



COASTAL CONNECTIONS

AN UPDATE FROM CAMP ARANZAZU

APRIL 2022

THE VALUE OF CAMP

I am blessed to be a part of this amazing organization and to share our news with you in my first Coastal Connections letter.

As you know, we welcomed campers back to Camp Aranzazu in 2021 and were able to serve some 875 campers! These children and adults represent some of the populations most vulnerable to COVID-19, and the fact that we were able to welcome them back safely is a testament to our talented staff and their relationships with our partners. At Camp Aranzazu, campers were able to once again relax, have fun, be outdoors, and be with others who share similar experiences.

Our campers grow, build relationships, and gain independence at Camp because we are intentional about our programming. But don't just take my word for it! Camp Aranzazu does more than rely on anecdotal information – we measure camper outcomes:



- 92% of campers reported feeling connected to a Camp Aranzazu staff member
- 87% said that they tried something new because of Camp
- 86% of campers reported that they felt like they belonged at Camp
- 85% of campers did something challenging at Camp

The value of Camp to our campers is best expressed by Charles William Elliot, a former president of Harvard University:

"I have a conviction that a few weeks spent in a well-organized summer camp may be of more value educationally than a whole year of formal school work."

Thank you for your continued support of Camp Aranzazu. Your generosity makes a difference in the lives of children and adults with special needs and chronic illnesses. The Board of Directors and I invite you to visit us this year to see the difference you have made.

Kurt R. Podeszwa
President



2021 CAMP AT-A-GLANCE



- 875 campers
- 4 special events in 3 months
- 1 interim chief operating officer
- 1 new president
- 26 linear inches of American Camp Association Accreditation binders
- 176 HVAC filters
- 12 full-time staff
- 200 hours on mowers
- 17 activity leaders
- 60 mower blades
- 28 bags of marshmallows for s'mores



"I have become more confident in my social skills, which will help me at school."

"I will push myself for greater [things] and overcome obstacles in my life."

"I will be confident in myself and not afraid to try new things."

"I will not be so afraid of my seizures."



GRATITUDE REPORT

YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES CAMP ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE by providing gifts to fund our programs; maintain and grow our facilities; and prepare for the future. Thanks to you, our campers with special needs and chronic illnesses have the opportunity to sail, zipline, and swim – no matter the challenge faced. You offer a moment of fun to those who need respite from daily challenges. We are humbled and grateful that you join us in this work.

\$100,000+

The Hamill Foundation
Ed Rachal Foundation
Tres Grace Family Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

The Guill Family Foundation
The Linda & Jerry Strickland Family Foundation

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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\$10,000 - \$24,999

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"I can be more independent."





Every spring, our two-person facilities team faces the task of preparing for our summer sessions, when we see an influx of campers. These preparations include regular maintenance, projects to address specific issues, and enhancements to program areas.

Perhaps the largest project undertaken this spring included measures to mitigate our flood risk. Following the extraordinary rainfall event of July 2021, we knew that we would need to install culverts to assist with drainage and regrade the main road into camp. This may not be the most exciting – or even noticeable – project, but we are happy that these measures will help us better “weather” heavy rainfall.

We have also started several enhancements to program areas through camp. We designed, built, and installed hurricane

shutters to protect the Sanctuary’s beautiful stained glass. Thanks to several generous donors, we will replace and enlarge the activity deck near the Art Center; repaint Tree House cabin and the pool house at the Classic Pool; and install railing on our pier to make it safer for campers to walk near the water.

We remain grateful for the donors who make these projects possible, as well as for our vendors. Says Mandy Hood, Facilities Director, “Being a small facilities team, we rely on our local vendors to keep Camp operating smoothly! We are thankful for their responsiveness and willingness to help us troubleshoot, coming up with creative solutions that take into account our needs, timelines, and budget. We consider our many local vendors part of our extended Camp family.”



Welcome **Camp Aranza-Crew!**

Camp Aranzazu typically serves campers through a “partner model” to intentionally host specific special populations. Our camping partners – usually nonprofit organizations, schools, and other groups – bring the campers and gather volunteers and any needed medical staff. Many of our camping partners have designed family camps for their clients throughout the years.

In November, however, we hosted Camp Aranza-Crew, our first ever family camp weekend made possible by the generosity of The Moody Endowment. Five families signed up through Camp Aranzazu directly, and the weekend served as an opportunity to connect with individuals who may not fit into our traditional partner model.

These families traveled to Rockport from as far as Fort Worth for Camp Aranza-Crew. We were grateful to provide them with a weekend of adventure and fun, where they could enjoy sailing along Copano Bay, fishing in our inland pond, swinging on our Screamer swing, shooting archery, and much more!

Family camp weekends offer a unique opportunity to tackle first-time adventures like sailing as a family unit and build connections with other families that have similar experiences. David, a father from San Marcos and Camp Aranza-Crew camper, shared that “even though each of the families has different special needs, we all can kind of relax and not feel self-conscious about it...We all have a common bond and patience [with each other].”

VISIT: <https://camparanzazu.org/come-to-camp#familycamp> to learn more or to sign up for a future Camp Aranza-Crew weekend.

RESILIENCY FUND

RESILIENCY FUND CONTRIBUTIONS ALMOST TO \$3 MILLION

\$600,000 more needed to receive \$2.5 million matching gift

In May of last year, the Camp Aranzazu Board of Directors launched an ambitious effort to raise \$10 million for a newly-formed, permanent endowment, the Camp Aranzazu Resiliency Fund. The purpose of the Resiliency Fund is to create a stable, predictable source of financial support for the Camp's two highest funding priorities—underwriting for campers so that as many children and adults as possible can benefit, and maintenance of the Camp's 105-acre, 175-bed facility.

To date, 40 donors have contributed almost \$2.9 million – almost a third of the way toward the goal. “I am very grateful to our many generous friends who believe so strongly in our mission and who share the board’s desire to ensure that Camp Aranzazu has the resources necessary to be able to serve children and adults with special needs and chronic illnesses for generations to come,” says Bobby Hatcher, chairman of the Resiliency Fund Campaign. “Like most successful fundraising endeavors, it is a team effort. We are fortunate to have the support of some great volunteers, including Fields Alexander, Giovanna Carter, Blake Finger, Tom Forney, John Guill, Keith Little, Bryan Phillips and John Watson.”

An anonymous Houston-area family Foundation has pledged \$1 million outright and will match all other gifts and pledges received by December 31, 2022, up to \$2.5 million. “I am excited about our success to date and optimistic that we can raise the additional \$600,000 and receive the full match,” adds Hatcher. “If and when we get there, we will have a \$6 million endowment – which will be transformational for Camp Aranzazu.”

If you would like to know more about the Resiliency Fund and how to support it, please email or call Virginia Ballard, executive director of the Camp Aranzazu Foundation, at vballard@camparanzazu.org or (713) 208-0072. You can also visit <https://camparanzazu.org/resiliency-fund>.

RESILIENCY FUND DONORS

1 million +

Anonymous

\$250,000 - \$499,999

The Fondren Foundation
Holly and Tom Forney
The Guill Family Foundation

\$100,000 - \$249,999

The Elkins Foundation
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\$50,000 - \$99,999

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\$5,000 - \$19,999

Anonymous
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Amanda Praet
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* In-kind

Donors as of March 23, 2022



“I’m more motivated to do good.”



SAVE THE DATE!

Please Join Us!

ZAZU
13TH ANNUAL

BBQ, MUSIC & MORE



THE AMBASSADOR OF TEXAS MUSIC

✦ **GARY P. NUNN** ✦

Saturday | May 7, 2022
5 - 9 PM
Camp Aranzazu | Rockport, TX

ARANZA-BOO

Saturday | October 29, 2022 | 1-4 PM
Camp Aranzazu | Rockport, TX



SAN ANTONIO
HOLIDAY BELLS & SHELLS
Wednesday & Thursday
November 16-17, 2022
The Argyle | San Antonio Gun Club



HOUSTON
HOLIDAY BELLS & SHELLS
Tuesday | December 6, 2022
Greater Houston Sports Club

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT:

Kate Plouvier, Development Director, at kate@camparanzazu.org

**Smiles are contagious
at Camp Aranzazu!**



2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Keith Little, <i>Chairman</i>	Bobby Hatcher, <i>Treasurer</i>
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Camp Shield – Houston*
Capernum Young Life – Dallas, Brazos Valley, and San Antonio areas*
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The Tuttle School at Briarwood – Houston
The Vine School – Victoria
The Vine School Bridge Program – Victoria

**designates a new camping partner*

Camp Aranzazu | 5420 Loop 1781 | Rockport, Texas 78382

www.camparanzazu.org