

**CAMP SUMATANGA ACTION TEAM:** Assess the mission of the Camp and address pertinent governance issues, evaluate current leadership and staffing model, and examine the Camp's relationship to the North Alabama Conference and Conference Trustees with maximum authority to act in the Camp's best interest.

**Members:** Rev. Dr. Andy Wolfe, Convener, ex-officio; Neeysa Biddle, Sandy Wright Brown, Rev. Dr. Bill Brunson, Mike Byrne, Tiphonie Gatgens, Terry McElheny, Harlan Prater, Allan Robertson, ex-officio, Daphne Orr, Interim Executive Director and camp consultant, Rev. Mark Johnston, previously Executive Dir, Camp McDowell.



## SUMATANGA ACTION TEAM COMMUNIQUE

November 21, 2019

**LOG-IN AND SEE WHOSE TEAM IS LEADING:** The fundraising campaign *Creating Camp Connections* is building momentum every hour. A big thank you to the Champions who have contacted family, friends and business associates to contribute to Sumatanga's mission of providing *sacred space and an environment rich with opportunity for encounters with God through nature and nurture*. The on-line campaign started November 1 and will conclude December 3, #Giving Tuesday. Our goal is \$300,000! <https://campaignsumatanga.swell.gives>



**REMINDER:** The Champions are in friendly competition with one another. There is a rumor one Champion will jump in the lake at Sumatanga if his team surpasses \$25,000!

### REMINDERS:

- **SUMATANGA CAMPUS TO BE CLOSED FROM NOVEMBER 25 UNTIL EARLY JANUARY.** The updates and repairs to the Water Tank are scheduled to begin November 25, 2019.
- **JOB OPENINGS:** The job descriptions are posted on the Sumatanga website. Applicants are asked to send a resume along with a cover letter to [Director@Sumatanga.org](mailto:Director@Sumatanga.org).  
**Director of Summer Camp Ministries**  
**Receptionist/Administrative Assistant**
- **VOLUNTEERS FOR EXTERIOR PROJECTS AND INTERIOR UPDATES NEEDED:** Raking leaves, clearing gardens, repairing sheetrock and painting are just a few of the tasks that individuals, families, church groups, school teams/clubs and Scouts can do on-site. Please contact Daphne Orr and Rev J. Mark "Bruno" Hughes via [Volunteer@Sumatanga.org](mailto:Volunteer@Sumatanga.org) to schedule your time so we can ensure all the materials are ready when you arrive.

**STEWARDSHIP OF SUMATANGA:** We shared in the October Communique our work remains focused on our constituencies of children, youth and adults offering experiences at Summer Camp, Retreats and Group meetings/functions. It is the mission of Sumatanga **to provide sacred space and an environment rich with opportunity for encounters with God through nature and nurture**. Our Vision **is to be THE home for Christ-centered hospitality**.

In order to strengthen the foundation that the Sumatanga family has lovingly built, the Action Team is approaching a long-term sustainable plan by identifying and then incrementally addressing steps toward a viable future. Some steps are as tangible as managing current income and outgoing expenses for Summer Camp and Conference Center retreats. Other steps require delicate mapping and steerage.

To uphold our commitment for transparency, we want to recap the steps to ensure Sumatanga Camp & Conference Center can continue its mission.

**COMMUNICATION:** We have assembled alumni individually in small groups and in large listening sessions. We leveraged social media to keep you informed and share ALL of the Sumatanga successes or clarify any misunderstanding or misinformation. We have recapped our progress through a monthly Communique. We have worked in partnership with the Board of Trustees and kept the Bishop and Cabinet informed of our progress. We recruited 50 Champions for the on-line fundraising program who could share our progress with their personal network.

**PRIORITIZATION:** The Action Team and the Sumatanga Staff will focus time, money and resources to improve on the Campgrounds/Pool Camp, Retreat Centers, McKinley-Atkins, Hundley Dining, Hutto Auditorium, Log Cabin and Hillcrest. Other buildings/areas will be not be used for guest activities.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT:** As stewards of this beautiful property, we have a responsibility to manage it. Our work is guided by the Sumatanga forest management plan which focuses on planting, culling and conserving the property in order to preserve the property for present and future generations. Past caretakers wisely planted tracts of pine trees specifically for harvesting, and at some point, our hardwoods will need to be culled. Daphne and the Action Team are working with a forestry consultant who will update our plan and guide us through the management process in an esthetically and environmentally appropriate manner.

**RESERVATION REVENUE:** The Hospitality team has revised the reservation process. The staff will secure a contract which guarantees a minimum number of rooms and meals in the Retreat Centers or Campgrounds/Pool Camp along with a processing fee. This will avoid holding beds for guest no-shows.

**DONATION REVENUE:** The Action Team delved deeply into financial models that projected revenue and expenses for 2020 and beyond. In addition to securing alternative revenue sources and diligently managing reservation/camp registration revenue, donations will remain an important component of the operating budget. Our financial projections for 2020 and 2021 estimates donations will be approximately 20% of our required operating revenue. While 20% is consistent with national benchmarks of other faith-based camps, our goal is to reduce the dependency on donations to less than 20% of operational needs. If operating needs can be covered primarily by reservation/camp registration fees, then a higher percentage of donations can be used to add value to Sumatanga in the form of modernized facilities PLUS a sound financial future.

**OPERATING EXPENSES:** As stewards of Sumatanga, we pledge to continually review and adjust expenses. We have renegotiated contracts and lowered costs for telecommunications, laundry and some utilities.

We anticipate fixed expenses as well as utilities will begin to decline in 2020 by operating only in the Retreat Centers, McKinley-Atkins, Lodge Kitchen, Hundley Dining Room and Hutto Auditorium as well as the Campgrounds/Pool Camp and scheduling guests within a 9-month window.

**STAFF EXPENSES:** In addition to our Executive Director, there are salaried full-time staff in Maintenance, Food Services, Housekeeping and Summer Camp Ministry. Our part-time staff includes: Bookkeeper, Receptionist/Administrative Assistant, Kitchen team, Housekeeping team, Hospitality/Guest Services and Maintenance team. Depending on the event, temporary staff may be added in the Kitchen and Housekeeping. Volunteers assist with Hospitality/Guest Services and are critical for general maintenance projects.

**NEXT STEPS:** The Action Team is focused on:

- Reaching our fundraising goal of \$300,000
- Water Tank repairs
- Hiring the open jobs – Director of Summer Camp Ministry and Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
- Assembling the Summer Camp Team (Director, Ministry Team, Lead Counselors, Activity Staff and Volunteers)
- Opening Summer Camp 2020 registration
- Continuing the repairs, clean-up and renovations of Retreat Centers, Pool Camp and Kitchens/Dining Rooms

Thank you for your prayers and support - not only your financial support but also your encouragement.

Andy Wolfe, Convener

Daphne Orr, Interim Executive Director