

MDA Summer Camp

First and foremost, thanks to all who participated in 2024 to raise more than \$1.25 million for MDA. Each dollar you raised gave many children and young adults hope and many weeks of fun at an MDA Summer Camp.

The following NALC members and their guests were in attendance at the MDA Summer Camp: Michael Short of Northeastern New York Branch 358; Joshua Petersson of South Central Indiana Branch 828; Jesse Redden of Fort Wayne, IN Branch 116; Clint Colie of New Jersey Merged Branch 38; Chris Hull of Zanesville, OH Branch 63; David Norton of Portland, OR Branch 82; Tim Huhta of Erie, PA Branch 284; Larry Sleger of Manitowoc, WI Branch 490; Melissa Harris of Louisville, KY Branch 14; Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson; and MDA National Service Partners Director Tawny Saunders.

“This was the first return of the Category Winners’ Incentive NALC/MDA trip since COVID,” Vela Davidson explained.

On June 17, the category winners attended the Salvation Army Wonderland Camp, which hosted the 2025 MDA Summer Camp. All sponsors were there that day and able to interact with the children and volunteers, playing games and awarding prizes. NALC members ran several booths and helped children partake in the games and have fun.

“It was an emotional time, seeing the smiles on the children’s faces and hearing their laughs,” Vela Davidson said. “It made me tear up. However, it made the work we all put in worth every penny.”

Each summer, kids and young adults with neuromuscular disease attend these life-changing overnight camps around the United States at no cost to their families, thanks to NALC and other generous supporters. Camp gives kids a chance to discover new interests while gaining self-confidence, making lifelong friendships and experiencing the independence of being away from home.

MDA Summer Camp creates a world of possibilities for children living with neuromuscular disease. It’s a magical place of inclusion, empowerment, exploration and growth.

The magic is in the experience of trying something new, developing friendships that last a lifetime, learning to self-advocate, and harnessing potential.

Camp offers a variety of activities and programs such as arts and crafts, sports and games, traditional camp activities and more. Every activity is adapted to meet



each individual’s needs and abilities. Dedicated and trained volunteer camp counselors are available to help campers with activities of daily living and personal care. An MFA poll showed the positive benefits:

- 98% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp creates opportunities for campers to develop a positive self-identity.
- 94% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp fosters independence and agency in their child.
- 93% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp provides their child opportunities to make friends.

“Thanks to your fundraising efforts, brothers and sisters, MDA can provide a safe, inclusive summer camp experience at no cost to families,” Vela Davidson said.

For the NALC attendees, the experience was a moving one that made them want to continue to raise money for MDA. “My mother told me, ‘If you think you can help someone, you should always try,’” Melissa Harris from Branch 14 said.

Make sure you and your branch are continuing to fundraise for 2025.

Reminder: Send a copy of the allocation form and checks to NALC so your branch can be credited the proper totals. Remember to send all money raised into MDA before Dec. 31 to receive credit.

