

# The Camp Abilities Newsletter

## The “CAN”

Volume 15 Issue 1

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**“Believe you can achieve!”**

“The CAN” (Camp Abilities Newsletter) is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Janet Joseph, “The CAN” founder and Lauren Lieberman’s mother. “The CAN”, as in, yes **YOU CAN!**

## What's Going On

Yesterday 6/29	Today 6/30	Tomorrow 7/1
<p>The Camp Abilities staff, specialist, and coaches had amusing icebreakers. They learned all the responsibilities, assessments, and schedules. They were also able to see and participate in the sports and activities like Beep Baseball, Disc Golf, 5-A-Side Soccer, Track &amp; Field, Swim, and Goalball. After that, they were able to wind down and prepare for a fun exciting week.</p>	<p>We had an amazing opening ceremony with the parents and athletes as they arrived at Camp. The athletes and coaches were able to do a Meet the Specialists Scavenger Hunt. We had a delicious dinner, had evening activities, and partied all night with Terry Kelly!</p>	<p>The athletes will be able to get to know the members of their team more as they do many different sports like track, swimming, SUP, Disc Golf, and goalball. Later they will get lunch and FOB. Then the athletes will be able to play soccer, Beep Baseball, Tandem, and Fitness. After that, they will enjoy dinner and afternoon activities and then party with Terry Kelly.</p>

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## Meet the Staff and Specialist!

**The Camp Abilities staff and specialists have been working tirelessly and hard to make sure that Camp Abilities is at it's very best. Here is a little dive into some of the very wonderful people who make camp a magnificent place!**

**Kristi Lane:** Kristi is from Wisconsin and this is her second year as a graduate assistant, but she has been attending camp for 3 years. She graduated this past May and has accepted a full-time teaching position! She says that her “favorite thing about camp is the culture of our staff and how everyone always comes together and shows up for the kids!”

**“Aunt” Helen Weinheimer:** Aunt Helen has been to Camp Abilities Brockport for the past 6 years, but she has also been to other camps. She got the unique name 'Aunt Helen' because she is Lauren Lieberman's Aunt. Aunt Helen is the specialist for evening arts-and-crafts activities. “I love seeing good friends and family at Camp each year and seeing what a dramatic difference we make in the lives of the campers. I go home at the end of the week reinvigorated.”

**Charles Roselle:** Charles has been a part of camp for the past 9 years. He has attended the camps in Brockport, Arizona, Texas, and Saratoga. This year he is a sport and aquatic specialist. Charles's three interesting facts are that he played football for the College at Brockport, he was born in California, and he has flown a plane.



**Lisa Hanson:** Lisa is one of our amazing brailist here at camp. She has been at Camp Abilities Brockport for 14 years, and Camp Abilities Texas Director for 7 years. On top of all of her many years at camp, she has also been an O&M for 26 years. She has “the two

best children in the entire world!” Her favorite thing about camp “is the wonderful and amazing friends I have made from all around the country.”



**Martha Ruether:** Martha is one of our Swim Specialist. We are so lucky to have her back again at Camp Abilities Brockport because she is a Paralympian who swam in Rio in 2016! She majored in Psychology and she enjoys rock climbing.

**Maureen Ruether:** Maureen is one of our research specialists. She has been at Camp Abilities for the past three years. She is the mother of Martha Ruether who is also one of our specialists (and a Paralympian). Maureen is a half-marathon runner and has eleven brothers, and sisters.

**Jordan Ramos:** Jordan is a specialist for 5-a-side soccer and swimming. This is his third year here at camp, he is the oldest of his 6 siblings, and he has lived in 3 different states in 3 years. Jordan says he “likes to try things even if I don’t excel in it at first” and he loves to see that within the athletes as well.



**Jess Parfitt :** Jess is the Goalball and Beep Baseball specialist this year at camp. She has been at Camp Abilities Brockport for 6 years and has been at Camp Abilities Utah for 3 years. She is a triplet, enjoys baking, and drove across the country by herself.

**Dar Niemira:** Dar is our specialist for Beep Baseball and Track & Field. Dar has been helping out with Camp Abilities since 2012, and has attended over 45 Camp Abilities in total. Dar was born without a hip socket and that is how her love for physical activity started. She had to do a lot of physical activity to make her hip strong and healthy. She is now an APE teacher in New York.

**Cassie Orgeles :** Cassie is our SUP specialist and she also works with our CIT. This is her first Camp Abilities and we are so lucky to have her because she was a Paralympian in 2011 for goalball. She was born in Hawaii and has been to Finland.

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**Hannah Williams:** Hannah is one of our Graduate Assistants who is also helping with the Lavelle grant. She has been at Camp Abilities for two years. She is from Canada, loves powdered peanut butter, and has a fake front tooth.

**Rachel Sherman :** Rachel is a Graduate Assistant and has been a part of our Camp Abilities family for 3 years. She has done 9 Camp Abilities and her favorite part about this fun impactful week is the talent show.

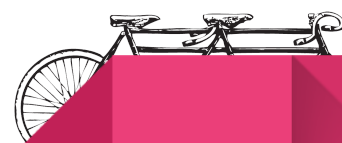
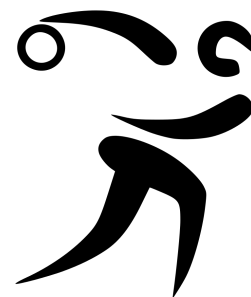
**William Safford:** Billy is our Disc Golf Specialist. He was here for the 10th anniversary of Camp Abilities Brockport, and he is on the board for Camp Abilities Maryland. He has played 250 Disc Golf courses in 29 states, and he has a daughter who is an All American distance runner.

**KC Bleazard :** KC is our Goalball and Tandem specialist. She has been at Camp for nine years. She also has been to Camp Abilities Texas, Washington, and Oregon. She rides dirt bikes, she loves to travel, and she “loves to see the growth of all the athletes during camp and when they come back the next summer.”

**Jasmine Bradwell:** Jasmine is one of our Graduate Assistants. This is her 3rd year here, but she has also been to Saratoga and Kosher camp. She is always “bringing the party!” She loves “watching the kids do skills that they’ve never done before.”

**Matt Farwell :** Matt is of our Graduate Assistants. This is Matt’s 3rd year at Brockport and 4th year during Camp Abilities. He is very good at memorizing song lyrics. He loves “seeing kids grow and become better athletes.”

**Zelma Kostyshak:** Zelma is our tandem specialist. This is her 1st-year full time at camp, but she has helped get bikes ready for the last 5 years. She loves to travel and bike, and




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has combined the two by biking in Italy, Ireland, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands.

**Ali Weaver:** Ali is our Red Team leader. She has been to camp for 11 years and has been to Camp Abilities Brockport, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington, Texas, and Saratoga Springs. She is a teacher for the blind and gets to do camp with her mom and sister each year. She loves “watching the athletes learn to paddle board.”

**Sara Koppenhaver:** Sara is our Blue Team leader this year at camp. She has done 6 years total at Brockport, Saratoga for 3, Delaware for 2, and will be doing Oregon this summer. She teaches middle school PE just down the road in Albion, and is a high school softball coach. She is known for losing my voice from energizers and cheers.

**Alex Stribing:** Alex is our Assistant Director, a specialist for many sports and a researcher. She has been to camp for 9 years. She has been to Camp Abilities Brockport, Delaware, Boston, and Saratoga. Alex is finishing her doctorate degree in motor behavior and special education. Alex plays volleyball and softball in her spare time. “I love the students I teach.”



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## From All Over

Camp Abilities has a respected reputation across the entire world, so when new counselor, Mary Russell, from Gloucester, UK, first heard about us, she wanted to learn more. Mary contacted Lauren, who invited her to come to see for herself.

Mary is a rehabilitation specialist. This mother of four retired from her first profession as an optometrist and currently manages a mental health project for her college. She wants to open the eyes of her colleagues to the benefits of inclusion and mainstreaming. In England, students in need can receive vision support up to the age of 26, and Mary has helped many of her students get through college.



Speaking of England, did you know there is a group of British campers from there, as well? Three boys and two girls from the UK, along with a teacher (Jane Price) and a residential counselor (Alan Drabwell) even arrived early. Jane originally came from New Zealand but lives in the UK now. The group spent a few days acclimating to life on this side of the pond, and now they're raring to go and participate in all that Camp Abilities has to offer.

And George is back for a third summer. George Nikopoulos, from Athens, Greece, is a 4th-year teacher of students with multiple disabilities. His enthusiasm shows how much he loves his job. George found Camp Abilities while doing online research, and dreams of eventually starting his own camp in his home country. Why does he come all this distance each year? Because he loves the place and the people who are so dedicated. George maintains contact with his fellow counselors and campers all

through the year. While he is in the United States, George will take the opportunity to travel around, and he'll visit New York City after camp is over.

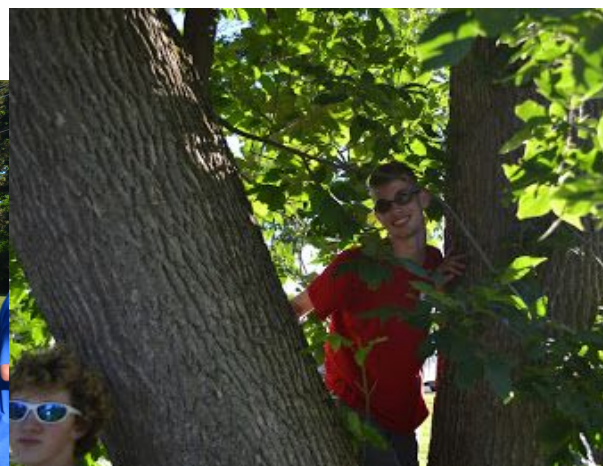
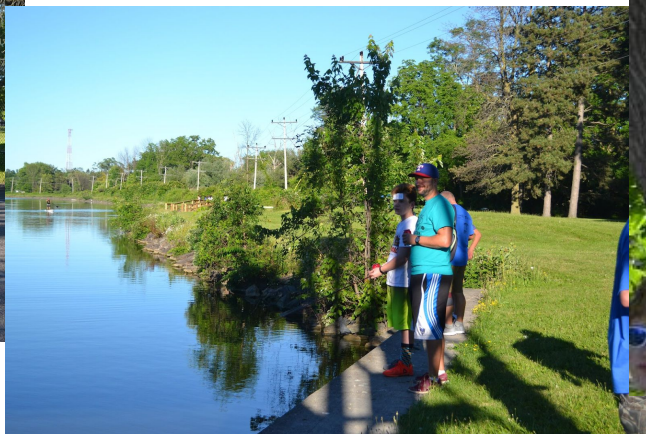




## Pictures of the Day

Here are the pictures of the day that contain all the fun and love that is all around Camp Abilities. If you want to find more pictures visit our Shutterfly!







The CAN is your newsletter. It is interesting because of YOUR contributions. Come talk to Alyssa at breakfast, lunch, or dinner with your amazing accomplishments so she can put it in the newsletter!