

Reaching New Audiences Through Camps

Christine Shupla, shupla@lpi.usra.edu
Deb Bialeschki, dbialeschki@acacamps.org
Andrew Shaner, shaner@lpi.usra.edu
Amanda Smith Hackler, smithhackler@lpi.usra.edu



Attendees at the 2016 national ACA conference explored NASA Juno modeling activities at the LPI booth

The Lunar and Planetary Institute, working with other NASA education specialists, is sharing NASA science, activities, and resources with campers across the United States through its partnership with the American Camp Association (ACA).

Camps Reach Broad Audiences

- ACA members include Boy and Girl Scouts, YMCA, 4H, and a variety of other camp programmers committed to delivering lessons in community, character-building, and skill development.
- Camp professionals like to say that there is a camp for every child. Some camps focus on specific audiences such as inner city and at-risk youth, children with disabilities, LGBT youth, and other minority groups. Almost all camps offer scholarships for families that need help in making this experience available for their child.
- Many camp program facilitators are eager to incorporate meaningful hands-on activities into their programs. Of the almost 3,000 ACA camps, 32% of all camps offer STEM specific programs, and 47% of day camps offer STEM activities.
- The planetary science community can reach new audiences by sharing resources, providing professional development, and collaborating with camps.

Recommendations For Sharing Your Science with Camps

- **Partner with a local camp to conduct activities, tell stories, and share your resources directly with campers.**
- Provide professional development and share appropriate resources through sessions and booths at regional or national camp conferences.
- Share how your life or career were positively influenced by a personal experience at camp through a camp conference presentation.
- Write a blog describing how camps can use or have used your resources.
- Provide a short webinar to demonstrate specific activities and event opportunities.
- Share new opportunities and resources with ACA leadership to disseminate to their members through newsletters, announcements, and their website.



Attendees at the 2017 national ACA conference received NASA resources at two sessions and at the NASA booth.

For help connecting with ACA conferences, blogs, and webinars, or recommendations on appropriate resources for camps, contact Christine Shupla at shupla@lpi.usra.edu.

Partnering with Camps

Start by learning about your camp's audience, programs, and goals, which may not include education.

Determine how your content, activities, and resources could support their programming.

Camp Programs and Audiences

- Although some camps offer programs for families and adults, the overarching audience is youth. Many camps focus on particular audiences (girls, children with specific disabilities, etc.).
- Programming includes afterschool camps, day camps, and overnight camps, from hours to multi-week experiences.
- Many camps focus on helping children develop 21st century learning skills such as social skills, independence, problem-solving, self-confidence, identity development, or spiritual well-being.

Camp Resources and Limitations

- Most camps take advantage of outdoor and natural settings.
- Many camps have limited or no mobile connectivity and encourage their campers to unplug from their technology.
- Some camps have telescopes.
- A few camps have media / technology labs.

Resources that Resonate with Camps

Camps conduct hands-on activities that use cheap, easily purchased materials, and do not require extensive time, preparation, or background experience.

Many camps are interested in activities related to:

- Night sky (constellations, planets)
- Traditional storytelling
- Weather
- Health
- Nature / Environment
- Communication and collaboration skills
- Team-building



"Strange New Planet" conducted at the 2017 ACA conference builds communication and collaboration skills.