



# OKIZU

Supporting Families with  
Childhood Cancer

## Staff Welcome Packet 2020



*Warm*

# WELCOME



I am excited to welcome you to the Okizu family. Together we will make sure that Northern California children affected by childhood cancer have a chance to have the most epic summer possible.

This summer you will assist with friendships, social skills development and simple plain fun. You will be asked to problem solve, think quickly on your feet, and have the patience of ten people. You will hone your leadership skills and listening skills. You will provide interventions, support, management, and a responsive ear. At times you are a cheerleader as you provide motivation, and at times may even feel like Darth Vader as you struggle to be fair and consistent. You will become a role model, a pal, an organizer, a support system. You will be idolized one moment and then perhaps cursed at another. No doubt you will also learn a great deal about yourself, your strengths, and areas that need growth. You may actually be surprised by your abilities! It is a total immersion experience - personally and professionally - where you will also build some of the best and strongest relationships of your life.

We are always camper focused, which means that everything we prep, plan, and execute at camp is with the camper experience in mind. This packet contains important information for you to read and review before your arrival to ensure 100% focus on campers upon arrival at Camp Okizu.

I look forward to meeting you all up at camp! In the meantime, enjoy a warm welcome from me; Knuckles, who is the Assistant Camp Director; and other full time Okizu staff. We are working hard to prepare for the amazing summer ahead so please let us know if you have any questions as you get ready for this lifechanging experience.

Happy Camping,  
Morgan "Zora" Santiesteban  
Camp Director

# OKIZU

## PHILOSOPHY

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Children who are diagnosed with cancer miss a normal childhood. Their illness, treatment, and complications can keep them from enjoying activities that often are taken for granted. And yet these children, like all children, need the opportunity to grow, experiment, and discover independence. Okizu began with the belief that a residential camp can be an ideal setting for children struggling with cancer to explore and enjoy a normal life experience, while interacting with others who truly understand their illness. We quickly learned that all family members, including the ill child, parents, and siblings, are impacted in powerful and unique ways by childhood cancer. The opportunity for interactions with true peers and the strong sense of community fostered by a residential camp environment provide valuable emotional and practical support for continuing the cancer journey, while also allowing everyone to take a break from their routine and have a great time. UNTIL THERE'S A CURE...THERE'S CAMP!

## OUR HISTORY

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A dream, a promise, and a great collaboration led to the formation of Okizu. Co-founder John Bell made a promise to a friend in hospice, that he would develop a camp for children with cancer. He collaborated with several physicians at Northern California medical centers, including co-founder Dr. Mike Amylon to create Okizu. Our first camp was five days long and hosted 28 children with cancer. We currently serve up to 300 individuals at a time during our 22 year-round programs. We collaborate closely with California Pacific Medical Center; John Muir Medical Center; Kaiser Permanente Medical Centers in Oakland, Roseville and Santa Clara; Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford; Sutter Medical Center; UC Davis Medical Center; and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals in Oakland and San Francisco. Our founders quickly learned that a cancer diagnosis is devastating to the entire family, not just the patient. We developed programs to serve all members of families affected by childhood cancer. The first SIBS Camp (Special and Important Brothers and Sisters) hosted 42 campers in the summer of 1984. We added Family Camp in 1985 and subsequently the Teens-N-Twenties program for young adults (known as TNT) and bereavement programs for families and teens. We now provide support services for more than 3,000 people each year. Okizu rented various campsites to host our programs in our beginning years. In 1998, we purchased 500 acres near Oroville, California in order to provide a permanent home for Camp Okizu: a fun, inspiring, safe, and supportive environment where children and families struggling with pediatric cancer can regain their strength and hope, and where kids can just be kids. Camp Okizu is a serene, tranquil site with rolling hills and four lakes. With the generous support of individuals, corporations, and foundations, we have built four camper villages with 32 cabins including four shower/bath buildings, a 16,500-square-foot main lodge, a state-of-the-art medical center for children currently undergoing treatment, an amphitheater, hiking trails, an archery range, a ropes course, a basketball court, and playing fields.

# CAMPERS ARE PRIORITY

So that means we are always looking for our staff to go above and beyond to make a huge difference in our campers' lives! The impact of a camp counselor as a role model on a camper is truly life-changing; we know that you, as one of our staff, will help make this type of impact on our campers this summer if you give us 100%! Aside from your time-off, you will be with campers all day, 22 hours / 6 days in a week. As a counselor, you will be woken up in the middle of the night. Working at camp is the hardest job you will ever have. Remember the impact you are having on the children of Okizu when times get challenging (and they will!).



## Camp Names

Okizu has a long-standing tradition of using what we call "camp names." It can be intimidating for a child to meet their counselor for the first time. We want our campers' first impression of camp to be enjoyable, fun, and memorable not a place of nerves and questions of what to call adults.

**HELLO**  
my name is

**Button**

On Sunday campers will know to call their staffer "Button" instead of wondering whether if he goes by "Diego", "Mr. Perez", or "Mr." It may seem simple, but this allows campers to connect more quickly with staff. Most, if not all staff have nicknames at camp. It can be anything you want! Just remember, it must be camp-appropriate.



Camp Okizu

# ADDRESS

445 ZINK ROAD BERRY CREEK, CA

Camp Okizu is located in a rural area with inconsistent cell service. Please print out directions via google maps before departing for camp



**New!**

## Background Screening

**Online and Cost is \$25.**

**Must be completed**

**EVERY YEAR**



Once your background screening clears we will send you an email letting you know of your clearance.

**No Background Screening = No Camp**

The steps you need to follow to complete the process are:

- 1 Go to <https://app.verifiedvolunteers.com/promoorder>
- 2 Create an account
- 3 Enter your good deed code (xama3jp)

# Health at Camp



Come to camp ready to take care of your physical health. You will be on your feet, being active, for more than 14 hours per day. Be prepared to hike and walk a lot. At times you will be walking one mile to get to an activity from a location at camp. Taking care of your physical health includes:

**Eating enough, and eating foods that will nourish you.**

**Drinking plenty of water.**

**Apply (and reapply!) sunscreen even on cloudy days.**



**HEALTH HISTORY FORM:** In this packet, there is an Adult Health History form, which includes emergency contact information, as well as a Consent to Treat, and Medication Information. Please complete this form and bring it with you. You will not be able to volunteer without it.

## Medications

If you take medication, talk with your doctor about how the long days, extra exercise, and change in diet might affect your medication dosage. Try not to change the dose in the weeks approaching camp, or, if you have to, be aware that changes in medication could have an affect on your mood and plan for how you will cope with this.

In adherence to California state law, all medications (including over the counter) must be stored in a locked cabinet in the Inn (Health Center.) You will have access to your medications whenever you need. For privacy, it is recommended to store your medications in a cosmetic pouch or something that is not transparent.



# EMAIL

*Check it often! We will be sending you training opportunities, updates, and other important information in the weeks leading up to camp.*



# TEXT

*In an effort to communicate important information and last minute updates, we may contact you by text. If you do not want to receive information via text, you need to complete an "Opt Out" form. Please call or email our office to obtain this form.*

# FACEBOOK

*We have a private group to arrange carpools, ask questions, and start to build community before summer even starts!  
Search: 2020 Camp Okizu  
Volunteers*



# MEALS AT CAMP

We will provide three meals a day for you at camp. Our foodservice staff designs menus mostly for kids; there are lots of beans, cheese, pasta, and bread. If you need to supplement this with fruit or protein bars, there is a staff fridge to keep your personal food items in and you will have access to it on your time off. We can accommodate vegetarians and some food allergies but if you have a more specific diet, please plan to bring items to supplement the meals provided. Anything you bring needs to be something you can quickly grab on your time off (fruit, protein bars, etc.)



*If you have any questions about whether or not we can accommodate your specific food needs, please email the Camp Director: Morgan, aka Zora, at [Morgan@okizu.org](mailto:Morgan@okizu.org)*

## Living Arrangements

Although we have many cabins equipped with bunks to house our campers and staff, we love spending our nights under the stars. We use our cabins to hold our luggage for the week and pull our mats out onto the communal deck to sleep under the night sky with the cabin group.



## Mail

c/o Camp Okizu, PO BOX 1310, Berry Creek, CA 95916. This is a rural mail route. Please tell your friends and family to allow ten days for your mail to reach you.



## Time Off

Being a camp staffer is fulfilling work, but is also hard work! We expect a lot from you during your session, and we know you will rise to the challenge! During the week that you are with us, you will get one hour off every morning (Tuesday - Friday) and we will do our best to give you one "night off" 9-11pm, with no camper responsibilities.

Staff lounge is the only space at camp where cell phones are allowed to be used.



## TIME COMMITMENT

Each session of camp is a nine day commitment; two days of staff training and seven days with the campers. Staff members arrive no later than **2:30 pm on Saturday** and leave around **2:00 pm the following Sunday**. In order to be a staff member during one of our sessions, you must attend and participate in staff training.



# Lifeguard Training

Optional, FREE, and FUN!

May 8 -10th

Only 5 spots are available.

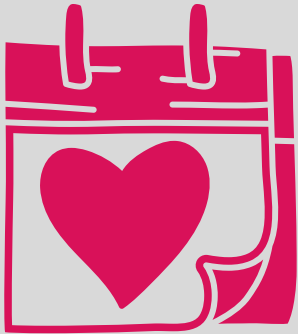
Interested? Email

Morgan@okizu.org



## ONLINE STAFF TRAINING

In addition to on-site staff training, staff members are required to participate in online staff training. The Online Staff Training will be sent to all staff in April. This MUST be completed prior to your arrival at camp.



### DAILY SCHEDULE:

A typical day at camp is as follows:

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Kapers

9:30 – 10:30 Special Interest Activity

10:30 – 10:45 Snack

10:45 – 11:45 Special Interest Activity

12:30 Lunch

1:30 – 2:30 Rest Hour

2:35 – 5:10 Cabin activity time

(counselors and campers decide what to do as a group)

5:10 – 6:00 Hill Time

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Evening activities

9:00 – 10:00 Bedtime prep and bedtime (actual time depends on the age of campers)

10:00 Quiet hour

## SCHEDULE

Each morning we offer Special Interest activities. All of the campers will be signing up for two activities to participate in each day. Counselors help teach and participate with campers side-by-side. We usually offer swimming, boating, archery, sports, newspaper, music, dance/yoga, and a few others. If you have a special skill you'd like to teach, please let us know!



# Staff Appreciation Event 2020!

December 26 - 28th

Weekend celebration at Camp Okizu  
more info provided in the fall



ZERO Tolerance - Weapons, alcohol, drugs, or  
any dangerous items are not permitted on camp  
property at any time while camp is in session  
(including staff training)

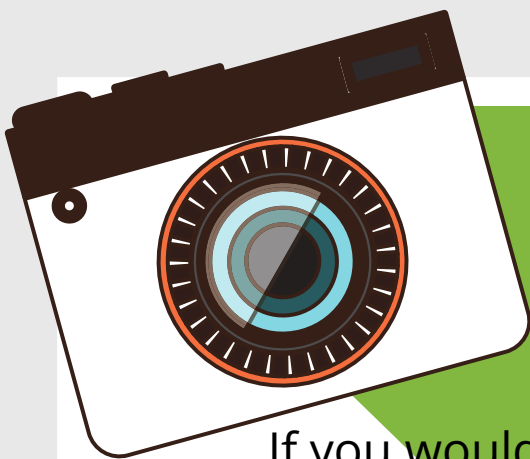
## Contact Info

CAMP  
(530)589-6985

MAIN OFFICE  
(415)382-9083

KNUCKLES  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
(510)314-7142

ZORA  
CAMP DIRECTOR  
(805)490-1661



## Camp Photos Available for Purchase

If you would like to participate in the camp photo  
opportunity, please ask for a form when you arrive at camp.

*Payment via check or cash.  
Cost of photo +\$4 for shipping*

Photos will be sent via USPS within 4-6 weeks.



You can find more details directly on the website at  
[www.visualsportsnorcal.com](http://www.visualsportsnorcal.com)

# PERSONNEL POLICIES



At Okizu, we value teamwork, cooperation, professionalism, and respect. These values apply to our paid employees and volunteers alike. We strive to promote a work environment which is defined by inclusion, dedication, organization, efficiency, and professionalism. We strive to create an environment that builds capacity within the camp community to understand, accept, value, and honor the unique contributions of all people.

Our goal is to maintain an inclusive camp community that eliminates stereotypes, bias, and bullying based on differences that include but are not limited to age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual identity, and socio-economic status. In terms of guidelines for staff behavior, we will define a Group Agreement once we are together at camp, which will define the best ways to accomplish our goals of providing peer support for our campers, and we will outline some of our personnel policies here in this document. In order to maintain the environment we have described, there are some types of behavior and conduct which are contrary to Okizu ideals, philosophies, and standards. These may result in progressive discipline, suspension, or termination. These include:

Disclosure of confidential information

Discourtesy to Okizu families, campers, volunteers, donors, or co-workers

Failure to observe dress code guidelines (see "List of What to Bring" for more information)

Obtaining employment based on false or misleading information, or falsifying information in, or making material omissions on your employment application or any documents or records

Removing or borrowing Okizu property without prior authorization

Actual or threatened physical violence towards another person

Carrying firearms or any other dangerous weapons at any time on premises

Engaging in criminal conduct whether or not related to job performance

Sexual harassment (see definition below)

Using or carrying recreational and/or illegal drugs while on premises

It is against the Okizu's policy and illegal for any employee, male or female, to harass another employee by making unwelcome sexual advances, or engaging in other unwelcome verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Okizu will not condone any sexual harassment of its employees. Likewise, we will not tolerate sexual harassment of a client or vendor by any employee of Okizu.

All employees will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for any substantiated act of sexual harassment they commit.

Okizu accepts volunteers and hires employees in accordance with federal laws and provides equal opportunities to staff and volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. It is our practice to give constructive feedback when needed. If a situation arises when your performance is not meeting our expectations, we will advise you in person and/or in writing.

If you have a grievance, you may bring it to your Unit Leader, Camp Director, or Medical Director at any time. They will work with you and our leadership team to resolve any issues.

As a volunteer, you will not receive any monetary benefit from your work at Camp Okizu, but it is our hope that you will have a rewarding experience. Since you are not a paid employee, we have no policies on leaves of absence, or severance.

## Rule of Three



**"Rule of Three" means staff are NEVER to be alone with a camper.**

Always follow the Rule of Three when you are interacting with a camper. The Rule of Three is always in effect, some specific examples include:

- Traveling somewhere on camp, make sure there is a third person with you
- Always have a third person, preferably a staffer, within the line of sight and earshot when needing a personal conversation with a camper
- This person acts as a witness, and must be able to see the staffer and camper at all times



# OKIZU PACKING LIST

**Hot days** and **chilly nights** are in your future, maybe even a rain drop or two! When packing for camp, please plan for all types of weather and random opportunities to play dress up.



## DRESS like the **ROLE MODEL** you are!

Plan to wear clothes that are comfortable to play in, hold no value if they get dirty or damaged, and showcase self-expression with slight modesty. That means your shorts must cover your tush, belly buttons must be covered, and images and text must be appropriate for children of all ages. Leggings or basketball shorts, and a t-shirt are the go to outfit of choice for most staff.

- Short sleeve shirts
- Long sleeve shirts
- Sweatshirts for morning & evening
- Rain jacket
- Warm sleep top
- Bathing suit\*

\*women: no string bikinis, please; men: no Speedos or Speedo-type bathing suits

**TOP 1/2**

- Pants
- Shorts
- Underwear
- Socks (what you think you'll need plus 3)
- Warm sleep bottoms
- 2 pairs of shoes (Required to be closed-toed)

**BOTTOM 1/2**

- Bath toiletries
- Warm sleeping bag and pillow (pro tip: bring a fitted sheet for your camp mattress under the stars)
- Towels/washcloths
- Flashlight / batteries
- Watch - waterproof if possible
- Alarm clock - can't use your cell phone and don't have power
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen /chapstick
- Water-bottle
- Hat
- Backpack
- Clipboard/pen

***Please leave anything expensive or irreplaceable at home***

**EXTRAS**

# Family Camp Staff Information



As you may know, Family Camp is an opportunity for families to relax and meet other families who have had a similar experience. Your job as a staff member is to make sure the families feel included, know what the schedule is, where to find things, and who to ask if they have a question. During the weekend you should meet and mingle with different families, play with children, and be available to help where needed.



3:00/4:00pm Families and staff start to arrive at camp  
6:00-9:00pm Dinner served in the lodge  
10:30pm Staff meeting in the lodge

During the staff meeting, you'll learn the age of the kids you'll be working with. Additionally, you will learn the activities you will be helping with during family time. These activities include but not limited to waterfront, art, fishing, archery, ropes, etc.



8:00am Breakfast  
After breakfast - Guardians go to discussion group and you'll be responsible for a group of children.  
9:00am - 12:30pm Kid time/ Guardian time  
12:30pm Lunch and rest hour  
2:30-5:00pm Family time at camp activities  
You'll work in the program area assigned at Friday's staff meeting.  
6:00pm Dinner  
After dinner: Campfire or dance

\*\* We ask you to hang with families till 10:00pm\*\*



8:00am Breakfast  
After breakfast: Clean up and head home.  
Staff departure is noon  
To give families a longer time at camp, these weekends now include an optional third night. Staff time commitment is Friday evening - Sunday after dinner/clean up. Staff are encourage to stay through Monday morning if they are available.

You are responsible for your own transportation to and from Family Camp. Post in the facebook group (previously listed) if you can offer a ride OR need a ride to camp.

Please arrive as early as possible on Friday and Let Camp Director, Morgan know if you will arrive after 10:00pm.

If you plan to arrive after 9:00pm, you'll need to provide your own dinner.

