the world. My sister Kristen and her husband Peter serve in West Africa in Gabon with Samaritan’s Purse as an ophthalmologist and a general surgeon respectively. While not currently practicing in healthcare, my youngest sister Rachel (nurse/OT by training) currently lives in Italy where her husband is stationed as a US Air Force Captain.

While this diaspora across the world can be challenging for family gatherings, something that has been a huge blessing for our family is our annual pilgrimage to Camp Spofford. While we took a break for a few years, our family has been Week 4 participants since the early 2000’s. This annual gathering has been such a blessing for the original Russell clan and is amazing to continue now with the next generation. We all look forward immensely to re-kindling our relationships at Spofford and to the encouragement that these friendships provide. We have loved staying in touch throughout the year with many of these individuals and being able to have regular conversations with friends back in the US is such a blessing.

Spofford has played such a huge role in our lives and that of our family. I trust and pray that it may have a similar impact for you. If you are interested in learning more about our work here in Malawi, we would love to connect! Please scan the QR code to be added to our monthly mailing list!

In Christ,
Mike, Rebekah, Everest, Adelaide, Maverick
Michael.russell@cureinternational.org



WHAT IS “OFF SEASON”?

A question I often hear from guests, or anyone who I tell that I work at Camp Spofford– is, “So, what do you do during the rest of the year?” It’s mildly amusing because at times the retreat season, what some may call, the “off-season”, can feel crazier than the summer. We don’t have 75 additional staff members here to run programs, help cook, or clean up, but we do have guests here almost every weekend. Easter and the stretch from Thanksgiving to New Year’s are the only weekends we don’t have guests on the property.

Most retreat groups facilitate their own programs and activities, so our involvement is lower than the summer. Even still, we get to see them experience intentional time together and moments of spiritual growth, and that’s what we love to open our doors for. They may not always know most of our staff’s names, but they will hear our mission during their stay. Know. Follow. Rest. Rest may not be what a youth group expects when they arrive, but our hope is that they leave better than when they came.

One of my favorite stories comes from a group that has been coming in November every year. While looking at the schedule with their leader I found out they had a baptism planned for the afternoon...in November! The weather was warm late into the fall, but it certainly wasn’t swimming season. As I asked about it, I learned that one of the kids came to Camp for the first time last year, came to know Jesus as his savior during that weekend, and refused to be baptized anywhere else! Even as the pastor was telling him about the upcoming addition to their church with a new heated baptismal, the decision was set. He was doing it at Camp Spofford. They even had another kid join and be baptized that weekend as well!

Another church shared how their typical youth retreat Saturday night, often one of the most powerful and emotional sessions of a retreat, had earned the name “cry night”. But that all changed when a few students and leaders felt like it wasn’t what God was calling them to that year. What once was an expectation of tears and heavy emotion, was about to be flipped on its head. “Joy Night” was the new thing, and it involved worship, celebration and emotion, but a joy that only God can bring. Now, instead of preparing tissues for cry night, everyone comes ready to celebrate who God is and what He has done.

We don’t always hear stories like this from each and every group, but to know the way God is moving in each retreat that comes for the weekend is so incredibly encouraging. We host groups anywhere from 20 people to over 300 people, and for each and every one it is an honor to be part of them experiencing God at Camp Spofford. Week after week, guests come and go, and we are so thankful for the way God provides this opportunity to serve Him and serve them day after day and year after year.

Nick Johnson
Guest Group Coordinator



YOUTH CAMP

The summer of 2025 was another successful year for Youth Camp at Camp Spofford. Our counseling staff arrived early, eager to learn and fully embrace the chaos and challenges of being a camp counselor. Throughout the extra training week, their enthusiasm and commitment were clear, but the moment they truly began to bond as a team was during our day trip to Hampton Beach. Despite gray skies and cooler weather, the counselors made the most of the day by sticking together, shopping at local stores, and spending hours in the arcade. The trip ended with a friendly competition on the boxing machine, creating laughter and setting the tone for a strong and unified staff.

Once campers arrived, we were more than ready to begin. Our first two Junior Weeks launched with incredible energy and excitement. It was wonderful to welcome back so many returning campers while also meeting new ones for the first time. Campers loved reconnecting with familiar counselors and sharing stories from the past year. One especially meaningful moment came on the Fourth of July, when we gathered on the hill to watch fireworks following our Friday night bonfire. Junior Weeks were filled with laughter, joy, and growth as campers either continued their Camp journey or experienced Youth Camp for the very first time.

When Teen Weeks arrived, we also launched our Aftershock discipleship and staff training program. This year we had a full cabin of girls and nearly a full cabin of boys. After spending a week fully engaged in regular Camp, they split

off for focused training that included intentional discipleship lessons, work projects with local ministries, and celebratory day trips. During Teen Weeks, one of the most impactful activities was “Ask Your Question,” where campers submitted questions about life, faith, and personal struggles. Counselors then addressed as many as possible during chapel time, creating space for honest conversations and deeper faith understanding.

Senior High Week brought a unique situation with only 9 male campers. They were initially split into two cabins but quickly united as one, calling themselves “da boys.” This unity was especially encouraging as older campers intentionally welcomed younger ones and helped them feel included. The week was packed with new games, including a twist on the classic Tube-a-Side, where campers attempted (unsuccessfully) to defeat the counselors. It was also a joy to see campers reconnect and share their appreciation for our speaker, Chuck Goulart.

Overall, Youth Camp served hundreds of campers and was marked by joyful worship, exciting games, and meaningful connections. Our newly scheduled chapel devotions allowed counselors to reinforce lessons and help campers better understand what was taught. With over twenty campers accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior and countless Bibles given out, this summer clearly reflected the lasting impact of faith, community, and God’s work at Camp Spofford.

Devin Hess
Program Director



ALEXANDRA BORKOWITZ

My story in camp ministry started long before I knew about Spofford. It started the summer after 8th grade, when my youth group decided to go to summer camp for the first time. My parents gladly signed me up and before I knew it I was at Pine Lake Camp in the middle of Iowa...only my youth group didn't join me. I was the only kid to sign up, and suddenly felt extremely alone. At the time I was worried about this fact, but I quickly realized it was its own blessing to know no one there. Being pulled from the comfortable Christian bubble of everyone I knew all too well, I grew in my relationship with the Lord and with other young believers more than I ever would have dreamed. And it was at that camp that I rededicated my life to Christ and my love for camp was truly planted, now understanding its impact on a camper like me.

The next couple years were filled with not only nonstop talking about camp, but the opportunity to return as a camper and as an assistant counselor. It didn't take long working at camp to realize this was for me. I often say that my role as a counselor is the most fulfilling job I've ever had. So after high school, when my parents and I moved to Connecticut, I knew I needed to find my new camp home. After some digging and what felt like a few neon signs pointing towards it, I landed at Camp Spofford. 2024 was when I spent my first summer at this beautiful camp in New Hampshire.

That first summer I fell in love, not just with my enriching job, but with this camp's ministry and the strong Christian community I got to work alongside. Admittedly that wasn't the only thing I fell in love with that summer; I also met my now fiancé, George, a man with the same love for Christ and camp as me. Now as one of the current interns, I have not only a lovely summer of ministry on my horizon, but a camp wedding to the man the Lord has so clearly blessed me with. I am in love with this camp, their mission, the people we serve, and my fellow ministry-minded coworkers, and I am so excited that my camp journey is not over anytime soon.





2025 BY THE NUMBERS

1,507 Family Camp Guests

655 Youth Campers

7,544 Retreat Guests

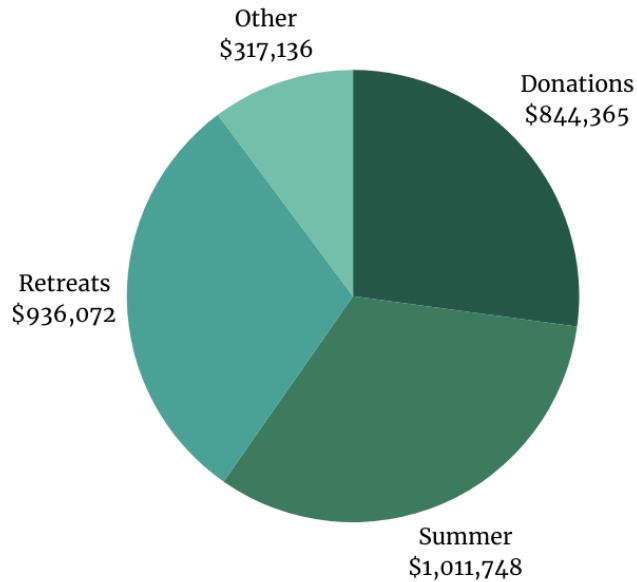
136 Summer Staff & Volunteers

29 States Represented During Summer

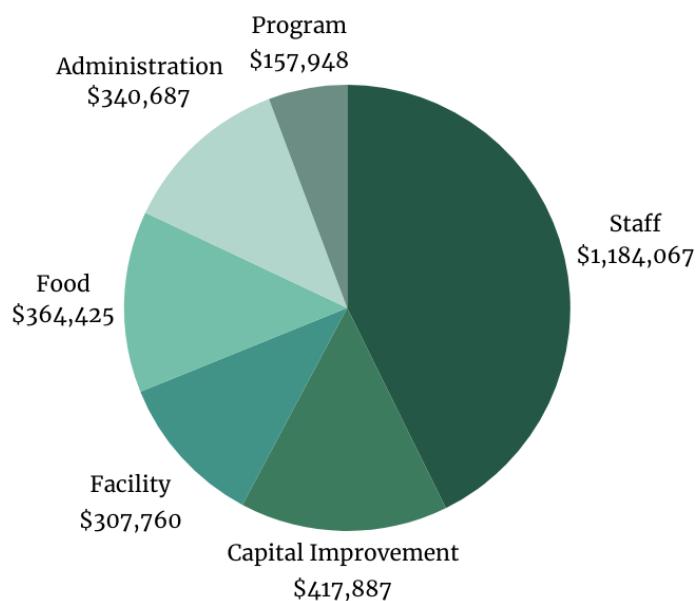
85 Camper Scholarships Given

143 Spofford Partners

FINANCIAL REPORT



TOTAL REVENUE:
\$3,109,322



TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$2,772,774

Goal: \$785k

Raised: \$762.5k



This is more than a building project - it's a ministry investment. By making room in our dining hall, we're creating space for even more people to come to Spofford. This would allow kids, families, and churches to experience the same fellowship of believers we read about in Acts - where people eat together, praise God together, enjoy the favor of one another, and God adds to their number (Acts 2:46-47).



FIRST PHASE

To be completed by summer 2026

1. Buffet & beverage upgrades
2. Kitchen improvements
 - a. Additional walk-in freezer
 - b. Replacement of old equipment
3. New prep kitchen for Knutes relocation to Dining Hall (additional 800 sq. ft.)

