



Families of Superheroes

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines superhero as 'a fictional hero having extraordinary or superhuman powers'. One can assume that errors within the dictionary are rare, but clearly the Merriam-Webster editors have never been to Camp Odayin. We know hundreds of real-life superheroes and this fall, 320 of them gathered together for Family Camp.

Children with heart disease, their parents and their siblings all possess extraordinary powers of courage and resiliency. Their life experiences require superhuman strength. During two superhero themed weekends, families created lasting friendships (and capes) with fellow heart heroes who understand each other's battles and journeys.

Among the many admirable qualities possessed by all the families at both Family Camps is that of tremendous and humbling gratitude. It takes a true superhero to openly express such kind words of appreciation. It's an honor to offer the Camp Odayin experience to such gracious families, whom we consider friends.

See page two for a thoughtful letter conveying radical gratitude for Family Camp.

Amery, Wisconsin October 16-18

"Family Camp is the highlight of the year for us. I can't imagine having a heart kid without the support of the Camp Odayin heart family."



Camp Lake, Wisconsin November 13-15

"You can't even imagine how grateful we are for Camp Odayin. Before starting to come to camp in 2007, we felt alone in the world. Thanks to Camp Odayin, all the wonderful volunteers, and the great families we no longer do."



For the second year now, our trek to the Milwaukee area for Family Camp coincided with Give to the Max Day. A generous match and gifts on this day of online philanthropy totaled \$46,340! Thank you to all who delighted us with donations during our drive through Wisconsin!

If you didn't have an opportunity to contribute on Give to the Max Day, we'd appreciate your consideration of a year end, tax deductible gift. Visit the 'Ways to Give' page of www.campodayin.org for details.

Sara and Camp Odayin staff-

This year was a year of firsts for us and Camp Odayin. Our son Davin stayed at residential camp this summer. As hard as that is on Annie and I to send our son off to any camp, it was a very pleasant experience to send him to Camp Odayin. Quite frankly, we sent our two boys to a church sponsored camp weekend in the summer as well, and all we did was worry. We worry whether something will happen in general, but when you have a child with significant heart complications you worry a lot more. What if something happens? Who would know what to do? What would they do? And the questions and worry are endless. But when we sent Davin to Camp Odayin, it was such a blessing. He could still go to "camp" but with the Camp Odayin staff and support he was able to "just be a kid" and that is priceless to us.

Directly as a result of that positive experience, we decided to attend family camp at Camp Wapo last weekend. I was a little hesitant, but curious too. To my delight, it was an absolutely amazing experience that I have a hard time putting into words. The staff was amazing and so friendly, you instantly felt welcome. It was very organized and planned. The kids loved it. Our oldest son (does not have heart issues) whispered to me, "Dad, I had no idea so many kids had heart problems" and that statement kind of made me think. We do not know of any other kids that have heart disease and so Davin is always "that special kid". But for the first time, our other son got to see it from another perspective and it opened his eyes too.

And for me, well I was absolutely amazed. For the first time in my life, I was able to have not only one, but many conversations with other parents who actually could relate to our situation. Take that back, not only relate, they completely understood. Our conversations were not filled with pity and, "oh how sad..." or "that must be so difficult" comments. I was able to talk to another dad about our children's heart issues and concerns like we were talking about our kids playing sports on the same team. I can't express to you how much that helps. And as for helping, the couple hours with the groups of parents with kids that have similar issues and the doctors who took time to sit in on our discussions and answer questions, that was the best. Your panel of teenagers, wonderful! I could have sat in that room all day and listened to them talk. In a matter of a couple hours, so many of the lingering questions I have had for the past eight years dealing with Davin's heart condition were addressed. Such a blessing!!!

So ultimately what I want to say is THANK YOU to everyone involved with Camp Odayin. It was one of the best experiences I could have imagined and I am looking forward to next year with anticipation.

Sincerely,
David and Annie

Magnificent Medical Directors

At Camp Odayin, we're fortunate to know a number of top notch, brilliant cardiologists who are also super fun and kind. Two cardiologists of exactly that sort have our appreciation and admiration for serving in the role of Camp Odayin Medical Director. We're hugely grateful to Dr. Chip Martin-Chaffee of CentraCare Health for his years of dedication and leadership. (Never fear, he promises to continue to join us at Residential Camp!) As the current Medical Director, Dr. Chip is now handing the job over to the very capable Dr. Chris Carter of Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. We've made many wonderful memories with Dr. Chris at camp already and are excited to have him involved in this new capacity.



Tyler Schnacky

We're saddened to share the passing of camper Tyler Schnacky. Tyler's smile and kindness shone brightly at Winter Camp and Residential Camp from 2012 to 2014. Tyler once shared, because of Camp Odayin... "I have met friends with hearts just like mine." Because of Tyler, we have all been changed for the better. He will be missed and forever loved.



Odayin on Film

This summer at Residential Camp, we were visited by two wonderful film crews. Tilt Motion generously donated their time and talents to create an informational video for Odayin. The video premiered at the UnitedHealth Group Charity Golf Event and is posted on www.campodayin.org. The Big Ten Network accompanied University of Minnesota student athletes to camp. Their feature first aired during the U of M vs. Iowa football game.

Keep your TV tuned to gopher sports on the Big Ten Network to see it again! Both of these generously gifted videos feature amazing campers and are powerful means of sharing Camp Odayin's mission.



We ♥ UHG

Camp Odayin was honored to be one of three beneficiaries of the 2015 UnitedHealth Group (UHG) Charity Golf Event. Massive thanks to Odayin volunteers Holly Baur and Kate Hamilton and camper parents Sandee and Bob Miland for their submission of a UHG employee nomination on behalf of Camp Odayin. We never dreamed it would result in the largest single donation in Camp Odayin's history. We received over \$200,000 of the proceeds! We couldn't be more overwhelmed, stunned, amazed and grateful.

Indeed a Good Deed



Yes indeed, we know the most charitable brewery in town! Every Wednesday, Indeed Brewing Company donates 100% of their proceeds. Camp Odayin was thankful to be the chosen nonprofit on November 4th. Entertainment was provided by generous local musician, Tim Mahoney. Tons of Odayin supporters stopped by the tap room to raise \$2,800!

Heart & Sole Run / Walk

On September 19th, 775 participants ran and walked around Como Lake during the tie dye themed Heart & Sole. The soul of the morning was the program emceed by Dez of KS95, when campers shared the following sentiments completing the phrase 'Because of Camp Odayin...'

I can be myself – Liam S.

I met friends who have scars like me – Makenzie S.

I have a heart family – Dylan S.

I gained self-confidence – Maddie B.

I try new things with nurses by my side – Nathan C.

I can attend camp – just like every other kid – Kimi S.
Because of sponsors, participants and volunteers, the 13th annual event raised nearly \$26,000!

Did you know?

Hopefully it's common knowledge that we only charge \$25 to attend Camp Odayin. You might not realize the actual costs that are covered by generous corporations, foundations and individual donors. After 14 years, it was time to update our calculations.

Actual per person cost for each of our camps:

Residential Camp - \$900

Day Camp - \$600

Winter Camp and Young Adult Retreat - \$500

Family Camp - \$250

These amounts reflect all aspects of program costs from meals to insurance to arts & crafts supplies. Program expenses comprise 80% of Camp Odayin's organizational budget. Therefore, donors can rest assured their dollars have a direct impact on the lives of children with heart disease and their families.



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Winter Camp

When most people think of camp, they picture sunny summer days at the beach. We love splashing in the lake in July, but there's also something great about being bundled up for the tubing hill! Plus, we want to see Odayin campers (and for them to see each other) throughout the year. Winter Camp will be held February 13-15 at Camp Wapo in Amery, WI. Campers who attended 2015 Residential Camp are invited to register by February 1st. We're also accepting volunteer applications for counselors and nurses through January 4th. Visit www.campodayin.org for details and links to camp forms.



2016 Calendar

- February 13-15: Winter Camp
- March 1: Summer Camp Applications Available
- March 6: Camp Kick Off Bowling Party
- April 23: Have a Heart Benefit
- May 1: Summer Camp Application Deadline
- June 3-5: Young Adult Retreat
- June 13: Whole Heart Golf Tournament
- July 11-15: Chippewa Residential Camp (Grades 1-6)*
- July 18-22: Flambeau Residential Camp (Grades 6-8)*
- July 25-29: Namekagon Residential Camp (Grades 9-11)
- August 1-5: Gitche Gumee Day Camp (Kindergarten-1st Grade)

* 6th grade is a float grade. If your 6th grader is in elementary school this year, please sign them up to attend Chippewa week. If they are in middle school this year, please sign them up to attend Flambeau week.

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If you would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically or to add or remove names from our mailing list, please contact us at info@campodayin.org.