

May 30, 2026

Dear YMCA Kids to Camp Community Members,

Because of you, more young people are finding their way to camp, many for the very first time. Over the past year, the Kids to Camp Fund has continued to do what it does best — open the door to belonging, growth, and wellbeing through nature. Across our camps and adventure programs, we have welcomed tens of thousands of participants, with thousands of those experiences made possible through scholarship support. For many of these young people, this is not just a week at camp; it is a first step into something bigger: confidence, connection, and a sense of place in the world.

We are seeing the impact in both numbers and stories. Participation continues to rebound and grow across our overnight, day, and family camp programs.



Scholarship utilization also remains strong, with demand consistently outpacing available resources, a clear signal of both need and trust in this work. Campers are consistently returning, and just as importantly, they are bringing others with them. We are seeing deeper engagement, stronger retention, and more pathways for young people and families to stay connected year over year.

At the same time, the qualitative impact is just as powerful. Campers are building independence, forming meaningful relationships, and experiencing nature in ways that support their mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. In a time where young people are navigating increased stress, isolation, and uncertainty, camp continues to be a place where they can reset, connect, and grow. One parent recently shared that their child came home from camp “more themselves than we have seen in years.” Another camper described camp as “the one place I feel like I can fully breathe.” These right here are the types of outcomes you are helping to make possible.

Our teams are continuing to deepen how we think about and deliver this work as well. We are intentionally integrating wellbeing into the camp experience, grounding our programs in connection, reflection, and restoration. We are strengthening how we measure impact, using tools like Medallia to better understand the outcomes participants are experiencing and how we can continue to improve.





At the same time, we are navigating real challenges. Demand for scholarships continues to exceed available funding, particularly for families facing increased economic pressure. Rising costs, staffing, transportation, and program delivery require us to be more strategic than ever in how we allocate resources. We are also working to close the “adventure gap,” ensuring that access to these experiences reaches everyone, while maintaining the financial sustainability of our programs.

And yet, even in the face of these challenges, we remain clear in our purpose. We believe every young person deserves access to the life-changing experience of camp. We believe time in nature is not a luxury, it is essential to wellbeing. And we believe that together, we can continue to expand access, deepen impact, and build a future where more young people feel connected, capable, and known.

Your partnership is the fuel behind it all. Thank you for your continued belief in this work and our mission, and in the young people and families we serve. We are deeply grateful, and we look forward to what we will continue to build together.



With appreciation and excitement for another unforgettable summer ahead,

Michel C. Tigan
Senior Vice President of Adventure and Wellbeing