

OCTOBER 2022

CAMP MANITO-WISH

CULTURAL AUDIT REPORT



CROSS CULTURAL
AGILITY, LLC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT

In today's world, we are confronted at every turn by differences. The methods we use to connect with others from different cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles must also adapt. What breaks down barriers, are opportunities to engage authentically - particularly when we see and experience positive, and affirming connections cross-culturally.

GOALS

Camp Manito-wish YMCA's Summer Camp, Outpost Wilderness Program, Leadership Program, and Family Camp educational environments are uniquely positioned. It is the perfect laboratory to experiment, create, and demonstrate a multi-colored alternate reality where fear and prejudice are just not prevalent. It is the ideal environment to model a change in individual and collective narratives.

The goal of this final report was to assess the culture of Camp Manito-wish as it relates to DEI, analyze the perceptions of the organization's stakeholders, examine the current cultural framework, and make recommendations that support the organization as a whole.

IMPETUS

The impetus for this assessment was to further the work already in progress by the DEI Staff Committee and the CEO to support the organization in ensuring sustainability, equity, and viability. The DEI Staff Committee and the CEO brought in Cross Cultural Agility, LLC. to conduct the organizational audit and help inform the process of moving forward.

WHAT IS MEANT BY DEI

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is more than the simple presence of diverse demographics. Fully integrated, DEI is premised on the following principles:

- **Commitment to DEI is built into all policies and plans;**
- **The different experiences and perspectives of all individuals are welcomed, valued, and respected;**
- **Access to equity opportunities for all are increased by expanding how requirements and qualifications are defined;**
- **The dominant norm is recognized as only one way of viewing or being in the world;**
- **Ongoing efforts are made to increase diversity, ensure equity, and identify and remove as many barriers as possible to inclusion.**

True DEI in an organization depends upon systems that incorporate ways of valuing differences and individuals whose interactions are informed by self-awareness and respect for others.

Knowing where Camp Manito-wish's commitment lies on diversity and inclusion matters greatly. When the community believes the organization is invested in diversity, equity, and inclusion, all stakeholders (the Board of Directors, Emeritus Board, Year-round and Seasonal Staff, Alumni, Parents, Collaborative Partner Organizations and Campers) feel not only welcomed, but respected, accepted, valued, and empowered.

REPORT OUTLINE

Cross Cultural Agility, LLC. developed a Cultural Assessment tool that was utilized while interviewing Camp Manito-wish's Board of Directors, Emeritus Board, Year-Round Staff, Seasonal Staff, Parents, Campers, and Alumni. The tool was modified to meet each

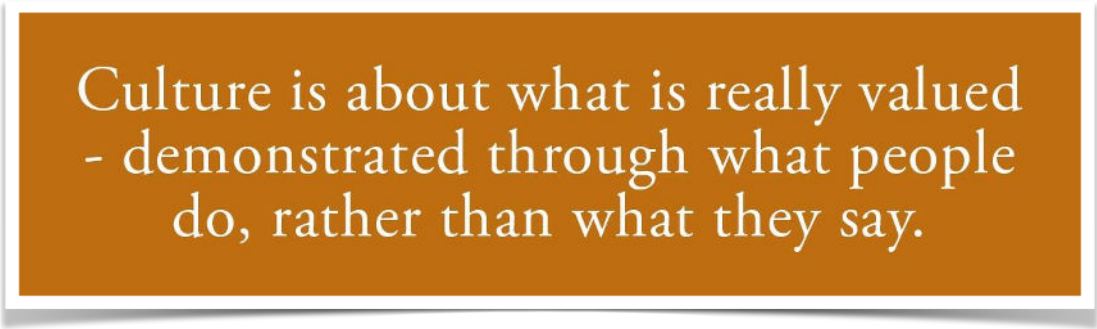
group's individual needs and perspectives. This report reflects the findings and results from these groups as well as interviews conducted with a partner organization (Shuler Scholars).

The report will include the following:

- **Cultural Framework Definition**
 - What Is Behavior?
 - What Are Symbols?
 - What Are Systems?
- **Timeline**
- **Methodologies**
 - Cross-Cultural Intelligence Assessment Tool
- **Interviewee Composition / Scope of Work**
- **Findings**
 - DEI Vision & Commitment
- **Programs**
 - Summer Programs (Boys, Girls, Outpost, and Family Camp)
 - Leadership Program
- **Processes**
 - Song Book
 - Gender Identities Guidelines Review
 - Forms
 - Marketing
 - Website
 - Other Documents Reviewed
- **Property / Facilities**
 - Dining
 - Privacy
- **Staff**
 - (Year-round and Seasonal)
- **Faith at Camp**
 - Chapel
 - Vespers / Square Ceremony
 - Graces
- **Closing Thoughts**

CULTURAL FRAMEWORK DEFINITION

In the original proposal to the organization, emphasis was placed on Culture and how it plays an enormous role in any organizational transformation. **What is Culture?** Culture is the consistent pattern of behaviors exhibited by a group. It is the collective or shared set of assumptions, values, and beliefs of a group of people by which they organize their common life. Everything that occurs at Camp Manito-wish is activated through the behaviors of your people. Culture is sustained by **Behaviors, Symbols, and Systems** because each one sends messages about what is valued and thus sets the behavioral norms for all who belong to Camp Manito-wish.



Culture is about what is really valued
- demonstrated through what people
do, rather than what they say.

WHAT IS BEHAVIOR?

Behavior is how one acts in the world. It is what a person does, and what is visible to others. The words 'behavior' and 'action' are used quite imprecisely to cover the whole range of what people do. To design your interventions, you need to be very clear what these terms mean, and what you are actually seeking to change. Everyone's behaviors reflect their values. A culture is formed and re-formed by everything that is done in the organization. Every behavior and each decision sends a message, and that message is in turn interpreted by people in the organization as a reflection of what is valued, which in turn molds the behavior and decisions of others.

When the objective is to change culture, your priority target group for mind-set change in the early stages, is your leadership population. The hierarchical nature of organizations

means that the messages sent by leaders are the most influential in terms of creating the culture. Work with your seasonal staff will always be hampered by the culture within which they sit. Your seasonal staff and campers are likely to adapt their behavior to fit with their perception of what is expected.

We humans are basically social in nature; we are hard-wired to fit in with our social group. We read the signals about what it takes to fit in, and we adapt our behavior accordingly. If we absolutely cannot do this, we either leave the group, or the group rejects us. As we adapt to fit in, we in turn reinforce social norms, or accepted behaviors, and thus reinforce the culture.

Building a coalition of people who are open to change will help you to achieve the tipping point where the norms in the culture change and many of those who were sitting on the fence come on board.

From my observation, I judge you have the makings of creating a coalition of cultural change makers. On the flip side, the cultural changes may cause some to alter or shift their level of involvement and commitment to the organization as a direct response.

WHAT ARE SYMBOLS?

Symbols are events or decisions to which people attribute meaning, which may well be beyond the scope of the original intent. A symbol is created when one event is seen to be an example of a larger pattern, and thus symbolic of that pattern.

Typical cultural symbols are situations where a choice has to be made - usually by administration - and all potential values cannot be met. Thus, the use of time and the allocation of resources become powerful symbolic acts.

Other powerful symbols are the rituals which have been built up over years.

Finally, symbols become accentuated through the telling of stories. Storytelling (for instance, Paul and Pauline Bunyan Days) turns symbols into legends; the defining

moments of your organization's past, the great heroic events, and the people caught up in them. The telling of the story becomes even more important than the event itself.

So, to understand the symbols of Camp Manito-wish, you should look in the following areas:

- **Where is time spent?**
- **Where is money spent?**
- **What gets priority in times of pressure?**
- **Which individuals and groups are favored, and why?**
- **What are the themes of your rituals and legends?**

Symbols are the measure of how deeply held certain values are. They are visible decisions or artifacts to which people attribute meaning, such as titles, office layout, campus layout, how the budget is allocated, where and how things are communicated on your website, in social media, and in your videos.

Symbols offer a very creative way to influence culture, and some new symbols can be introduced in quite a short time frame. The overall goal when working on symbols is to produce the response: "Wow, that's different!" To be effective, a symbol has to be viable, preferably to a large number of people, and clearly show that the values of the leaders of the organization are changing.

Some powerful ways that organizations demonstrate values change (in general) through symbols include:

- **Changing how time is spent**
- **Changing how money is spent**
- **Changing what gets priority in times of pressure**

- **Giving key roles to people who live the values, especially if these choices are unconventional**
- **Publicly recognizing people for culture-supporting behavior**
- **Lining up external advertising (website, newsletters, and social media) to cultural goals**

WHAT ARE SYSTEMS?

Systems are different from behaviors and symbols because they are the result of historical choices. Someone in Camp Manito-wish's past made a series of decisions that designed your systems. Changing those decisions and designing new systems takes time. Systems tend to lag behind the changes to mind-set and values.

The key to understanding systems is - Measurement. What gets measured gets done. In other words, what gets measured is deemed to be important, and therefore gets done. It is not the measurement itself which causes action, but the interest that people place on the data generated by measurement, and its ability to make Camp Manito-wish look good or bad in the eyes of the tribe. Measurement is a strong symbol of what is valued.

Long standing systems are harder to undo. Change is complex, and takes time to implement.

TIMELINE

The interview aspect of this work officially began in **September 2021 and ended August 2022**. Over the course of this engagement I have communicated regularly with the Administration: Pat Soldan and Jeff Pereles, which served the purpose of building trust, strengthening our communication and ability to

converse openly and honestly, gain insights on programmatic DEI related topics, as well as to understand the heart and mindset of the Administration.

- **Approximately 30 Zoom Meetings between May 2021 - August 2022 with Pat Soldan and Jeff Pereles**
- **Numerous email exchanges**
- **Stakeholder Interviews Via Zoom and telephone January - August 2022**
- **Created a Video Promo for the Tripper**
- **Camp Site visit July 7 - 13, 2022**

METHODOLOGIES

CROSS-CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT TOOL

To achieve the Assessment/Audit, Cross Cultural Agility, LLC., used multiple approaches:

1. **Conducted one-on-one private interviews via the Zoom platform**
2. **Conducted one-on-one private interviews via the telephone**
3. **Conducted one-on-one interviews in person**
4. **Conducted group interviews in person**

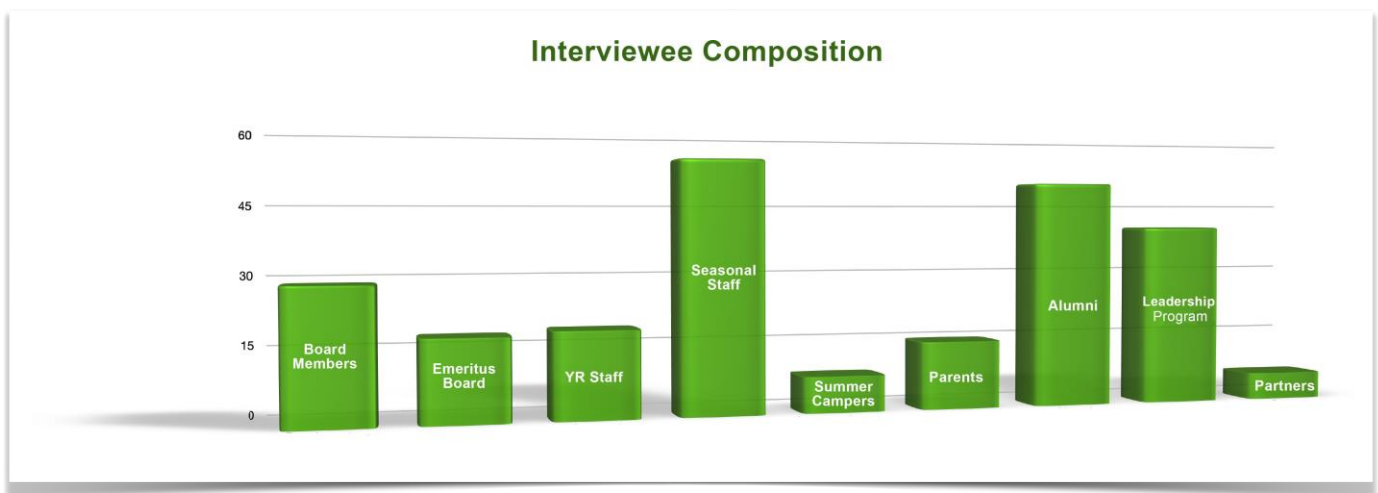
While the individual respondents personal answers remain anonymous, the group results were analyzed and their general perceptions, along with reoccurring themes are shared in this report to assess areas of need, growth, or strength.

Recommendations and suggestions will be offered for implementation to resolve and/or mitigate organizational pain-points and cross-cultural barriers - both real and perceived.

The Assessment Tool was designed to:

- **Assess how the organization's cultural stakeholders perceive the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work being done by Camp Manito-wish.**
- **To act as a mirror for the organization to identify key emerging issues and perceptions related to DEI.**
- **To create a baseline to help measure DEI progress over time.**
- **To garner support for any improvements needed to further commitments to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.**

INTERVIEWEE COMPOSITION / SCOPE OF WORK



- **29 BOARD MEMBERS**
- **18 EMERITUS BOARD**
- **19 YEAR-ROUND STAFF**
- **55 SEASONAL STAFF** (SUMMER, OUTPOST, LEADERSHIP PROGRAM)
- **8 SUMMER CAMPERS** (CURRENT AND RECENT PAST)
- **15 PARENTS** (CURRENT AND RECENT PAST)
- **50 ALUMNI**
- **40 LEADERSHIP PARTICIPANTS**
- **6 INDIVIDUALS FROM PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

240 Interviews
160+ Hours of Recorded Content

The information in this report includes the collective aggregate responses, as well as next steps recommendations. Group results were analyzed and compiled to facilitate both discussion and assessment with the organization's management in the areas of need, growth, and/or strength.

The interview conversations were subjective in nature, and resulted in over **160 hours** of recorded content. Rather than give conversational recaps, I will share reoccurring themes. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes to an hour. They were conducted in an informal conversational manner that were both passionate and thoughtful.

The Assessment Audit offers opportunities for consideration in the following areas:

- **Reflection**
(how the organization sees itself in terms of diversity and inclusion)
- **Culture**
(the organizational norms, habits, and beliefs)
- **Interpersonal Skills**
(putting inclusion into action)

The individual and group interviews were conducted in a conversational manner in order to garner authentic responses and any spontaneous thoughts that would offer additional insight and perspective. There were two desired outcomes:

- 1. To better understand the stakeholders perception of Camp related to DEI, and what they would like to see Camp do.**
- 2. To better understand their experience with Camp (through a DEI lens).**

The narratives provided by the interviewees were filled with stories, personal experiences, reflections, suggestions, critiques, and observations that could only be yielded from those that are intimately involved and vested in the organization.

When conducting the interviews, the interview findings were analyzed using the following process:

- 1. Listening to what was actually said**
- 2. Looking for the underlying values behind what was said**
- 3. Finding common themes**

4. **Tracing these themes to see how they are linked, looking for the root cause**
5. **Finding the elements that will probably never change and need to be used constructively**
6. **Finding the more superficial habits which can probably be changed**
7. **Building a picture of the behaviors, symbols, and systems which sustain these values**

In the following ‘Word Cloud’ as well as the accompanying chart, are some of the key repetitive responses from stakeholders to the prompt, “***Describe Camp Manito-wish in three words.***”

The variance of the responses are a good reflection of the multiplicity of views as well as the similarities and contrasting thoughts of the interviewees as a whole.



The chart below is a compilation of responses from all of the interviewees (approximately 85%) who answered the question.

Words	Frequency Used
love, community, expensive, growth, challenging, confused, fun	80%
white, changing, traditional, leading, exclusive, frustrating, magical, mindful, unaware, pride, leadership, disconnected	75%
kind, slow, lost	40%
heart-home, unconscious, development, inaccessible, cultish, homophobic, skeptical, reflective, privileged, conflicted, taking, draining, learning, safe, youthful, resilience, reflection, caring, ritualistic, grounding, driven, infancy, adventure, energetic, disappointing, exploration, bottom, unexplainable, donor, reminiscent, strength, unexpected, shift, unexplainable, toxic, grit, cliquish, legacy, relationships, reactionary, intense, save, friends, family, push, sea, beautiful, loving, freeing, amazing, forward, moving, opportunities, colonialism, home, uncomfortable, light, scary, rewarding, connection, encouraged, purposeful, homogenous, shame, growth-ful, steps, action, building, culture, bubble, non-diversity, familiar, striving, outside, encouraged, inspiring, intention, solitude, thinking, divided, striving, disappointing, exploration	Mentioned 1 – 35%

FINDINGS

DEI VISION & COMMITMENT



major pain-point expressed by Alumni and Seasonal Staff is a lack of clear understanding of what Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion looks like when it comes to Camp Manito-wish.

The term ‘diversity’ was interpreted by each individual in a different way. Some in your organization think diversity means racial, cultural, or ethnic. Some believe it refers to gender identity, while others see it as a religious issue. They expressed ‘angst’ in their individual interpretations with thoughts of how it will be incorporated and ultimately change the organization. This way of thinking leads to assumptions, disconnection, and the fear that nothing or too much is occurring.

My Assessment: DEI work is a broad umbrella that takes time to fully integrate within a 100+ year organization. Camp Manito-wish’s Administration recognizes the importance of DEI and is in the process of developing a shared DEI vision. This is demonstrated through the development of an organizational DEI Staff Committee (which was already in place prior to this engagement). I believe that current Administration is in the process of expanding the vision and aligning the organization’s programs and operations with this vision.

During the engagement, the organization’s Board of Directors established its own DEI Committee in support of this effort.

The questions are: **“How different do you want your culture to be?”** And **“What DEI does Camp Manito-wish have capacity for?”** In my observations, this is currently being fine- tuned.

In order to effectively move the organization’s DEI needle, cultural shifts have to happen on all levels - and that can only be achieved through continued self-reflection, honest

dialogue, and continued education. I would recommend that your DEI work includes a **Culture Development Plan**. The Plan could be laid out in five segments:

1. **Provide educational opportunities for the Board, Administration, and Year-round Staff to really understand the complexities of DEI.** Until there is a clear understanding of the scope of any unintentional and unconscious biases within the organization that are seeded within the Board and Administration, and then expressed through the culture's behavior, symbols, and systems, your DEI related cultural shifts may prove to be transitory at best.

One recommendation is to create a **Virtual DEI Information Portal** with both mandatory as well as elective materials for the board, staff, alumni, parents, and campers. Using your web portal, you can create educational opportunities all year-round. Those educational opportunities should not just include basic DEI training, but rather mirror the Cultural Competence, Unconscious Bias, Emotional Intelligence, and MESH trainings recommended for staff. DEI training and education (if optimally executed) will yield the greatest DEI cultural shifts within the board, administration, and the organization itself.

Until there is a deeper understanding by the majority of stakeholders of the issues, any “fixes” or solutions on a programmatic level will be superficial at best. It is extremely difficult to ‘fix’ something if you don’t have complete awareness of what is broken.

2. Once the governing body and staff team have a clear understanding of DEI, then define your focus. **Go Deep, not Wide.** One of the challenges that I have noticed in general within the organization, is that overall, there seems to be a hesitancy to say exactly what the desired DEI focus is. The initial focus could be narrowed to gender, ethnic, socio-economic, neuro-diversity, gender identity diversity, or religious equity and or inclusion.

Once enhanced DEI education has provided the necessary clarity, **my recommendation is** to strengthen your commitment in one or two specific areas and then over time, expand to other demographics. Truly defining what *“Creating an inclusive environment by upholding human dignity, valuing diversity, and acknowledging unique experiences”*

means in 2022 and beyond. **Defining what your DEI priority and focus is - is critical to your DEI success.**

My recommendation is again, to go deep and not wide. Trying to do everything can feel like (and be misinterpreted by your stakeholders) that nothing is being done. What does success look like? Is it gender identity equity? Ethnic and cultural diversity? Neuro- diversity? Is your focus to be a Christian organization? Is the emphasis on your independent camp identity? What is your long term commitment to? **Decide how different do you want your camp culture to be.**

3. Create an intentionally enhanced **DEI Communication Strategy** to better communicate to stakeholders the pathway and current DEI work. Once you as an organization decide where you want to focus your collective energy, then you can tell your story better.
4. **Make changes to your symbols and systems to reinforce the messages of your enhanced DEI learning.** Young people in general are more concerned with your cultural aspirations and seeing behavior change. Involving your seasonal staff in your cultural shift requires a major investment in time and money, which is why it is best left until the board and administration is convinced of the exact cultural direction and focus that supports the organization and delivers the best business benefits.

Once seasonal staff is involved, culture becomes a passion and a core feature of what Manito-wish stands for. Increased pride will build once the direction and focus is decided, communicated, and understood by all.

5. **Decide how you will measure change.** Create better tracking of all your camper demographics (ethnicity, gender identity, and even religious). Decide what you will measure longitudinally. Is it Quality over Quantity? Or Observable versus Measurable Changes? Is it the Numbers (What We Look Like) versus Experience (What We Feel Like) or a hybrid of all of the above.

Part of the current challenge is that there have been very few metrics in place to measure Manito-wish's social and environmental footprint and impact. There have been no

metrics in place to track the diversity of your campers. If you don't track it, you can't measure it and thus your stakeholders feel that nothing significant is happening. Those metrics are key to sharing your DEI success with your current and future stakeholders.

PROGRAMS

SUMMER PROGRAMS (BOYS, GIRLS, OUTPOST, AND FAMILY CAMP)

The number one shared staple that was consistently expressed across all the stakeholder groups (Board, Emeritus, Year-round Staff, Seasonal Staff, Alumni, Parents and Campers) as the heart of the organization is **Trail**.

60% of your stakeholders stated that Trail is one of the behavioral aspects that many fear will change if certain aspects of diversity and inclusion are fully embraced. Many voiced fear (rooted in the stereotypical perception) that non-White cultures are afraid of large bodies of water, unable to swim, and are not versed in the art of canoeing and that will somehow change this critical and beloved aspect of camp.

30% of the seasonal staff interviewed expressed that they would like more of the local history incorporated in the trips and on Trail in general.

During the site visit, I was able to observe aspects of both Summer Camp (the Boys session), Outpost, and parts of Family Camp, and the Trail sentiments were consistent with interviewees representing the various stakeholder groups across the organization via phone and Zoom interviews.

70% of the seasonal staff and alumni commented on the “exclusive” nature of Camp. They expressed internal conflicts with being an “insider” and being part of a somewhat “closed community”. There is an awareness of the “privileged perspective” of camp and the limited opportunity for many to attend due to the geographical location and the

expense of Camp. Those same interviewees expressed that they were keenly aware of “Similarity Bias” at Camp and that once you are “in” the group, there is little room for deviation from the norms. *“We are an elite group with a shared experience”* (a quote from a Seasonal Staff member).

During one of the group, in-person Seasonal Staff interviews, one of the staff made the observation that was echoed by others in the group that the stronghold the community has on the mythical characters Paul and Pauline Bunyan, feels outdated. They felt it was out of step with the times and that it does not paint a wholistic view with lumber jack lore not being balanced and in step with land conservation and environmentalism.

Without prompting, 75% of stakeholders across the organization expressed a sense of “relief” and “gratitude” that “Indian Mound Cabin” had been changed. This speaks to me of the continued strides that the Administration is making.

My Assessment: Because there is such a high focus on Paul & Pauline Bunyan as camp lore, it can be non-inclusive especially to other cultures (particularly indigenous cultures). There is an opportunity to bring more balance to the Paul & Pauline Bunyan narrative by adding aspects of land conservation, local historical markers, indigenous narratives, and environmentalism.

Camps in general, tend to be ritualistic in nature, but there appears to be a restlessness among many of the Seasonal Staff who are both vested in the rituals of Camp and frustrated with those same rituals as well. Many said that they come back year after year to see friends and their camp family, but don’t see it as a place that other cultures would see themselves fitting in except through assimilation.

There seems to be great comfort in the predictability of Camp, but also discomfort in the social-facing aspects of Camp that are not as diverse as many would like them to be.

My recommendation: Provide ongoing DEI training as well as spaces for stakeholders (particularly Seasonal Staff) to talk about (and positively work through) their internal conflicts and the inconsistencies they feel, see, participate in and perceive.

Given the current socio-political climate, having rifles at Camp is a point of concern that was voiced numerous times from Seasonal Staff and some Leadership Program Staff

members while gathering information during interviews. I was also able to observe this during the site visit as well.

The use of weaponry can send mixed signals to the community especially since there is an “Active Killer” Protocol (Run • Hide • Fight) on campus. If there is an “Active Killer” on site, having rifles can send mixed signals to both campers and staff and could evoke feelings and behavioral responses of bravado and heroism. Unless there is camp specific de-escalation training, the use of rifles can also be triggering (especially in a deeply wooded area) for some community members (particularly non-Whites).

My Recommendation: Considerations may be made to put that aspect of the program on hiatus until clear, up-to-date protocols and messaging can be ascertained to determine if this is a necessary and viable aspect of Camp during this time of continued social unrest.

The terminology of Camp Manito-wish (similar to every other camp) is very exclusive and is taken for granted that everyone intuitively understands it. It can be a barrier to feelings of belonging and inclusion.

My recommendation: Make sure that terminology is explained in more ways than just a handout with a glossary of terms. Put it up in various places around campus, giving the literal meaning in conversations with anyone who is new.

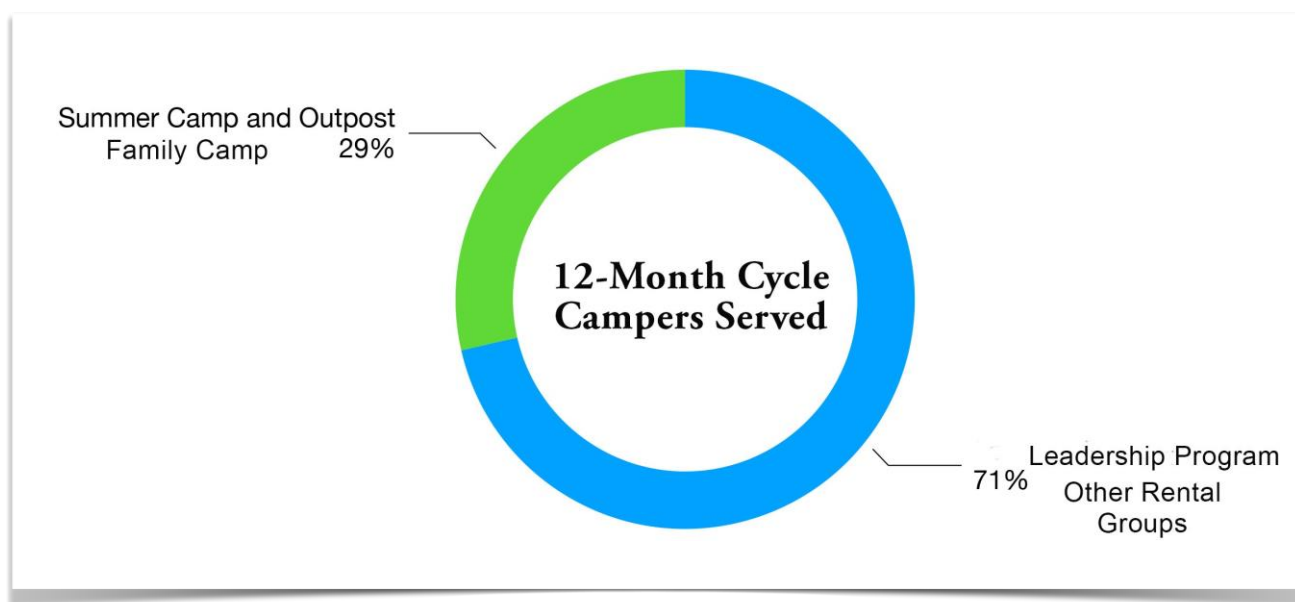
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Logistically the Boys and Girls Summer Camp and Outpost Programs are more mirrored. Those programs are viewed by the vast majority of stakeholders interviewed as the “main” summer programs. The Leadership Program is perceived as an additional program, but not as an equal share of the proverbial “three-legged stool”. This is largely due to the nature and design of the Leadership Program, as well as the limited or complete lack of involvement and experience of it by the stakeholders I was able to interview.

The Leadership Program is the largest of your program offerings and the most diverse. In fact, **through your Leadership program, you serve more than double the amount of**

campers than through your traditional single-gendered camp programs, Outpost and Family camp.

Ironically, the Leadership Program has by far the largest number of participants of your three core program offerings. Because I was only able to physically observe one small aspect of your Leadership Program, it would not be a fair assessment to judge the entire Leadership Program based on the small percentage of the program I was able to witness and interview (both in-person and via virtual interviews).



For example, the 40 participants and 6 staff interviews only represents 1.6% of the total year-round Leadership Program participation.

There were, however, specific observations and recommendations that I have shared with both Pat Soldan and Jeff Pereles during my site visit as well as feedback from the Schuler

Scholars School Staff that could make their experience a little better and be considered if applicable to the other groups.

I think there is a lot of room to tell your story better. Even though your Boys Camp, Girls Camp, Outpost, and consequently your Family Camps are not very ethnically diverse, your Leadership Program should be counted towards the number of non-White Campers that you are able to serve in the course of a year.

The program appears to be a major missed opportunity to create long term relationships with the viable groups of diverse campers that are already experiencing Camp Manito-wish. The Leadership Program could be a vital pipeline for Camp's other summer offerings. Not incorporating them more is a missed behavioral opportunity.

Camp Manito-wish is more diverse than the majority of your Stakeholders understand because many of them have only experienced the Summer Camp or Outpost offerings. The Leadership Program has the capability to bridge the inclusion and diversity gap if it is reimagined in the minds and hearts of all of your Stakeholders (including your Partnering Schools and Organizations).

My recommendation: Work with your partnering schools and organizations to renegotiate your service agreements so that you can have access to the demographics of the youth that you serve.

Your Stakeholders need to understand how diverse you currently are. Changing your measuring protocols would be a huge indicator of a Systems shift that can potentially add to the diversity and cross-pollination of your Leadership Program with your other programs.

I also **recommend** that you create a new program that can serve as a bridge between the Boys and Girls Summer Camps, Outpost, and the Leadership Program. This new program would ideally be co-ed and inclusively designed to intertwine all program participants.

PROCESSES

SONG BOOK

During the Spring of 2022 the Camp Manito-wish Song Book: “**Songs of the Northland**” underwent an extensive review, edit and update. Songs that were outdated and no longer culturally relevant were either modified or eliminated.

My recommendation: As our society continues to shift and evolve, a review of the Song book should be done every few years to ensure that the catalog of songs are relevant, culturally appropriate and as stated in your Song Book:

- **Celebrate the tradition of song at Camp Manito-wish YMCA by blending the music of the past with the expression of music today**
- **Encourage creative expressions of joy, fun, spirit and strength, which leads to growth and the development of the entire camp community**

GENDER IDENTITIES GUIDELINES REVIEW

Back in December of 2021, I reviewed Camp Manito-wish’s Gender Identities Guidelines document, which was created in 2018. The guidelines as a “living document” are being updated with the suggested modifications.

If as an organization, you make the decision that one of your diversity and inclusion primary focuses is gender identity, with the segregation of the Summer Camps between boys and girls, much intentional care will have to be given if transitioning, transgendered, and LGBTQ+ youth are to be seriously considered.

Overall, I believe that your Summer Camp and Family Camp are both poised to build more diverse and inclusive environments. The vast majority of your stakeholders that were interviewed seem to be eager but are not quite sure about how to cast a wider,

inclusive net. There also seems to be a misunderstanding among your stakeholders in general as to the real impetus for the consideration and inclusion of LGBTQ+ campers. Understandably, the lack of clear information breeds a level of fear. Fear of the unknown and specifically, that there will be a shift in Camp's core values.

It was voiced by a few Alumni and Parents that they believed that Camp was merely yielding to societal pressures regarding the creation of safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ Campers and Seasonal Staff. In actuality, I believe there were quite a few contributing factors to Camp Manito-wish's work around LGBTQ+ inclusion. I interviewed quite a number of stakeholders representing all the various groups who love Camp and want their LGBTQ+ loved ones to also be accepted in the community and have a positive Camp Manito-wish experience.

My recommendation: Initiate educational opportunities for all stakeholders as well as have courageous and honest dialogues within the community regarding inclusivity. This will (ideally) open up channels of communication, understanding, compassion, empathy, and ways to be even more supportive to all members of the Camp Manito-wish family.

FORMS

The following documents were reviewed:

- **Camper Application (online)**
- **Staff Application**
- **Summer Camp Parent Evaluation**
- **Seasonal Staff Survey**
- **Leadership Student Survey**

My recommendation: Create a space on all the applications for applicants to list their DEI experience and/or training. There may be missed opportunities by not including it. There were no red-flags, however DEI related metrics such as: ethnicity (which is different than ‘race’), gender identity, and neuro-diversity could be added to all your standard evaluations and accountability mechanisms particularly if it is your DEI focus. In general, your “The Summer Camp Parent Evaluation”, “Seasonal Staff Survey”, as well as the “Leadership Student Survey” should include more demographic information with particular focus on the metrics that would be beneficial longitudinally to capture from a DEI perspective.

As a resource, **The Avarna Group** has a catalog of resources that might be helpful with diverse recruitment, outdoor education, sexual orientation, multicultural education, environment, gender, community engagement and more.

<https://theavarnagroup.com/resources>

MARKETING

The following marketing materials were reviewed:

- **Leadership Sheets**
- **“The Path to Leadership Starts Here” Brochure**
- **Social Media Accounts (Instagram and Facebook)**
- **“The Essence of Camp Manito-wish” video**
- **“Leading the Way”**
- **“The View From Here”**
- **“Manito-wish Forever”**

- **CMY Statistics**

After reviewing the aforementioned marketing materials, there were a couple of things worth noting. **“The Manito-wish Leadership Program”** video was truly inspirational.

When reviewing **“The Essence of Camp Manito-wish”** Video, a few things stood out:

1. There is no representation of the Leadership Program which further enforces the feeling and perception that it is not a primary aspect of your camp portfolio. As a person of color, the only place I would feel like I really belonged was in the Leadership Program. More intentional marketing needs to be considered especially since this video is entitled “The Essence of Camp”.
2. At the 0:52 marker of the video, there is a female staff member with what appears to be black mud or tar all over her face looking wide-eyed directly into the camera. It can be unconsciously triggering for people of color given the history of “black-face” in our culture, particularly because in the video there is no context given. It felt rather random, subliminally inappropriate, and out of context.

Other than that, I didn’t see anything that would be considered a barrier to inclusion.

My recommendation: Update the video by either editing that particular clip out or add an additional clip to give it context. I would also suggest creating a new video that combines all of your key programs as the “essence” of camp giving a clearer vision of the “three-legged stool”.

WEBSITE

If the desired outcome is to become more ethnically diverse, I recommend that you tell the Leadership Program story better. Right now, it feels more like just “a program that you do” rather than a core aspect of “who you are.” It is a key program and you should find a way to tell the Leadership story better. Other than that, the website is a good representation of the camp experience.

OTHER DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Here is a listing of the additional documents that were reviewed. Nothing was identified as a potential barrier to inclusion.

- What To Bring List
- Outpost What To Bring
- Parent Information (including: 2022 Parent Guide; International Camper Guide; FAQ)
- Employee Information (including: Handbook; What to Bring List; FAQ; Staff Physical Examination Form)
- Program Enrollment/Inquiry Forms (including: Family Camp Sell Sheet; 9-2020 Staff
- Leadership Cabins Final; 2022 CMY Fact Sheet; Manitowish Forever; FY2022 Board of Directors;
- Staff Apprentice Sell Sheet; 2022 Summer Camp Application - Partner Organization; Leadership Flyer 2022; Summer Camp; Outpost; Leadership; Family Programs)
- Training
- Financial-Related (including: Campership Application)
- Medical-Related (including: Physical Examination Record)
- Travel-Related
- Order Forms
- Waiver Forms
- Dining

PROPERTY / FACILITIES

DINING

Camp Manito-wish has some obvious limitations when it comes to accommodating differently able-bodied campers and staff. The campus is beautifully appointed and my only recommendation regarding that, would be to expand your dining services to accommodate Leadership participants and Outpost in your Leadership Center. This was expressed by members of both groups in separate onsite interviews. The Outpost Seasonal Staff that I interviewed stated that it would be convenient to have more dining options at times, and the Leadership Program Staff and Participants echoed that sentiment but for different reasons. The Leadership Program participants (Schuler Scholars) felt that walking to meals from a further distance than Summer Camp participants added to feelings of exclusion.

PRIVACY

Privacy in the cabins and bathrooms was mentioned during the on-site visit by Seasonal staff, Leadership Program participants and staff, and Alumni. The main sentiment was that there was very little privacy for campers while dressing and undressing in the cabins. There are no designated changing areas or curtains that offer full privacy in either the cabins or the showers.

Another area of concern, was the ground level bathrooms in the Leadership Center. There are no curtains on the windows and anyone can view the general sink areas.

My recommendation: Make sure that all bathroom windows are covered. An opaque film could be added to the ground floor Leadership bathrooms to allow light in while still offering privacy. A small area could be designated within the cabin (or adjacent to it) that could be available to any camper who preferred additional privacy while changing

clothes. Adding an additional curtain to the shower stalls to prevent any gaps, could also help.

Feelings of vulnerability and safety are based on an individual's personal experiences. A few minor adjustments could make all the difference in the world to someone who is feeling insecure or particularly vulnerable.

STAFF

YEAR-ROUND AND SEASONAL

My staff assessments were mostly included within the Summer Camp section of this report. Seasonal staff were the most vocal and passionate about wanting to see more visible DEI shifts within the organization. This could be due to the fact that year-round staff has a more global and current understanding of the DEI work being done within the organization.

What I experienced and observed is that your seasonal staff mirrors the passion and energy of most young adults in our society at-large. They tend to be more socially aware of the nuances of DEI in general due to social media, and in turn can be less tolerant of the speed at which sustainable change occurs within an organization. The gift of having a continuously changing group of passionate young stakeholders is that they can help the organization move the DEI needle forward by positively influencing the campers through conversations and behaviors that support the organization's DEI goals.

My recommendation: Implement a robust library of DEI trainings and resources that can be utilized by all staff year-round. The more conversations about all of the different realms of DEI the more comfortable your Stakeholders will be with whatever the Administration decides is the first area(s) of focus.

FAITH AT CAMP

CHAPEL



Chapel seems to be a major area of discomfort for many (particularly Seasonal Staff, and some Alumni) across the different religious and spiritual ideological spectrum due to the fact that the word itself is exclusively Christian by definition and is not religiously inclusive.

The word “chapel” originated as one of the earliest Christian places of worship. They were not dedicated buildings but rather a dedicated chamber within a building. Most larger churches had one or more secondary altars which, if they occupied a distinct space, would often be called a chapel.

According to Merriam-Webster, “chapel is ultimately derived from the Late Latin word kappa, meaning “cloak.” How did we get from a garment to a building? The answer to this question has to do with a shrine created to hold the sacred cloak of St. Martin of Tours.”

Some of your Stakeholders hold the view that strict Christian ideology morally opposes gender identities other than cis-gender. This discomfort was expressed consistently and even with the addition of other religious symbols, the Christian foundation is felt predominately. There seems to be some angst around the ritualistic aspects of this part of your program with Chapel attendance not being optional, and with the prevalent biblical references.

Even though in the FAQ section of your website, it clearly states that chapel is **“a crucial part of our programming. At camp we instill Christian values, however our doors are open to all.”** The actualization of that statement through clear behavioral efforts is needed. Religious inclusion and diversity has to be demonstrated with practical applications in order for the stakeholders to fully understand what **“our doors are open to all”** really means. Christian values can sometimes be interpreted as intolerant and dogmatic which can feel very exclusionary in nature.

VESPERS / SQUARE CEREMONY

The Vespers/Square Ceremony was not mentioned during any of the interviews prior to the on-site visit. What I experienced and observed was a solemn ritual that seemed to emotionally touch the camp participants deeply. Some of the Seasonal Staff on-site expressed that the ceremony in hind sight (reflecting back on when they were campers) felt “cult-like” because of the requirement to wear white shirts. Having only experienced it once, my impression was the opposite.

In many cultures, white is worn as a symbol of reverence, and spiritual connection. It transcends religious affiliation. I observed the participants and they seemed to take the ceremony seriously and with great reverence for the process. It didn’t seem particularly “religious” but rather “spiritual” and from a DEI stand point, I didn’t see any barriers to inclusion.

GRACES

Interestingly, the topic of Graces was not brought up in any of the off-site interviews. “Graces” however, was a sticking point for many of the Seasonal Staff on-site. Many commented that they felt much more comfortable with the ritual of reciting “Passages” before meals rather than “Graces”. For many, “Passages” seemed more relatable and current. Many felt that “Graces” was used more for Family Camp and when Alumni were present to appease them with the tradition.

My recommendations: As an Administration with the input of the Board, explore how your values can be expressed in ways that feel more inclusive regarding Chapel and Graces. Because everyone experiences their faith in a very personal way that is reinforced by our participation in religious groups, it can be a very complicated situation to navigate. Continued courageous conversations with the ultimate goal of inclusivity may be the key.

**Camp Manito-wish’s Administration and Board of Directors’ “Faith at Camp Retreat” was taking place concurrently during the writing of this report. This report does not contain any data or outcomes from that retreat.*

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Each aspect of Camp Manito-wish has been influenced over the years by a range of factors, which have created the behavioral norms - and their underpinning mind- sets. True DEI in an organization depends upon systems that incorporate ways of valuing differences and individuals whose interactions are informed by self-awareness and respect for others.

Camp Manito-wish partnered with Cross Cultural Agility, LLC. to further the work already in progress by the DEI Staff Committee and the CEO to support the organization in ensuring sustainability, equity, and viability. This Cultural Audit is the end-product of that partnership.

240 Stakeholder interviews were conducted over the span of fifteen months yielding approximately 160+ hours of recorded content from telephone and Zoom interviews. Additional interviews were conducted onsite with organizational stakeholders representing each organizational demographic.

This Assessment Audit offers opportunities for Camp Manito-wish in the following areas:

- Reflection (how the organization sees itself in terms of DEI)
- Culture (the organizational norms, habits and beliefs)
- Interpersonal Skills (putting inclusion into action)

Emphasis was placed on Culture and how it plays an enormous role in Camp Manito- wish's organizational transformation. Culture (as explained in this report) is sustained by Behaviors, Symbols, and Systems which magnifies the organizational values and thus, sets the behavioral norms for all who belong to the Camp Manito-wish family.

In order to effectively move the organization's DEI needle, cultural shifts have to happen on all levels - and that can only be achieved through continued self-reflection, honest dialogue, and continued education.

Developing a Culture Development Plan could give the organization a clear understanding of the scope of any unintentional and unconscious biases seeded within the organization and then expressed through the culture's behaviors, symbols, and systems.

Creating a year-round DEI Information Portal could also be a way to provide all of your stakeholders with opportunities to deepen their understanding of DEI and what Camp Manito-wish has the capacity to sustain.

A surge of DEI education throughout the organization could ultimately infuse new information, shift the hearts and minds to innovate and integrate all of the opportunities that are right in front of you.

Camp Manito-wish is much more diverse than the majority of your stakeholders understand it to be because many of them have only experienced the Summer Camp, Outpost or Family Camp offerings. Through the Leadership Program, you serve more than double the amount of campers in a year than all of your other programs combined. You have a tremendous amount of room to tell your story better.

The bottom line is that when it comes to DEI, Camp Manito-wish is in a very unique situation. If ethnic diversity is your initial focal point, your Leadership Program provides ample low hanging fruit through relationships with your partnering organizations and schools that need to be renegotiated and reimagined so that you can include more of that demographic information.

Thank you for the opportunity to support your beautiful community of Camp people. Niambi

Jaha-Echols

Cross Cultural Agility, LLC.

