

YMCA Camp Minikani 2024 Gratitude Report



Thank you for being a member of YMCA Camp Minikani and for supporting the generations of campers, staff, and alumni who call Minikani their home. We are so glad to have you as a part of the Camp Minikani family!

In 2024, our Summer Staff, Environmental Education Staff, and community created formative memories, friendships, and life-long experiences for more than four thousand kids. Whether campers join us during summer camp season, or Environmental Education programming, each camper and guest experiences Camp Minikani's natural beauty, passionate and knowledgeable staff, strong traditions, and inclusive culture.

Thank you for your generous gift to support Camp Minikani in 2024. Know that with your support, we can continue to serve our community safely, effectively, and with care and compassion. Thanks to our generous community, 106 campers received the financial assistance they needed to continue their Minikani journey.



The Value of Camp

For 105 years, Camp Minikani has been a cherished summer home for campers from all walks of life. Away from all types of media, Minikani campers explore new passions, nurture their talents, find their direction, motivate themselves and others, and build life-long friendships. The character development and intrinsic values like empathy, independence, and resiliency nurtured at Minikani help them become leaders in their communities and in their lives moving forward.



Summer 2024 Recap

- 724 Campers experienced Minikani for the first time this summer.
- 957 Day Campers attended Camp Minikani, enjoying traditional camp activities like archery, sailing, swimming, arts and crafts.
- The quintessential Minikani experience, Overnight Camps included 1,294 kids for one or two week immersive stays at camp.
- The year-round Leaders in Training (LT) program includes trips to the Superior Hiking Trail, service trips around Milwaukee, and onsite leadership preparation. In total, we are serving 206 LT youth in all three categories 1's, 2's and 3's.
- The Explorers program included trips to Rhinelander, kayaking between the Apostle Islands and expeditions to backpack in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, creating personal growth for 336 youth.
- Our counselors are always Camp Minikani's strongest asset! With the majority having grown up as Minikani campers, they are well positioned to positively impact the next generation of campers. They serve as strong models of the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility for each camper.

What Minikani Parents Are Saying

"I definitely saw the camp's vision come to life. The supportive environment and focus on growth were clear in my child's positive experience and new friendships. It was a great fit!"

"She feels safe and included, the counselors have been amazing and she has made some amazing friends. It's very rewarding as a parent to watch the growth she experiences in the two weeks she is away from home."

"Camp exceeded our expectations. Our son came knowing no one and felt welcome, challenged and included. We loved that he had a good time and really liked that the counselors wrote a note describing all the ways they pushed him outside his comfort zone and encouraged him along the way."





Our Community Cares

This past year the Minikani community generously donated \$139,592 in camper scholarships. More than 90 donors shared the gift of Minikani with 106 campers and their families.

Our generous Minikani community also contributed \$352,000 in total gifts to our Explorers 110 campaign. Through these gifts the Explorers program will grow in 2025 to serve more campers annually.



Meet our Advisory Board!

2022–2025 Class

Greg Valde – Board Chair
Kevin Casper
Michael Mierow
Kevin Wright
Julie Molsky
Aaron Bell

2023–2026 Class

August Herschede
Kate Hoffmann
Paul Ellsworth

2024–2027 Class

Jill Kohli
Hillary Phelps Lobenstein
Andy Wiegman

In the Months Ahead

With summer 2024 in the rearview, focus is now on the upcoming months on the Minikani calendar. Through our Environmental Education and retreat programs, Minikani will play host to over 60 groups in the coming year. By partnering with local schools and groups, more children experience Camp Minikani and enjoy some of the same meaningful experiences as our summer campers. The camp experience truly is year-round, with our LTs participating in trainings throughout the year, as well as other programs and events that keep campers connected, while also engaging community members new to Minikani.

We look forward seeing you in the coming months:

- Cookie House – Dec 7, 2024
- Winter Break Camp – December 27 – 30, 2024
- Spring Break Day Camp – March 24-28, 2025
- Pancake Breakfast – May 4, 2025
- Family Camp – May 23 – 26, 2025



Thank You

For 20 years, my family has made our home on the shores of Amy Belle Lake. I have the privilege to steward camp forward in a positive way to impact more kids and more generations. I have personally seen camp change thousands of kids' lives through the unique power and impact that exists at Minikani. Watching kids grow in independence, make new friends, and build self-esteem is so impactful, all while being guided safely by young college-age role models that campers look up to and aspire to be.

It takes a village of stakeholders for camp to be successful – thank you for being one of those stakeholders, from camper parents, alumni, lake neighbors, staff, board, to our generous donors. We see your impact every day. We truly saw our community come together to ensure a successful Explorers 110 campaign! I'm so pleased that we can provide a camp experience for an additional 110 teens.

"We are so very thankful as parents that camp is a safe place for all, regardless of color, gender and economics." We deeply appreciate all that you do to build and preserve the Camp Minikani experience, together, creating memories that our youth will never forget.

Gratefully,

Eli Fyksen
Executive Director
efyksen@ymcamke.org



Thank you to each of these donors who generously made a gift between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024 to support Camp Minikani!

\$25,000+

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RINKA+
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\$10,000+

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\$1,000+

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Greg Valde*
YMCA Camp Minikani Summer Staff

*Member of the 1919 Club



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Thank you to each of these donors who generously made a gift between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024 to support Camp Minikani!

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