

ADK Camping Trip - Class 2023 EmpowHer Camp Impact Report

Group photo of Young Leaders with the lake in the background

Fast Facts

Coast to Coast: Our second year of EmpowHer Camp has participants and mentors from 14 different states, ranging from Washington to Massachusetts and many in between!

100% Growth: 100% of our participants reported experiencing growth in at least 12 categories; including self-advocacy, problem solving, & confidence! Parents have also seen growth, especially confidence since camp!

Communication: 100% of participants reported an increase in communication skills, both public speaking and communicating and socializing with peers.

Quick Recap

Round two of EmpowHer Camp began in August 2022 with six Young Leaders with disabilities from across the country coming together to camp with successful disabled women mentors and allies for one week in the Adirondacks. Camping with this bunch included fun, learning, growth, and connecting. We learned survival, independent living, and leadership skills! Each Young Leader learned how to build a fire, meal prep and cooking, how to identify plants, emergency preparedness, and so much more. We worked together to help each other with tasks, discussed our goals, and developed new daily life skills. The fun included games, tie-dying, camp fire songs, dancing, and so much more.

Image: Group photo of Young Leaders, mentors, and allies all wearing "Disabled Women Make History" hoodies.

Image: Young Leaders Emily and Madison smiling with Ally Kelly

Mentoring Matters

Even though Adirondacks camp has ended participants & mentors are connecting regularly! At camp, each Young Leader selected a mentor to work with for the next year. Young Leaders created a yearlong community impact project involving inclusive disaster strategies they learned at camp and they will work on their projects with help from their mentor. Participants and mentors connect regularly to talk about their projects, school, family, goals, college, future careers, life, and so much more!

Image: Mentor Johileny & Young Leader Keira laugh

Image: Mentor Julia & Young Leader Giana make guacamole

What Comes Next?

Participants will continue to work on their community impact projects with the help of their mentors for another nine months. In July 2023, we will reunite in Washington, D.C. where the Young Leaders will present their projects, meet with Congress, practice resume writing and interview skills, and explore how they've grown as leaders! Then, in August of 2023, a new group of Young Leaders will begin their EmpowHer Camp journey by camping in the Adirondacks!

In Their Words

Young Leaders: "The most enjoyable part of the EmpowHer Camp journey has been learning about advocacy as well as life skills and independence."

Mentors: "Overall the camp was a life changing experience. Being around all disabled people and feeling seen and heard while simultaneously helping the next generation will forever be one of the greatest experiences of my life."

Parents: "She has been more eager to attempt transfers and catheterizing herself - both of which she was opposed to before camp. Also she has been a better listener and seems more thoughtful overall!"

Image: Young Leaders & mentors share a group hug