



YMCA CAMP MINIKANI LEADERSHIP TRAINING FAMILY PROGRAM MANUAL



Dear LTs and Families,

Welcome to Camp Minikani's Leadership Training (LT) Program. This guide will help you and your Leader in Training (LT) understand the LT program and prepare for the summers ahead. Please read and save this guide, as it will be a useful resource when questions arise in the coming months.

For decades, the LT program has shaped the lives of young leaders. Although the format of the program has changed over the years, its function has remained the same: to encourage participants to recognize and act on their leadership potential by embracing Minikani's values and working to better themselves through goal setting and experiential learning.

The LT program is a year-round training program comprised of three main components: training weekends, community service, and a summer session. The program is intended to be a three-year commitment. Over the summer, your LT will be led by two Leadership Training Directors, most of whom went through the LT program themselves, who will help the LTs to build leadership skills, learn to serve camp and their community, and better the lives of children.

We are excited to share this new aspect of Minikani with your LT and family this summer. Part of the LT program is building communication skills. Therefore, it is our expectation that LTs take full ownership of their experience in the program and contact camp directors directly to communicate their ability to attend, program questions, or concerns. We recognize that committing to a year-round program involves the whole family and hope that this guide provides a comprehensive overview of the program. If you do have any additional questions, please call or email the office at 262-251-9080 or minikani@ymcamke.org.

In the Spirit of Minikani,

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Those accepted into the Leadership Training Program step beyond their role as a camper at Minikani. They demonstrate the willingness to strive to be a leader both at camp and away, and work to better themselves through goal setting and skill-building opportunities.

MINIKANI'S VALUES

Inclusion

Be an inclusive community.

Celebration

Celebrate creativity and diversity.

Stewardship

Strengthen a connection with nature.

Development

Cultivate growth, welcome change.

Legacy

Pass the torch of tradition with humility.

Spirit

Live with passion and integrity.

ONE GOAL

The purpose of our Leadership Training Program is to provide participants with effective leadership skills, through training and experiences, that can be used throughout their lives. Their skills help them to work effectively with children, and others, at camp and can be applied to many other settings.

THREE COMPONENTS

1. We help LTs discover how leaders act and communicate.
2. We provide many opportunities to practice.
3. We make it fun!

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Through our Leadership Training program, and with the full commitment of each participant, we will work to develop the following skills which LTs can use in all parts of life, including home, school, sports, work, and in their community.

LT1	LT2	LT3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Goal Setting • Respect • Work Ethic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentorship • Service • Planning • Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Leadership • Initiative • Communication • Problem Solving
Developed through a week-long hiking trip, planning activities for a cabin, and assisting with dining hall procedures.	Developed through mentoring LT1s, planning camp-wide activities with their peers, and a service trip in the Milwaukee area.	Developed by instructing in skill areas and working in cabins to plan days, meet campers' needs, and help foster growth in others.

OUR METHOD

We develop leadership skills during summer sessions and year-round programming by:

1. **Modeling.** LTs model the skills we are working to develop.
2. **Practice.** Participants engage in a wide range of activities where they can develop and practice their skills. LTs learn through experience what works and what doesn't work in leading others.
3. **Reflection.** After activities, we take time to reflect on how the activity was led and what skills were practiced and what additional skills could be utilized.
4. **Goal Setting.** LTs learn to set SMART goals that help guide their time on camp. Time for reflection allows them to set meaningful goals that will push them and to keep track of their progress on personal goals.
5. **Mentoring.** LT1s will be placed with a LT2 mentor to provide hands-on support and guidance during their summer session. LT3s will be placed with a counselor each week in a new cabin or group.
6. **Evaluations.** We use formal written evaluations to acknowledge and document participants' achievements in the program, identify the leadership skills they are learning and using, and to provide constructive feedback to further develop these skills.
7. **Observation.** LTs learn from examples as well. While working with campers, LTs are supervised and observed by Minikani staff members who model great leadership.

LT PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Camp is about learning by doing, so participants will gain leadership skills in a safe environment through a variety of fun and challenging activities, training weekends, and discussions under the supervision of their directors and Minikani staff members.

LT1 & LT2 SUMMER COMPONENTS

- 1. Skills Participation** – LTs will be assigned a counselor and skill area for the week. They will shadow the counselor to identify leadership qualities, lead games, help review rules, and assist in leading skills. They will debrief with their assigned counselor each day to set goals for themselves and track their progress.
- 2. Minicamp Participation** – LTs will assist with our 5 and 6-year-old day campers every other day while at camp. They will help with lunch time activities, read stories, and participate and supervise during pool time.
- 3. Evening Activity Participation** – LTs will participate with cabins during evening activities or help lead evening activity stations.
- 4. Waitering Meals** – LTs will help set up the dining hall for meals, serve food, and help clean after meals. LTs collaborate with their waitering group to ensure all tasks are done in a timely manner.
- 5. Work Projects** – LTs will complete work projects to build stewardship at camp.
- 6. Participation & Take Over Day** – LTs will be paired with a counselor for a two-day experience. They will spend one day getting to know their cabin, observing positive counseling, and identifying leadership skills. The next day they will “take over” that cabin, planning their afternoon activities and vesper. As LT1s, they plan with the cabin’s counselor, allowing them to practice the leadership skills they have learned with counselor mentorship. LT2s take a lead role in learning the cabin dynamics and planning a day tailored to their cabin.
- 7. Mentorship** – LT1s will be paired with an LT2 on their first day back at camp after their hiking trip to introduce them to their role as an LT. This is an opportunity for LT2s to demonstrate what they have learned through the LT program.
- 8. Evaluations** – LTs receive formal written evaluations to acknowledge and document their achievements, identify the skills they are learning, and to provide constructive feedback to further these skills. LT1s and 2s are evaluated after their skill participation and cabin takeover.

LT1 & LT2 DISTINCTIONS

LT 1: During the LT1s first week of camp, they embark on a week-long hike on the Superior Hiking Trail. Their second week is spent on camp, staying in Halquist Lodge. They participate with and plan for a cabin and assist in a skill area.

- **Hiking Trip** - On their hike, LTs will participate in the "Leader of the Day" program. Each day 1-2 LTs will be chosen to lead the entire day for their peers, including planning the days schedule, leading campsite set-up, and leading debriefing sessions.

LT 2: LT2s spend their first week staying in Halquist Lodge. They participate with and plan for a cabin, assist in a skill area, and plan two camp-wide activities. Their second week is spent mentoring the LT1s before heading to Kohler Andrae State Park to camp and engage in service around the Milwaukee area.

- **Group Planning** - LT2s will be responsible for planning LT Games and Pine Time, two camp wide activities. They will work with their peers to create and lead these activities.
- **Service Trip** - During their second week, LT2s will embark on a capstone service trip in the Milwaukee area to put into practice what they learned about service and leadership during the first two years of the program.

LT 3 SUMMER COMPONENTS

LT3s attend camp for five weeks: 1 staff training week and 4 weeks of summer. During their four weeks at camp, LT3s stay in cabins and are paired with four different counselors and groups of campers. This allows LT3s to observe various leadership styles and practice their skills with distinct groups of campers.

- **Group Leadership and Activity Planning** - In partnership with a counselor, LT3s are responsible for planning cabin activities and vespers for their groups. Throughout their four weeks at camp, their responsibility for planning and leading campers increases.
- **Teaching Skills** - LT3s are assigned to a skill area for the summer. They progress in instruction of specific skills, safety management, and camper engagement.
- **Camper Development** - LT3s work with their campers to develop goals, instill traits such as responsibility, and manage camper behavior.

YEAR-ROUND COMPONENTS

It is essential that the skills learned in the Leadership Training program are put into practice outside of the traditional summer camp environment through training weekends, community service, and planning meetings.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING WEEKENDS

Mandatory Leadership Training weekends are held twice a year in the fall and spring. Weekends consist of a combination of instructional sessions, work projects, group activities, and recreation. Some sessions are conducted with the entire group of LTs and staff present, while others are specifically directed at LTs at a certain stage of the program. Fall and Spring Weekend dates will be updated on the [LT webpage](#).

COMMUNITY SERVICE

We believe that part of being a leader is giving back to one's community through volunteer service. The goal of community service is for LTs to apply the skills and principles they have learned in their own communities and expand their knowledge base to improve their ability to be effective leaders.

Each year of the program has different requirements for service hours completed in the community or at camp. Hours must be completed before arrival at camp and off camp hours must be submitted via the [LT Service Hours Verification form](#) on the LT webpage.*

Hour Requirements			
	Hours outside of camp	Hours at camp	Total Hours
LT1	10	5	15
LT2	10	10	20
LT3	10	15	25

* The LT webpage will be updated with on and off camp volunteer opportunities.

WINTER CAMP

All LT3s are required to attend Winter Camp for a two-day period. They participate in a training and are placed in a cabin as an assistant counselor. This experience helps prepare them for their upcoming summer and will provide additional context for Staff Training. Winter Camp dates for LT3s are posted on the LT webpage, and communication regarding shift sign-up will be sent out as Winter Camp approaches.

LT1s and LT2s will also have the opportunity to complete service hours at camp during Winter Camp. Information will be sent out as Winter Camp approaches.

SUMMER PLANNING MEETINGS

LT1s and LT2s will attend Summer Planning Meetings before the summer. During these virtual meetings, LTs will meet their directors and work with their session to plan aspects of their summer hike or service trip. LT Directors will email your LT to schedule any meetings and with meeting specifics before their summer session.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the summer, including packing lists, service hour verification, and song and activity ideas – visit the LT webpage on the Minikani website:

<https://www.minikani.org/prepare-for-the-lt-program/>

Any questions regarding the LT Program, logistics, or dates can be directed to our Trips and Leadership Director, Josie Morkin – jmorkin@ymcamke.org

For information on registration, payment, and forms for the summer, visit our [CampMinder website](#)

Any questions regarding registration or payment can be directed to our office staff – minikani@ymcamke.org

