



our next
generation

WE SEE THE POSSIBILITIES

2024

SUMMER
REPORT

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LaToya
SYKES
 President & CEO

At Our Next Generation, Inc., we're thrilled to share the incredible highlights of our 2024 summer camp program, where we brought joy, learning, and connection to youth and families across Milwaukee's central city and beyond. This year, we offered an eight-week, full-day summer camp experience designed to inspire, engage, and empower young minds while providing a safe and enriching environment for families.

But that's not all—2024 marked an exciting expansion for us! We opened our doors wider than ever before, extending our reach to serve even more communities, including Washington Park, Coldspring Park, Sherman Park, and the Concordia Historical area. While our roots remain firmly planted in Milwaukee's Central City, we were delighted to welcome children and families from surrounding neighborhoods and beyond, creating a vibrant tapestry of diversity and shared experiences.

From hands-on activities to unforgettable adventures, this summer was all about building connections, fostering growth, and creating memories that will last a lifetime. So, let's dive into the stories, achievements, and smiles that made the summer one for the books!

BY THE NUMBERS

During the summer, Our Next Generation, Inc. (ONG) set out with big dreams and even bigger goals—and the numbers tell an inspiring story of resilience, adaptability, and success! Here's a snapshot of our 2024 summer camp journey:

98 APPLICATIONS

The excitement was palpable as we received a whopping 98 applications from families eager to join our summer camp program. This overwhelming interest was a testament to the trust and enthusiasm our community has for ONG!

75 CAMPERS ENROLLMENT GOAL

With a goal of welcoming 75 campers, we hit the ground running, ready to create a summer filled with fun, learning, and unforgettable experiences.

22 CAMPER TRANSITIONS

While we bid farewell to 22 campers due to early school starts, employment commitments, relocations, and family vacations, we celebrated the fact that these changes reflected the dynamic lives of the families we serve. Every camper who moved on took a piece of ONG's spirit with them!

53 CAMPERS ENROLLED

The summer concluded with 53 amazing campers who brought energy, curiosity, and joy to our program every single day. These campers formed lasting friendships, explored new adventures, and received academic instruction to mitigate summer learning loss.



ONG!

EMBRACING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

In 2024, ONG proudly partnered with incredible organizations to enrich our summer camp experience and expand our impact.

Together, with organizations like the Brewers Summer Kickoff, and some of the community partners listed below, we offered safe opportunities for campers to learn and grow.

Blue Lotus Farms: Campers and staff visited Blue Lotus Farms in West Bend, WI, for a three-day summer excursion focused on understanding nature through hands-on experiences, like kayaking, canoeing, fishing, hiking, plant identification, bird watching, and swimming safety and fun.

Dodge County Nature Center: Lead & Learn Program: ONG organized an outing for the entire camp to the nature center, where they explored two trails, visited the insect sanctuary, and played outdoor games. This was the first year ONG was able to take the whole camp.

City Champs mixed martial arts: City Champs, a traveling MMA school, provided campers with a demonstration of Mixed Martial Arts and self-defense techniques at ONG.

Milton House Underground Railroad: Middle and high school campers visited the Milton House in Milton, Wisconsin, located just outside Janesville. The Milton House served as a "safe house" for runaway slaves attempting to reach Canada. It was owned by lifelong abolitionists and now operates as a museum. ONG was provided a special hour-long tour of the museum, guided by a local historian.

Grace Conservatory of Music: Campers received lessons from April Bell, where they learned music scales, chords, and various songs. culminating with campers playing in a grand music ensemble for family, volunteers, donors, and ONG staff.

Milwaukee Public Library-Super Reader: 3rd-5th graders participated in the "Super Reader Squad." Campers This program is designed to foster young learners' interest in reading during the summer. Campers received coupons for various fun activities around Milwaukee for completing their reading goals.



Milwaukee Chamber Theater: Middle and high school campers attended a variety of plays both in person and virtually that were hosted by the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Campers had the opportunity to interact with the performers and expressed their in theater, art, staging, and other related fields.

NeuLife Social Services: Middle and high school campers participated in human-trafficking awareness and effective communication sessions, that emphasized the idea of "self-empowerment," focusing on individual strengths and abilities.

Safe & Sound/27th Street Drug Free Coalition: High school campers engaged in various community and drug-free initiatives, to include neighborhood clean-ups, intergenerational discussions, mental health, beautification projects, peer relationships and many others.

Sharp Literacy: Sharp Literacy helped our 3rd to 5th graders develop their reading, writing, and research skills by using visual arts, with a focus on their STEM Dream Team initiative.

Starbase Aviation Week: A select group of campers had the opportunity to learn aviation skills through the Starbase program. Campers were taught cartography, charting, weather mapping, navigation, and flight simulations by experienced Navy pilots. By the end of the program, the campers were proficient enough to fly from Milwaukee to Kenosha, Wisconsin, and back.

Shepard School (Goat Herder Project): Our partnership with Herder Marcus "Luke" Davis allowed us to bring goats to ONG for an urban farming project unique 8-week program. Nearby Nature Center provided the curriculum and relevant lessons. ONG's high school group, Leaders of Tomorrow, were responsible for the daily care of the goats, educating the community about the benefits of urban farming and the processes involved in caring for livestock, including feeding, providing water, and ensuring adequate shelter.

Volunteers, partners, and community members were invited to visit and learn about the program. The campers led all community-focused visits, inspiring younger students to aspire to become shepherds in the future. We would love to see ONG campers develop into future farmers, herders, veterinarians, or zoologists!



AGENCY RESOURCE PARTNERS

Milwaukee Center for Independence (MFCI), Summer Meal Program: As an agency, we were able to partner with MCFI to provide a nutritional breakfast and lunch for all youth enrolled in our program and community members under the age of 18 years old.

Milwaukee Office for Safety & Wellness (MSW) Summer of Healing Prevention Project: MSW's core mission is to reduce violence and promote safety and healthy living in Milwaukee. They provide strategic direction and oversight for citywide efforts aimed at lowering the risk of violence through collaborative strategies and partnerships with non-profit, neighborhood, and faith organizations. ONG is a proud partner of MSW, working to help reduce crime and serve as a resource for families in the greater Milwaukee area. ONG hosted a successful event that celebrated donors, volunteers, elected officials and community organizations, all of whom contribute to supporting campers and helping Milwaukee become a better place to live, work, play and learn.

Progressive Health Care Annual Health Fair: ONG campers and families had the opportunity to explore the annual Progressive Health Fair, which included free minimal health screenings, Covid testing, mental health resources, stress-relief activities, and more.

Safe & Sound Youth Council: ONG campers participated in the national "Dear Future Me" campaign. Students created a short video that highlights having a positive perception on life and remaining drug free. The video was posted on Facebook. Campers also worked a billboard project which resulted in 4 billboards, featuring ONG campers, being placed throughout the 53208 area.

ONG thanks our campers, families, staff, donors, and partners for making for making our 2024 Summer Camp an impactful and rewarding experience!

CAMPER FEEDBACK

"ONG is the place to be!"
~ Bryson, 10

"ONG gives me a great feeling. I feel comfortable here. I can talk to friends and teachers about anything."
~ Marquise, 16

"The food is good and Blue Lotus was the best place I've ever been to." ~
Jerimiah, 12



"I love ONG because we go on field trips and the teachers are nice."
~ Casey, 10

"It's good to be around friends in the summer. We have a lot of fun."
~ Jaylin, 14