



As a Leader in Training at Hole in the Wall, Stephanie gained the skills needed to help her embrace the full promise of her future and find her first job.

Becoming a Leader

The Leader in Training Program Helps Young Adults Develop Critical Skills for Their Futures

Stephanie Ross first came to The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp as a shy seven-year-old who closed herself off to new experiences. Today, she is a confident 19-year-old college student ready to take on the world, something she credits to her time at Hole in the Wall.

Over her nine summers as a camper, Stephanie learned to believe in herself through the friends, support and love she found at Hole in the Wall. As her time as a camper came to a close, Stephanie felt prepared to embark on Camp's Young Adult programming, made up of the Hero's Journey® program and the two-year Leader in Training (LIT) program. Reaching youth at a critical time in their lives, Hole in the Wall's Young Adult programming helps former campers aged 16 – 18 navigate the transition into adulthood by teaching them life skills and providing a safe platform to explore their strengths, challenges and goals for the future.

At the Hero's Journey program, Stephanie started off hesitant, but walked away from the experience with a better understanding of herself and an incredibly close group of friends. Building off of her time as a camper and at the Hero's Journey program, the LIT program is what she feels really prepared her for her future. Her

first year in the program as an LIT 1, she attended workshops on resume writing and interviewing, effective leadership, problem solving and more. Then, during the course of her session at Camp, she was able to test her new skills, working with mentor counselors to support the campers in her cabin and at the horse barn.

"LIT 1 really helped me to learn how to be in the present and connect more with those around me," Stephanie said. "The techniques we learned helped me personally. It is because of the LIT 1 program that I was able to get my first job. Because of the skills I learned, I've also already been promoted."

During LIT 2, Stephanie was able to build on the skills she developed in the first year of the program. Now with two sessions on Camp to learn and hone her skills, Stephanie took on more responsibilities for herself and the campers in her care. By working in the moment, she gained perspective and learned the importance of taking time to think through her actions.

Additionally, she was once again able to participate in group workshops that imparted critical life skills, like time management, communication and how to connect with others. And she was able to spend even more time

with counselor mentors and other LIT 2s, learning and sharing insight on how best to bring Hole in the Wall magic to the campers in their care.

"The Leader in Training program has helped me grow so much as a person, and I learned so many of the skills I have now there," Stephanie said. "And everyone in my sessions became so close. One person can have an incredible impact, and we were able to teach each other from our own individual experiences. It's opened my eyes to what it takes to run Camp and made me want to continue to contribute to that in any way that I can."

Already effectively guiding our campers into their futures, the Young Adult program is also undergoing some exciting changes to strengthen the program. Construction will soon be starting on a Young Adult Lodge, which will be housed where the facilities complex was previously located. The new lodge will provide space for Hero's Journey program and LIT program staff offices, as well as housing for LITs. It will also be home to the annual Young Adult Conference.

To learn more about the LIT program, or any of Camp's Young Adult programming, contact Hilary Axtmayer, chief program officer, at hilary.axtmayer@holeinthewallgang.org.



a seriousfun camp

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From the CEO

This year has been a time of reflection at Camp. Following the successful conclusion of our strategic plan, it was important for us to look back at how much we accomplished and dream the biggest dreams possible for what is to come.

For five years, Camp experienced extraordinary growth, launching the Hospital Outreach program (HOP) in New Jersey and Philadelphia; creating and growing our mobile program; CampOut, finding new avenues to serve our young adult population; and building our staff and fundraising to successfully prepare for the future.

As we look ahead to the coming years, even more exciting growth is in store. In the coming months, we expect to be launching partnerships with more mid-Atlantic hospitals in Maryland and Washington, D.C. We are also looking at other avenues to expand programming in this region, with CampOut offering more regional events and home visits. Additionally, we are exploring other opportunities to help strengthen the community of Camp families in the southern portion of our service region.

In this issue, you can learn more about some of the changes currently underway at Camp. Read about how our Young Adult programming is helping those who have aged out of our traditional summer program to transition into the future. Also, be sure to learn more about Dr. Dave, our new medical director, in the Partner Profile section on page 6.

We are excited to move boldly into 2020 with the creation of a new strategic plan that will guide our growth for the next five years and look forward to bringing our Founder's dream of "a different kind of healing" to more seriously ill children and their families.

What's New at Camp

This summer, 1,066 campers experienced joy and laughter, built lifelong friendships and discovered they were capable of so much more than they imagined during eight transformational sessions at Hole in the Wall.

As the hot, hazy days turned cool and crisp, we've been excited to see many more children and families find a home in Hole in the Wall. Kicking off the fall, Hole in the Wall once again hosted an offsite Family Weekend in partnership with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for families of children diagnosed with neurofibromatosis. This year, we welcomed 19 families, nearly double the number who joined us at last year's weekend. Additionally, this year's weekend found us at a new location – Camp Saginaw in Oxford, Penn., an overnight camp that provided exciting new activities for our children and families like go carts and yoga, as well as Hole in the Wall favorites including the high ropes course, arts & crafts and archery.

We are also excited to share that as of September, our Hospital Outreach® program (HOP) has begun bi-weekly programming at Nemours Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children in Delaware. Currently, there is a specialist visiting on Wednesdays, spending the mornings on the inpatient floor and hosting group programming in the evenings. There is also a specialist bringing Camp-style activities to the oncology clinic on Friday mornings and to the inpatient unit during the evening.

Back onsite, construction will soon begin on our new Young Adult Lodge. The new lodge will host our Hero's Journey and Leader in Training (LIT) program staff and will also provide living space for our Leaders in Training during the summer. Additionally, we are excited to offer this space for both housing and workshops during the annual Young Adult Conference. Construction is expected to be complete by June 2020 in time to welcome LITs this summer.

Looking ahead, our Camp FUNraisers have some new opportunities to "raise a little hell" while supporting Camp by running the Berlin Marathon. Both teams and individuals are invited to join us for this sought-after race, though bibs are very limited! Reach out to our FUNraiser team at FUNraisers@holeinthewallgang.org if you are interested.

Photos top and left: This year's remote Family Weekend brought together families from the Philadelphia region for familiar and new fun!

Right: Jimmy gets slimed at this year's Camp Week at CHOP.



Creative CORNER

Check out 11-year-old Shemaiah's amazing painting of Pearson Pond that was created this summer. Shemaiah first came to a Family Weekend in 2013, and has attended the summer program for the past five years. She absolutely loves everything about Hole in the Wall, and now, she has this beautiful artwork to always remind her of her friends and fun Camp memories.



Hospital Outreach® on the GO

Highlights from our exciting year-round program that brings the joy of Camp to seriously ill children in locations across the Northeast.

In 2014, when Hole in the Wall's Hospital Outreach® program hosted its very first Camp Week at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), no one knew it would become such a phenomenon. Now, five years later, Camp Week at CHOP is the biggest, most anticipated event of the summer, with more than 1,900 patient and family experiences over the course of the week.

"The first year was very challenging trying to pull off a new event in a space that was pretty new for the team," said Amy Moore, Philadelphia regional manager for Hospital Outreach, who had been the volunteer coordinator for CHOP at the time. "But every year since, it has gotten bigger and bigger, bringing a sense of camaraderie that's unparalleled."

Today, buzz about the event begins as soon as the first flyer goes up and grows every day. By the end of Camp Week, the entire hospital is covered with unit banners, and everyone gets in on the fun, including patients, families, child life, nurses, doctors and even security. It's a complete takeover that brings laughter to every corner of CHOP. Even patients who are unable to join the activities in person get in on the fun in their rooms with specially prepared "isolation kits" filled with all the materials to complete the project of the day.

"One mother told me that her daughter was devastated to be back in the



Camp Week at CHOP gets bigger every year, bringing Hole in the Wall fun to kids throughout the hospital, whether they join from their rooms or in person.

hospital in the middle of her summer," said HOP specialist Carly Scheiner. "However, once Camp Week had been introduced to her, she was sold. Although she did not make it down to Carnivarty, Woodshop 500, or the bridge activities, she still received and completed all of the corresponding isolation kits. She prided herself in her car she named 'Sonic' and cheered as she saw it race down the track when they televised the Woodshop 500 throughout the hospital."

It's moments like these that illustrate the impact of the week, where patients can be campers and the entire family can join in the fun. Based on a different theme each year, Camp Week participants enjoy Hole in the Wall summer program favorites like opening campfire, Carnivarty and Woodshop 500, as well as some programming unique to the hospital – like Slime Day. Additionally, crafts

are available on the hospital bridges every day, and special programming is offered in the evenings for parents, caregivers and teens.

But Camp Week wasn't the only summer fun HOP offered this year. In addition to year-round bedside visits and playgroups in all regions, patients and families at multiple partner hospitals in Boston experienced full days of Camp fun during Camp Days, while New York/New Jersey took things out of this world with HOP Around the Galaxy Slime Day events. Additionally, the Central New England team provided fun activities at hospital-hosted summer picnics in multiple locations.

To learn more about the Hospital Outreach program, visit www.holeinthewallgang.org/hospital-outreach or contact Michele "Gill" McKenna, director, Hospital Outreach, at michele.mckenna@holeinthewallgang.org.



Family Flats

Stories from current and former camper families.

When 11-year-old identical twins Martin and Evan were diagnosed with retinoblastoma several years ago, they found a great deal of comfort in facing their challenges together. At every visit to the hospital, the boys would hold hands and support each other during the many needles that were part and parcel of their treatment. Having their brother and best friend right there during the rough times made them even closer.

But even with a twin by your side, a cancer diagnosis can be incredibly isolating. Outside of each other, they didn't have a community they could turn to for support and hope. That's when their aunt Noel stepped in. A longtime volunteer nurse at Hole in the Wall, Noel knew a session at Camp was just what the boys needed. And at Camp, they thrived.

"This was the boys' second time at Camp, and that week that they spend there is the highlight of their year," mom Sarah said. "We hear stories about the activities, counselors, Cabin Chat, and the great time they had for months."

The boys loved having a week where they could leave everything else behind and just have fun. Through fishing, boating, music, archery and more, they found a sense of accomplishment, and new friends that brought them so much happiness. Camp opened them up to so many possibilities.

"I was hoping that at Camp Martin and Evan would enjoy being with other kids who may have gone through similar experiences and that they'd learn that they can achieve all of their goals and dreams," Sarah said. "Camp did that, gave them self-confidence and made them more willing to try new things."

Since coming to Camp, both boys feel that they have become better people. Where they once relied just on each other, they now understand that there is this welcoming community at



*Is this Martin or Evan?
The only thing these twins love more than pretending to be each other is Camp!*

Camp that can lift them up and help them accomplish more than they had previously imagined.

"Camp changed the course of my life," Martin said. "It got me into helping people more." His brother Evan agrees. "I feel lucky to have Camp," Evan said. "The counselors helped me interact better with other people."

Both boys hope to one day be counselors themselves and share all the magic they experienced at Camp with other children facing similar challenges.

"Camp gave them more self-confidence and made them more willing to try new things."

Summer 2019

So much joy, hope and laughter filled this summer at Camp, in hospitals and in camper communities as more than 1,000 children experienced “a different kind of healing” during the summer and Hero’s Journey® programs, and thousands of other children enjoyed Camp magic through summertime Hospital Outreach® and Family Outreach programs.





Our Events

Highlights of our latest benefit events and those to come...

A few rain showers didn't dampen the fun at the 29th Fandango Benefit Gala, which took place at Camp on Saturday, September 14, and raised more than \$1.2 million for Camp's growing programs. More than 300 guests enjoyed an afternoon and evening filled with camaraderie, laughter and inspiration.

As guests arrived at Camp, they discovered downtown had been transformed into a festive atmosphere featuring multiple food trucks, Camp-inspired activities and rockin' music from local band Those Guys. Guests gathered under the tents to meet up with old friends and reminisce about their favorite Camp stories.

As guests made their way into Sports & Rec for the silent auction, they were greeted with a new offering this year – online bidding. For many of the most coveted items, including a Seaside Getaway at the Jersey Shore, tickets to *Tootsie* on Broadway with a cast meet and greet and a bowl crafted from a Camp tree, the bidding got underway well before the start of the event, prompting excited and spirited participation.

Then it was time for the live auction, masterfully emceed by longtime Camp friend Alec Baldwin. Opening the auction, Camp CEO Jimmy Canton provided program updates and camper Carly shared her moving story about how Camp has lifted her spirits in good times and bad. With guests ready to raise their paddles, the bidding began, as did fierce competition for incredible offerings, including tickets to a *Saturday Night Live* dress rehearsal, an autographed jersey from Camp board member Sandy Koufax and a chance to meet Jake Gyllenhaal.

Following the auction, it was time for the main event – the Fandango performance, featuring Sam Waterston, Dane DeHaan, Anna Wood, Amir Arison, Javier Colon, and other famous faces. But the real stars of the evening were eight incredibly talented campers – Daniela, Drew, Freddie, Kerrin, Patrick, Sa'myah, Sophie and Zaire. The show depicted a scavenger hunt, where everyone was able to highlight their best qualities to be a winner!

After the performance, guests made their way back to downtown Camp, where they enjoyed a delicious dinner, more great music and time to bask in the glow of an amazing and inspiring night.



The 29th Fandango Benefit Gala was filled with inspirational moments and incredible generosity.

Pardner Profile

A place to shout about a few of the people who make Camp the remarkable place it is.

Even though he's always loved science and people, David Nelson, MD didn't always plan to be a doctor. But after a chance meeting with some medical students late in his college career, he started down a path that ultimately led to where he is today – Camp's new medical director.

Dr. Dave first learned about Hole in the Wall in 1994 when he was in his residency in San Diego. Several years later, he found himself in Rhode Island and, after paying a visit to Camp, became a regular volunteer during the summers.

"Volunteering at Camp was good for me both professionally and personally," Dr. Dave said. "It was a great grounding and reset, and it reminded me of why I got into medicine and the important parts of medicine."

Over the years, Dr. Dave has also volunteered at other SeriousFun

Children's Network camps including Roundup River Ranch and The Painted Turtle. He also has helped with evaluations of the medical programs at sister camps to ensure they meet SeriousFun criteria. And his children have served on summer staff at Hole in the Wall for the past several years.

"Seeing how my kids grew up here and decided on their own to give back and come back is one of my greatest accomplishments," Dr. Dave said.

Before joining Hole in the Wall staff this summer, Dr. Dave was a pediatric emergency doctor at the University of Las Vegas in Nevada. He loved how emergency medicine prepared him to handle anything that came his way. But when the opportunity to relocate to Ashford and Camp presented itself, he knew it was something he had to do.



Camp's new medical director, Dr. Dave, takes his job very seriously, but not himself.

"I always knew I wanted to be a medical director with one of the SeriousFun Camps but thought it would be a retirement job," Dr. Dave said. "After coming this summer, I quickly learned that being the medical direc-

tor is not a retirement job. It's very active. But I also knew that to take on this role, it would be important for me to stay connected to my prior life as a pediatric ER doctor."

To keep himself current on his skills and the latest advancements in medicine, Dr. Dave will split his time between Hole in the Wall and the University of Vermont Medical Center, where he will be practicing pediatric emergency medicine and training the next generation of physicians.

As for the future at Camp, he will work closely with the infirmary leadership team to continue to refine policies and procedures that keep our campers safe, while also recruiting the best volunteers to Camp.

"I've always found amazing mentors during my time at Camp," Dr. Dave said. "I am trying to model my time as the medical director after all the physicians who came before me."

Saddle Up for Camp

Camp is at the epicenter of a caring community. Our gratitude goes out to all who host and organize fundraising events in support of Camp's mission.

In 1994, Matt Futterman first met then Hole in the Wall Camp director, and now Camp CEO, Jimmy Canton, who was a good friend of a friend – a friend who would eventually become Matt's wife. Matt stayed with Jimmy leading up to the Big Sur Marathon, and Jimmy encouraged him to volunteer as a cabin counselor for a session. Not long after, Matt spent a session at Camp as a counselor in Purple 12, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Matt had always been fascinated by running and developed a love for long-distance running in particular. After running five marathons in the 1990s, he took a break from marathons but continued to run every day, often pushing his children in jogging strollers. Then, in 2011, he finally acted

on a promise he had once made to Jimmy to run on behalf of Camp.

The experience renewed his love of marathons. Now, eight years and as many marathons later, Matt has raised more than \$22,000 for Camp.

"When you're running with a purpose, it's a different feeling," he explained. "Running 26 miles knowing all your work goes to Camp is a very tangible thing."

During each marathon, he is taken back to his time as a counselor, where he met such brave and inspiring children.

"I remember sitting in the theater on Stage Night listening to this girl singing Elton John's 'Can You Feel the Love Tonight' and just thinking 'This is remarkable.' It's important to understand how liberating it is for these kids. Being away



from your parents when you've not previously had that opportunity is incredibly empowering."

Matt was initially worried that Camp would be depressing but was taken aback by how completely wrong he was. Seeing the children walk into Camp and become transformed within a few hours or days was an eye-opening experience. After that first

session as a volunteer, he began to call Camp "the essence of joy."

Not only did Matt witness how children were transformed during their time at Camp, but he also heard of them bringing home that Camp spirit as well. He says he is inspired by the ways that the Camp experience empowers the campers to conquer any challenges they had previously been told they couldn't.

Camp has had such a lasting effect on him that this year, Matt will again be running in the TCS New York City Marathon for Camp as a team ambassador. Running for Camp has had a great impact on him and inspired him to share his experiences in writing.

"Camp is a great passion," Matt said. "Running long distances is a great passion. Writing is a great passion. I don't think I would have written my book, 'Running To the Edge,' had Hole in the Wall not been there for me. It brought me back to the marathon world."

Sheriff's Spotlight

A shout-out to our dedicated corporate partners.

Alexion, a global biopharmaceutical company focused on serving patients and families affected by rare diseases, is always seeking ways to better serve their patients – from product to philanthropy. It is this focus on the patient and improving their quality of life that led Alexion into a partnership with Hole in the Wall, whose mission they feel is very aligned with their own.

Alexion continues to be a thoughtful corporate partner, providing not only financial support, but volunteering time as well. Alexion's employees are consistently engaged throughout the year and are involved not only at Camp, but in other community programming initiatives.

"The generosity of Alexion, not only with their donations, but also with the time of their employees, makes them an incredible partner for Hole in the Wall," said Andrea Keefe, director of corporate and community partnerships at Camp. "It's clear their employees are there for all the right reasons and amazing to see how the company supports these volunteerism efforts."

Alexion hosts a Global Day of Service each September where they provide their employees with opportunities to volunteer with a variety of organizations. The organization takes this day very seriously with senior leadership setting the example by

encouraging all employees to participate. Last year, a group of 35 employees celebrated the day with a visit to Camp for a Helping Hands Work Day.

Seeing how passionate the employees were about volunteering with Hole in the Wall, Alexion also coordinated a group of volunteers this past summer to visit Boston Children's Hospital and lend a hand at Camp Day, a fun-filled day of programming that brings favorite activities from the summer program right into the hospital.

"There is so much alignment between Alexion and Hole in the Wall," said Laura Azevedo, manager, charitable giving and community outreach initiatives at Alexion. "But beyond the synergy, these are the kind of volunteer opportunities our employees gravitate towards. It was such a privilege to share a moment in time with children and their families at Boston Children's Hospital through the Hospital Outreach program."

For more information about Hole in the Wall's Corporate Partners Program, please visit www.holeinthewallgang.org/get-involved or contact Andrea at andrea.keefe@holeinthewallgang.org or (203) 772-0522.



Camp Holiday Tribute Cards Are Here!

Share some Camp spirit by recognizing clients, family and friends with Camp Holiday Tribute cards. Featuring several choices of camper artwork, Camp's holiday cards let you make a donation to Camp on behalf of others. Order today at www.holeinthewallgang.org/holiday or contact Anna Grace Barry at anna.barry@holeinthewallgang.org or (203) 772-0522.



Alexion supports volunteerism throughout the organization with its Global Day of Service, and Camp is a grateful beneficiary.



Founded in 1988 by Paul Newman, The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp is a community dedicated to providing "a different kind of healing" to seriously ill children and their families through a variety of year-round programs. The Camp delivers fun, friendship and a healthy dose of mischief through its signature summer program and weekend sessions at the Camp facility in Ashford, Conn. as well as outreach to hospitals, clinics and communities across the Northeast. All services are free of charge. In keeping with Camp's core value of Camaraderie, Hole in the Wall fosters a community of purposeful inclusion through a commitment to diversity and equity.

The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp never sells or shares its donor names and addresses. This policy reflects our commitment as a charity to maintain the highest integrity in order to protect and ensure privacy, while building a personal relationship with each donor.

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The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp
Paul Newman, *Founder*
Ray Lamontagne, *Chair, Board of Directors*
James H. Canton, *Chief Executive Officer*



The summer program was filled with singing, dancing, friendship and so much joy.



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Look inside
to see how
campers become
leaders at
Hole in the Wall.

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