



"In all my years of planning summer camps, I've never come across one with such a great purpose. Dragonfly's Camp Uplift combined fun with helping the kids find a cause that's important to each child and committing to make it better. Brilliant!"

- Lisa Barto, parent

The mission of The Dragonfly Foundation is to help young cancer patients and families find strength and empower their flight. Since 2010, Dragonfly has served thousands through their partnership with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and has expanded to Dayton and Chicago. This summer, it launched its first summer camp program, Camp Uplift. The weeklong camp is geared toward incoming fifth- and sixth-graders. The goal is to share the idea that the kids have the power to make a difference. The camp is part of Dragonfly's continued efforts to build a compassionate, supportive community for patients and their families.

Recently, Venue sat down with Maureen Scahill, coordinator for Camp Uplift to learn more about Dragonfly's newest initiative.

Venue Magazine: Why did The Dragonfly Foundation feel it was important to offer this program to children?

Maureen Scahill: The Dragonfly Foundation is often approached by parents who want their kids to volunteer. Unfortunately, because many cancer patients are often immune compromised or in poor physical condition, it can actually be life-threatening to have them around children who don't understand the importance of washing hands or infection control. With that said, there are many other ways kids can support Dragonfly or other organizations.



At Dragonfly, we want to help kids understand that they, too, can be a force of awesome at home, school and in their community. It is so easy to be kind and help others. Through Camp Uplift, we hope to share with kids that they have the power to bring compassion and empathy to one person, who will then be

inspired by their kindness and cause a ripple effect of good deeds and kindness. They have the power to be the change.



"My son was over the moon with this camp. It provided the opportunity to discuss topics that are not being deliberately focused on in other settings. He had an amazing week and he and my 6-year-old are looking forward to the next opportunity to serve or attend this camp next time!

Thank you again!" – Crystal Baker Miller, parent

We hope to encourage kids to think about kindness and compassion as more than being random. We hope that their actions will be purposeful: to help their neighbor, their friend, even someone they don't know, and to foster a better home, school and community. There is so much negativity in the world around us that we hope that Dragonfly's Camp Uplift will show these kids that they can bring positivity to those around them and empower them to start the ripple of kindness and awareness. We believe that there is "no act too small and no one too small to act."

Venue Magazine: How do you hope to impact the campers through the programming?

Maureen Scahill: The camp has three primary goals: To encourage acts of kindness, compassion and empathy; to demonstrate ways

that kids can take initiative to help at home, at school and in their community; to inspire them to take action to support a cause and to make a difference.

We hope that kids will learn lessons they can share with siblings, parents, relatives and friends. We hope they will make supporting a cause part of their lives today.

We want to help kids identify a passion, something they really enjoy. It might be something they have always enjoyed, such as art or science, or they may find something new that they haven't tried before camp (decorating cookies or acting). We then hope that they can find a purpose, a way to help others with that passion. And then we want them to learn how they can take action and make a difference, all while having fun doing something they love.



"Be A Force of Awesome!" A great message. My child has been repeating it and acting it out with the physical expression for each word. It's something I know I can reference in the future if she needs a pep talk because she smiles everytime she says it."

- Cora Le Colaizzi, parent

Venue Magazine: What about the upcoming camp excites you the most?

Maureen Scahill: There are so many amazing guests who are joining us at camp that it really is hard to say what I am most excited about. I really think that the kids will enjoy the iSpace STEM learning program and the Pinot's Palette painting class. Cincinnati Circus will provide a juggling lesson and magic show. We also have our very special guest, Livvy Stubenrauch (the voice of Anna in the movie "Frozen"), who

"It was such a GREAT week for Joel! He was thoroughly entertained from beginning to end and to be around kind people was something he needed. You can't go wrong with a week at Camp Uplift! The kids learn lasting life lessons and have more fun than they could anywhere else."

- Kristin Bramblett, parent

will spend a day at camp with us. I have to say that I am most looking forward to seeing that spark in the kids when they realize that they, at such a young age, can really be the change and make a huge impact in the world around them -- one kind act at a time. I cannot wait to hear their ideas of how they want to take action in the community and go out and be a force of awesome.

Venue Magazine: What has been the response from parents when they first found out about it?

Maureen Scahill: People are very excited to empower their kids. Many have already shared volunteer experiences with their children, but have never experienced a camp like Dragonfly's Camp Uplift – one that is dedicated to kindness, compassion and community building. The fact that camp sold out so quickly and we have families on a waiting list proves to us that there is a need and desire for such an experience for kids in our community. and we are overwhelmed by the positive response.

If everyone did something, the world would be a better place.

This interview took place before Dragonfly's Camp Uplift. It was held June 5th-June 10th. Its sponsors included: Tony's Steaks & Seafood, Silver Spring House, All Over Media, Cincinnati Mosquito, Bob & Beth Reichert, iSpace with support from the Charles H. Dater Foundation, Pinot's Palette, Cincinnati Circus, Stonelick Township Fire Department, Pete & Yunus Powell Spence and Cedar Grove Photography.

The Dragonfly Foundation is located at 9275 Governors Way, Cincinnati, OH 45249. For more information, call 513.494.6474 or visit www.dragonfly.org. To donate tickets and suites for patient/family events, call 513.609.4758.