



Merry Heart Children's Camp



2020 Annual Report

<https://merryheartchildrenscamp.org>

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Message from Board Chair and Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Wow, this has been an unusual year for everyone, and there has clearly been a lot of uncertainty and reflection about what the future will hold for us.

On a positive note, we had our first annual event, “Camp Is Where the Heart Is” in February and it was a great success. We had great volunteers, Madison, Bryndis, Tim and Mary, who guided us during this event. We had many volunteers who helped make the event go smoothly for more than 100 guests.

Our main mission is to provide an in-person summer camp for youth with heart conditions. Our board of directors watched closely as the pandemic disrupted everything from our daily routines to our summer plans. It



Rob McDonald, Executive Director, showing a camper a 3D heart model.

became clear by May that given the increased risk our heart kids could have if exposed to COVID-19, a decision regarding camp was needed. It became clear to our board in May, that our heart kids were at increased risk for COVID-19. The board of directors, along with the medical committee, decided not to hold an in-person camp this year, but to do a virtual heart camp instead. Having a virtual camp was very different and challenging. We felt it was a success and our campers connecting with old camp friends and forming new relationships. Due to the economic impact of the pandemic on many of our camp families, the virtual camp was free. It’s a small consolation during a tough time, but many families were thankful. Many of the families appreciated this so that their heart kids were able to attend heart camp this year.

Read on for two Camper Stories. Your support of this camp impacts many lives, and we thank you for that. **YOU make the difference** and we want to thank you for supporting us. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Francis".

Paul Francis, MD
Board President



Paul Francis, MD, Board Chair, playing the guitar with song leader Lynn at our 2019 camp.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert W. McDonald".

Robert W. McDonald
Executive Director | Camp Director

Mission

The mission of Merry Heart Children's Camp is to provide a safe, nurturing and fun outdoor experience for youth with heart conditions where they can meet new friends and develop courage and independence without fear of being judged by others.

Benefits

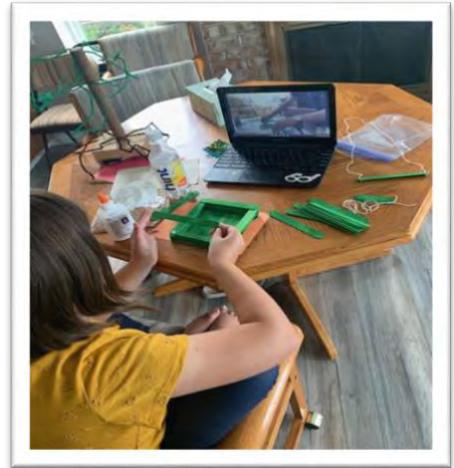
Our camp helps these young people by providing opportunities to:

- Interact with their peers.
- Be educated about their heart conditions.
- Explore issues surrounding their heart conditions.
- Learn new skills.

Programs

Our Virtual Program

We had our 6th camp in August 2020. By May we had 40 heart kids signed up for our in-person camp, however with the coronavirus and the cancellation of our in-person camp by the state, the board decided to do a virtual heart camp this year. A few heart kids did not want to do a virtual camp, but 30 youth participated.



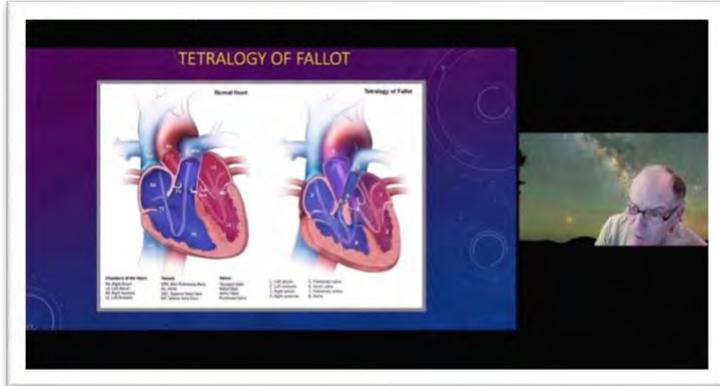
Our camp this summer was challenging because we could not have an



Items that were placed in our "Camp in the Box".

in-person camp due to COVID-19. Therefore, we gave our campers a virtual camp. We had 30 campers attend our Zoom camp for four days for 3 hours in the morning. There were all camper activities and the group was divided into "cabins" to have a more intimate experience with 5-7 campers, 2 counselors and a counselor-in-training. We sent them a camp box with activity and my heart books, materials to make six crafts, recipes for camp cooking, their camp T-shirt, a stuffed black bear, a jigsaw puzzle of the campers from last summer, a smart game and a poster of the Trailblazers. The crafts and cooking classes were demonstrated in the morning by counselors and counselors-in-training, the campers made their own in the afternoon and showed their results to their cabinmates the next day. We maintained camp spirit with singing, a talent show, a scavenger hunt and popcorn for a movie night with their families. There were talks about the heart and fun, meaningful stories.

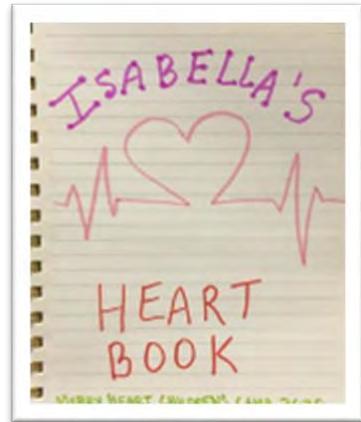
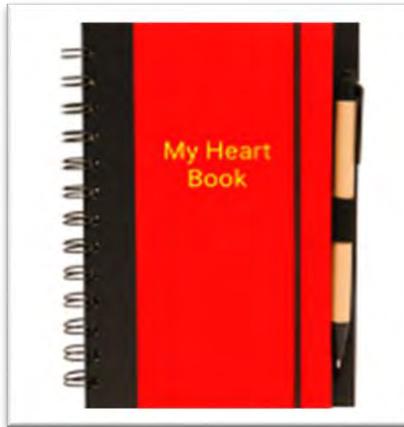
After 5 successful camps, our virtual camp required a different kind of organization and resources. Everyone had a lot of fun and campers were able to be with, if only virtually, their cabin mates and counselors which is one of the most important goals of our camp.



Heart Education

At our in-person camp, we normally have someone talk about heart education. This year due to COVID-19, we only had one heart talk which Dr. Francis who gave an overview of the different type of heart conditions. One of the activities that we did during heart camp was to provide our campers with a heart book where they were able to create a

journal of their heart condition and write their story about their heart. This was an idea from one of our counselors who lead the virtual camp idea.



Counselor-in-training Uki demonstrates on to make a Brown Bear at virtual camp.

Volunteers

With going to a virtual heart camp this year, we had to reinvent our summer camp program to reflect a virtual camp program. Our volunteers were awesome this year and they stepped up by providing the different activities at the virtual camp. We had one of our counselors do a video on how to build a solar oven and in the camp box we provided the campers with a s'mores package. We had both counselors and counselors-in-training demonstrate the activities the campers were going to do in the afternoon during the camp day.



Counselor-in-training, Jozlynn, leading the campers in a song.

Program Impact

Impact Story – My First Camp



Ava demonstrating her 3D tree.

Ava

Shannon whose daughter was at her first heart camp described what virtual camp meant to her daughter.

“I really want to thank you for everything you did. When you guys said your final goodbyes today, my daughter hung up the Zoom call and burst into tears because she was so sad it was over. With the pandemic, we have been being extra careful given her heart condition and as a result she is feeling extra isolated. I cannot tell you how much it helped her to see that she is not alone in this, there are other kids just like her. She has never even met one before this camp. So, it really helped her feel part of something, in a time when it is more critical than ever to feel this way. So, thank you for ALL the time and effort you and your wonderful team of volunteers put into this virtual camp. It really mattered to these kids.” – Shannon H.

Impact Story 2 – Since the Beginning

Parents can best describe the impact our camp has on their child.

Jonah

“When I reflect on what Merry Heart Children’s Camp means to me, as a mother of a son with a heart condition, so many different emotions come to mind. Having a place where he can go have a great time, meet other kids like him, and do so safely, is an incredible gift. Though I try not to let worry run our lives, it is always there with a medically sensitive child. But at camp, knowing the staff genuinely

cares about these children, with medical resources right there, we can let those feelings of fear go and just enjoy the moments. One of the things I have

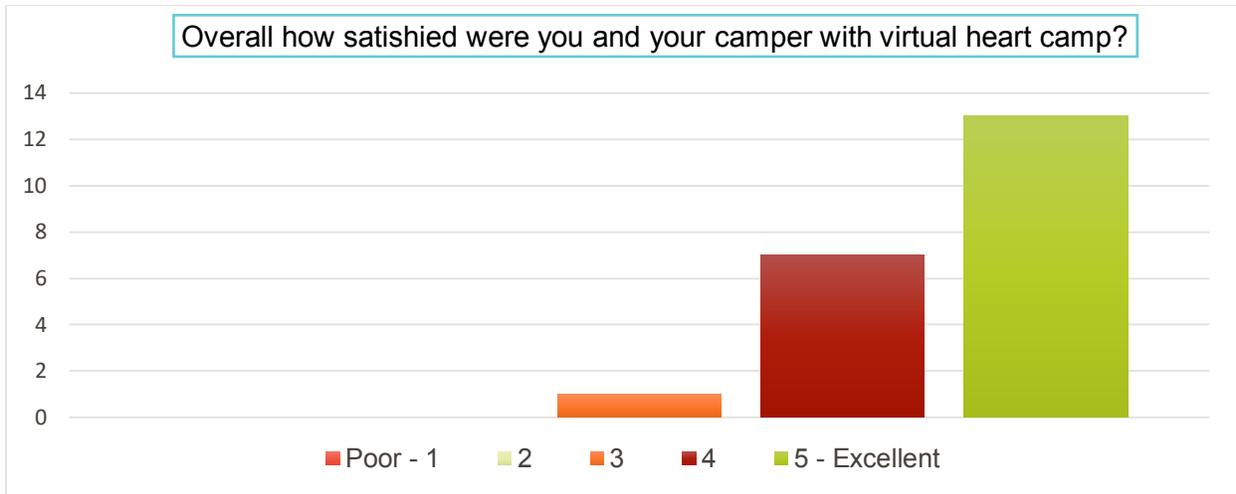
found the most interesting, as he has gotten older, is how invested he has become in not just his own heart condition, but those of his friends as well. I love the talks we have once he is home about how much he has learned and how much more he would like to know. This extra knowledge has helped make it easier to explain and to help his younger sister navigate through some of her own worries for her brother’s health. But the best part for us are the pictures! MHCC sends updates and pictures multiple times while the kids are away and the pure joy on their faces is the best. As my son’s time to participate as a camper is too quickly ending, I know he is excited to look into opportunities to participate as a Counselor in Training. We could not be any happier with MHCC and the experiences it has given him. And the confidence it has given us to let him go out in the world without us right there is a much-added bonus.” – Mary L.



Jonah with his family at our first heart camp.

Camper Satisfaction

After camp, we had a Zoom post camp review with staff, counselors and counselors in training where we discussed what worked and what did not and how to improve the camp if we need a virtual camp next summer. We also sent a post camp questionnaire to campers and their parents which will be reviewed at our next board meeting.



Events

This year has been one of many firsts for Merry Heart Children’s Camp.

We held our first evening fundraising event, and we launched our first letter-driven fundraising campaign, and because of COVID-19, we held our first online virtual camp.

Each of these accomplishments required great coordination and energy from our volunteers, board members, and supporters. Thank you to all who helped make this year a success.

The ‘Camp Is Where the Heart Is’ event took place in February in the beautiful dining area at Chris King Precision Components in NW Portland. DJ Derek Smith from KMHD spun records to keep people moving as they visited, enjoyed beer and wine and an array of charcuterie and smoked salmon, and placed bids on silent auction items.



We heard stories from our board member Dr. Jen Huang, from camp family Jamicka Miller and Alijah Barrera, and from artist Mary Doyle, wife of the late Northwest writer Brian Doyle and mother of a child with a heart condition.

Over 100 guests and volunteers made the night a great success by making new relationships and raising more than \$18,000 for the camp.

In August, the camp launched a letter driven Summer **CAMP**aign. The letter was sent to more than 600 camp supporters. Email

newsletters were sent each week in an effort to share more camp stories, update supporters how the campaign was going, and share new information about the virtual camp.

The Summer **CAMP**aign was also a success. We received donations from long-time supporters, and first-time donors resulting in more than \$5,000.

Thank you, donors, foundations, volunteers, camp families, and board members for believing in Merry Heart Children’s Camp.

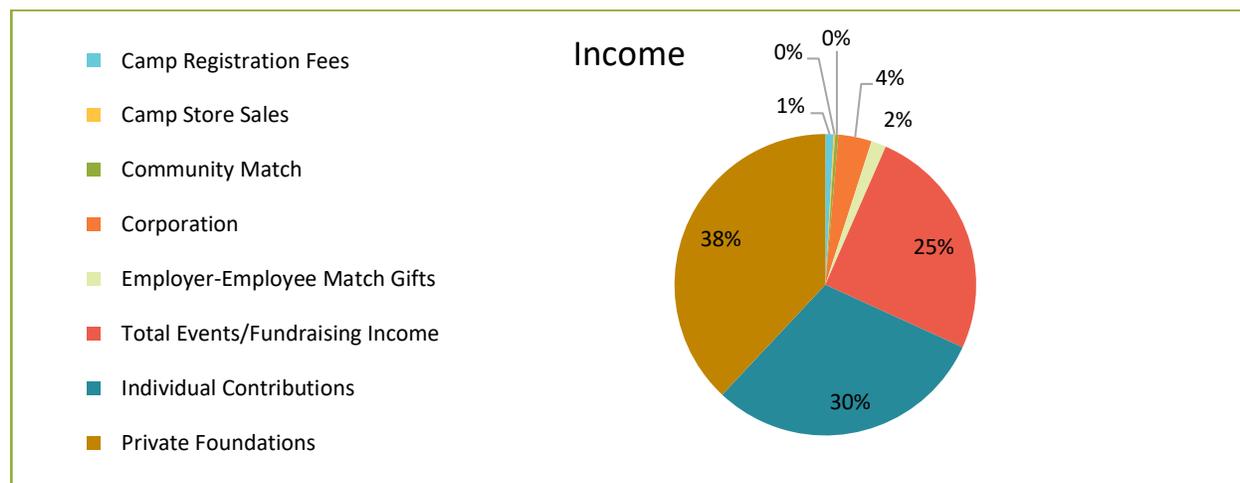
Resources & Financial Management

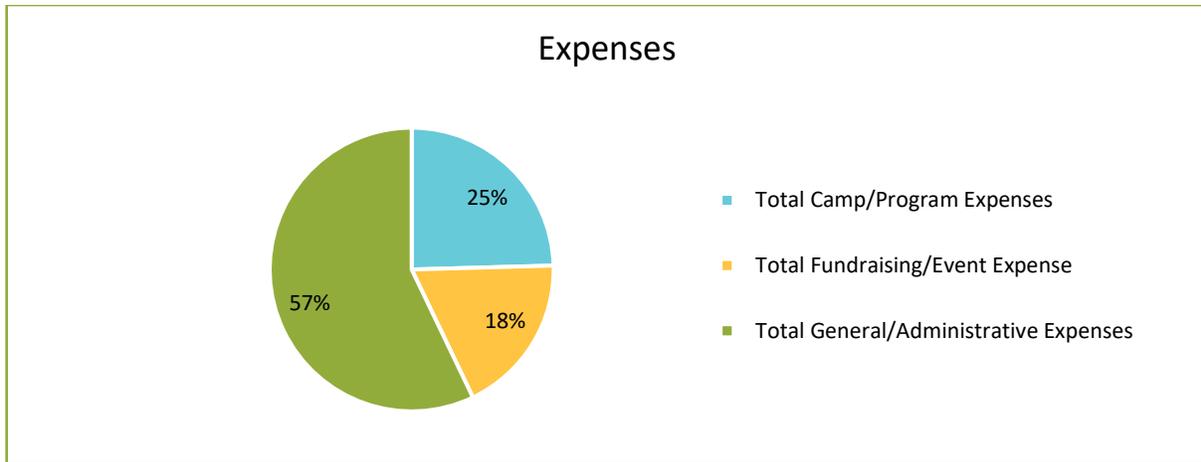
We had some major changes this year. As noted from our 2019 annual report, we changed the budget process for the camp year, which will run from October to the end of September. This will help us to fundraise and budget appropriately.

Our 2020 operating budget was \$69,799 and our camp/program budget was \$31,777. We did have our first major event in February which was one of the reasons for the increase in fundraising expenses. The other major expense was the board hired an independent contractor to help us with donor management and communications.

Balance Sheet Summary	2019	2020
Total Assets	\$129,286.46	\$167,658.17
Total Liabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$129,286.46	\$167,658.17
Variance		\$38,372.24

Lastly, our program was significantly impacted by the coronavirus and could not have an in-person camp this year. Our major costs for the virtual camper were camp t-shirts, insurance and mailing all the “Camp in the Box” to our heart kids. In addition, the board decided to waive the \$55 nonrefundable registration fee this year to help those families who were having financial difficulties during the pandemic.





Looking Forward

We are working hard to continue to provide a heart camp for our kids with heart conditions. Here is a quick summary in each area:

Finance: In hiring a development/communication director, we hope to increase funding by 5% through online donations, increase our donor base, do an annual event each year and increase the amount of grants support.

Programs: We hope to have an in-person camp next summer for 48 or more campers but are now better prepared to have another virtual camp if necessary. We plan to continue our counselors in training program for 6 or more teens.

Notable Upcoming Events: We are planning to have our second annual social event with a goal of raising \$20,000.00. Other plans are to have smaller virtual events and work toward have more community support for the camp.

Sustainability: We continue to develop long-term relationships with all our donors, corporations, private and public foundations.



We Need Your Help

Every Penny Matters

With the current environment, every penny matters when it comes giving kids with heart conditions a place to go to meet their peers, be safe and just have fun under the observation of our great medical volunteers.

It is a simple process to give by going to our [donation page](#) to donate. The other way is to donate by mail to Merry Heart Children's Camp, PO Box 80413, Portland, OR 97280.

Volunteer and Help Make a Difference

Not everyone can make a financial contribution. You can help in other areas of support such as helping write grants, assisting with our annual fundraising event and other events, or volunteering for camp. Please visit our [website to volunteer](#) or send an email to director@merryheartchildrenscamp.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Thank You to All of Our Donors

Merry Heart Children's Camp is honored to collaborate with individuals, private foundations, corporations and corporate foundation sponsors who help create a camp dedicated to youth with heart conditions. We would not be able to have this camp without you. **THANK YOU!**

Heart Hero

(\$4,001 - \$5,000)

Nike Community Impact
Fund of The Oregon
Community Foundation
Pediatric Cardiology
Center of Oregon

Heart Champion

(\$2,501 - \$4,000)

Juliet Ashby Hillman
Foundation
Henry Lea Hillman, Jr.
Foundation
Marie Lamfrom Charitable
Foundation
Juan Young Trust
Zera Foundation



David Adams (r), donor since 2018, with Robert McDonald, Executive Director | Camp Director

Heart Keeper

(\$1,001 - \$2,500)

Biotronik
Nancy and Bob Cretsinger
Paul Francis
Mary Rice and Robert
McDonald
Victor Menashe
OCF Joseph E. Weston
Public Foundation
The Holzman Foundation

Heart Friend

(\$501 - \$1,000)

Kathy Holmes and Charles
Henrikson
Shannon Howard
Doug and Carole King
OHSU Division of Pediatric
Cardiac Surgery
OHSU Division of Pediatric
Cardiology
Susan Spitzer
Vibrant Light Photography
Rena Wittkopf

Heart Helper

(\$101 - \$500)

Anonymous # 1
Anonymous # 2
Anonymous # 3

Michele and Robert Arluna

Amy Bartonek-Culley
Jennifer Bost
Michael Brown-Hayes
Pam Logsdon Camit
Nathan Camit
Dennis and Heidi Carney
Matthew Carter
Stephanie and Peter
Chang
Allen Davison
June DeSimone
Carolyn and Greg
Heberlein
Jill and Daryl Houtman
Jean Hoelscher Howard
JJ Heldmann
Pierce and Jenny Kenny
Jeanette LeTourneux
Vicki Ly
Robert McCrone
Walther McMonies
Sharon Moore
Ashok Muralidaran
Mark and Kim Reller
Joseph Schreier
G. Michael Silberbach and
Paula Welshons
Martin Sopher
Shelly Stalnaker
The Wright Family
Foundation

Susan and Larry Thornton
Tiffany Wilson
Douglas Woodcock

**Sweetheart
(<\$100)**

Peggy Adams
Anthony Archer
Laura and Charles Arluna
Laurie Armsby
Matthew and Hilary Basco
Sharmila Bose
Dana Braner
Kevin Britt
Eddy Brown
Kyleen Carter
Jane Carter
Robin Casey
Andy Cave
Jodie Cee
Theodore Christman
Angela Clark
Ashlee Colby
Selena Cintron
Linda Copeland
Michael and Susan Covey
Misty Justice Cox
Vonda Crouse
Kirsten Cyryeager
Joshua DeKlotz
Carrie Dishner
Matt Daskalos
Lynn Davis
Mary Miller-Doyle
Candace and Dan Doerner
Christopher Drollinger
Lauren Edelman
Miles Ellenby
Mark Epstein
Debbie Fahey
Alison Farrell

Heather Foster
Brenda and Phil Zook
Friesen
Suzanne Gebhardt
Nichole Gieber
Sara and Kelly Gregersen
Karen Green
Rebecca Green
Vikas Grover
Saurabh Gupta
Katherine Phillips-
Hamblett
Manny Harlapur
Paul Hathaway
Sherry Hartwell
Lisa Heberlein
Sandy Hefflefinger
Cecilia Ferrer-Heyne
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Joan Macari
Sheri Bursaw-Mackey
Sherrie Magahay
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Carrie Maxwell
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Jyoti Veeramoney
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Karen von Bostel
Jennifer Wentzien
Kay Willis
Jeff and Cynthia Wight



Sara and Tim LaBarge (l) and
Michele Arluna, donors since
2015.

In-Kind Sponsors
David Adams and Brigid
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