

Camp Sonder

Business Plan

April 10, 2014



Sonder n. the realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own—populated with their own ambitions, friends, routines, worries and inherited craziness—an epic story that continues invisibly around you like an anthill sprawling deep underground, with elaborate passageways to thousands of other lives that you'll never know existed, in which you might appear only once, as an extra sipping coffee in the background, as a blur of traffic passing on the highway, as a lighted window at dusk.

Executive Summary

Camp Sonder is a summer camp in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It will be located on 93.9 acres of land near Michigamme, Michigan. This plot of land has waterfront on the remote, 320 acre Fence Lake. Camp Sonder will be only one hour west of the city of Marquette and can be accessed by any vehicle. Nestled in the tall white pine forest, overlooking the lake, are the various lodging and facilities of Camp Sonder. Currently scheduled to open in May 2015, this summer retreat will feature various week or weekend long camp sessions aimed at different target markets as well as have times of general attendance. A variety of activities will be available at Camp Sonder including art, yoga, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, biking, and camp-like games. Guides of various backgrounds and expertise will be available to help facilitate these activities and create a sense of community at the camp. All levels of expertise are welcome at Camp Sonder and none of the activities are required, only available. Various types of accommodations will be available at Camp Sonder. Three small yurts will be available to rent and a larger yurt will become a hostel capable of sleeping up to 20 people. Campsites will be established throughout the property as well for tent camping. All accommodations have access to running water, restrooms, and electricity. Healthy and holistic meals are optionally provided and many choices of fresh and sustainable foods will be prepared each day to allow guests to feel a physical revival as well as a mental one.

Various week-long sessions offered at Camp Sonder will appeal to different customers based on demographics, behavioral factors, and interests. These specialized sessions focus on different methods of connecting customers to themselves and others through nature, yoga, art, adventure education, and group activities. Some of the sessions may be aimed at women, families, teens, young adults, and older adults; or, they might be based on a subject of interest such as art, leadership, creativity or unadulterated fun. An important component of all these sessions is encouraging participants to leave their work and negative aspects of their personal lives behind by detaching from technology for the time spent at Camp Sonder. Turning away from all electronic communication for even just a day allows the individual to completely focus on the task at hand and live in the moment rather than the past or future. Camp Sonder strives to be open to people from all walks of life and connect them through common recreation activities. Between these sessions, the camp will be open and considered a time of general attendance. Anyone may stay and have use of all recreation equipment. There is little structure of activities during this time and guests are welcome to do as many or as little activities as they desire. The guides will help facilitate the use of the recreation equipment, but will be less involved than during the specialty sessions. Meal times remain constant throughout the season and most nights a campfire will be made available for roasting s'mores and general merriment.

The founder of Camp Sonder is Amelia Richards and she will act as the owner and general manager. Her duties include managing finances, paperwork, large camp maintenance, program designer and camp director. She is a student at Northern Michigan University in the Outdoor Recreation, Leadership and Management degree program. She is also studying Entrepreneurship and Art&Design as minor degrees. Amelia has work experience in outdoor recreation facilitation and programming from various jobs as well as some experience in business. She has been trained in leadership, outdoor education, adventure education and many fine arts.

Camp Sonder will market as an all inclusive resort during the sessions. Pricing will depend on the session and lodging. During general attendance, meal plans are optional and lodging price is based per night. There will also be a small fee for the use of art supplies during this time. In order to get Camp Sonder started, \$478,025 of estimated funds are required. \$264,617 will be provided by owner Amelia Richards and a 30% equity stake is being offered to an external equity investor for \$113,407. This investor will not need to provide much additional funding in later years because Camp Sonder is predicted to be cash flow positive by Year 2. If any extra funds are provided, they would be as low as \$1,500 in Years 2 and 3. This investor should have support and interest in the various components of Camp Sonder's mission, cultural, and vision statements. Additionally, Camp Sonder requires a loan of \$100,000 in order to help purchase the land.

Any interest or inquiries about Camp Sonder should be directed to Amelia Richards at americha@nmu.edu



Statements

Mission Statement

Camp Sonder is a place of connecting humans to themselves and others through nature and a digital detox. Guides of various backgrounds and expertise will be available to help pursue many endeavors and every level of experience is welcomed. From the person whose never camped before to the traveller living out of their backpack, there are activities for all kinds.

Culture Statement

Humans are always on the go, never ceasing to worry about what comes next. At Camp Sonder, people begin to disconnect from their complex, digital world and just be themselves. Here, people can live in the moment and find our basic selves without the constant pressures of society. Each person thrives on a different feeling; whether it be thrilling, calming, solitude or community, all can be found at Camp Sonder. Our staff's goal is to help our visitors laugh more, love deeper and live better by interacting with the natural world with a serene mind and open heart.

Vision

Camp Sonder aims to expand its areas of expertise and knowledge every single year. Hiring a well qualified and diverse staff will be crucial to the development of what the camp has to offer. Various sessions targeting different groups of people and activities will increase as the camp becomes more established. These sessions might be focused on art, yoga, survival, digital detox, and all will incorporate some form of outdoor education. Eventually, Camp Sonder also plans to invest in winter recreation equipment and winter friendly facilities so that it may host sessions year round.

Company Overview

Camp Sonder will be a summer retreat in Northern Michigan. It is located on a remote lake less than an hour from Marquette with more than 90 acres to explore. Yurts, A large yurt hostel and campsites will be available as lodging options, healthy meals provided and many activities will be available including art, yoga, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, biking, and camp-like games. All assets have been purchased and the land is now owned by Amelia Richards, Camp Sonder's founder and owner. Loans have been taken out to help pay for all assets and the land is currently under construction installing a well, septic fields and electricity to the yurts. Camp Sonder is legally organized as a limited liability company (LLC) in the state of

Michigan as of 2013. Two guides with experience in outdoor recreation will be hired and the opening date is set for May 2014.



Opportunity Analysis and Research

Environmental Analysis

Because of the economic recession over the past decade or so, the traditional summer camp is declining in popularity. Upper-middle class parents can no longer afford to send their kids away for several months of summer to canoe and roast marshmallows and camp directors can no longer afford the transportation and feeding for several hundred kids each summer. Technology is also a large change in the summer camp world. 20 years ago camp counselors kept a sharp eye out for contraband candy; today, they have to confiscate phones and ipods. Summer camp used to be only connected to the outside world by sending letters and a visit or two from parents. Now with texting and internet access campers are as connected as if they never left home. Helicopter parents bombard the camp offices with calls and emails and countless medications to manage and food allergies to accommodate. The average parent today also seeks resume and skill building activities for their child rather than a month of social development and fun. In today's competitive world it's all about whose child has the best grades, most volunteer hours or can throw the fastest pitch. They want to see skills, achievements, patches and certificates that will help get their son or daughter into Harvard.³

Just as today's parents want their children to accomplish something at summer camp, adults are looking to enrich their own lives as well. Many more are seeking active vacationing rather than choosing to go lay on a beach for a week. The current young generation has a "work hard, play hard" mentality and seek more adventurous vacations. What better way to do that than join other adults and learn a new skill or perfect an old one? Hunting and fishing camps have traditionally been the "adult summer camp" but many more areas of recreation have developed and gained passionate followers over the years. While adventure camp seems more geared

towards young adults, many camps are actually aimed at middle aged adults. Empty nesters who have just sent their children off to college and retirees who wish to cross a few more things off their bucket list before their body begins to fail them. While this live, laugh, learn mentality might be growing in this generation of adults, there are also many socioeconomic barriers to outdoor recreation. Race and class have large barriers with some populations (largely african americans) traditionally not seeking outdoor recreation and lower class citizens not being able to afford the equipment or travel costs. Large gender barriers exist as well. Women are far less likely to leave their families, less likely to join physical challenges alongside men and are much more conscious of appearance and personal hygiene thus requiring more elaborate accommodations. Men are limited by the fact that they are traditionally the provider for the family so cannot take off time from work and are also reluctant to join in the team-building and environmental education that accompanies outdoor recreation.

Technology has become both an opportunity and a threat to the summer camp industry. Websites and internet searches has made it infinitely easier to get information out there, enroll campers, and widen the customer base or more effectively reach a target market. Technology is also a summer camp's greatest threat. Many children and even adults would much rather spend their free time on a laptop than on a hike. Outdoor recreation is not as big in children's lives now that they have gaming consoles to keep them entertained, even on a sunny day. Young adults are so attached to their social media that not posting for a whole week might seem unbearable and many adults' work email is so integrated into their lives that stepping away would seem irresponsible. This dependency on technology is a large threat to all kinds of summer camps.

Industry analysis

Most would think that outdoor recreation is a small economic sector. Despite that stigma, more than 140 million Americans make outdoor recreation a priority in their daily lives, proving it with their wallets by putting \$646 billion of their hard-earned dollars right back into the economy. Despite an economic recession, in which many sectors declined, the outdoor recreation economy grew approximately 5 percent annually between 2005 and 2011.¹ Narrowing the industry further to summer camps, we see the recession take its toll on that industry. Upper-middle class families can no longer afford the 1-3 month summer camps. This market has declined approximately 2.3% over the past five years.² Upon further research however, it was discovered that the decline was centered in large traditional summer camps. With a limited economy, parents were much more likely to send their children to short camps that were skill based. Smaller camps with a focused learning point or purpose (such as sports, music, arts, job training, or volunteering) fared well through the recession. Economics and the American culture of skill building favored these smaller specialty camps and week long sessions rather than

months.³ A sect of these summer session camps that has developed over the past decade is adult summer camps. These are mostly skill building camps as well but focus heavily on recreation sports, arts and serving as an escape from the ever-busy work world. Camps for adults have grown an estimated 10% a year over the past decade, to about 800 in all. A tally by the American Camp Association says a million adults went to camp last summer.⁴ By just searching “Adult Summer Camps” on the internet hundreds of listings appear. Everything from wine camp to cowboy camp; from figure skating to bird watching. The options are endless, yet the most common seemed to be centered on art, music, adventure and skill building.

The threat of new entrants in the summer camp industry is fairly low for a number of reasons. First, the start up costs are fairly high. Lodging, upkeep and various assets depending on the type of camp are all required. Second, this business requires a lot of passion, hospitality and vision for it to succeed. Customer service is key to a camp surviving as most camps heavily rely on returners and word of mouth recommendations. Skill building and education requires teaching skills and general enthusiasm for the subject. Starting a camp from scratch will heavily depend on how much the owner put’s into it both monetarily and time. The rivalry among existing firms really depends on the specialty chosen and location of the camp. While the industry is growing, with high entry barriers and many concentrations available the rivalry remains fairly low. Most camps have a unique campaign but could fight for customers if another camp exists within five hours. Another point of rivalry regarding location is a limited amount of good natural campgrounds. Generally camps are located on a body of water and are situated away from society. As populations continue to grow, these premium spots are harder to find or are being crowded out by sprawling suburbs. Camp Sonder’s largest rival will be Mt. Bohemia’s summer camp⁷. It is approximately 150 miles north and offers similar if not better adventure recreation. The art and yoga, as well as the specified sessions of Camp Sonder sets it apart from this already established adult summer camp. The largest rival for the artistic side of Camp Sonder would be Interlochen Art’s Camp⁸ in downstate Michigan. This is a world renowned music and art camp but Camp Sonder would be much more economic and open to all levels of ability. Suppliers generally have a low amount of bargaining power because much of the equipment used is bought upfront and once at the camp can be used for years. While name brands hold some weight in outdoor recreation equipment, generally it is only considered when personally bought. No inventory is being sold so there is very little dealing with suppliers. Customers on the other hand have an extremely high bargaining power. Because this is their vacation time they have many options as to how they are going to spend it. Even if they did choose an adventure camp, there are many to choose from and some of the activities can be done without actually attending the camp. Customers are also buying an experience and have the power to decide to return or not which for camps that rely on returning customers can have a huge impact on the business’s

success. The threat of substitutes is high regarding recreation. There are endless vacation opportunities and many would choose relaxing, urban, or low-cost/free activities over an active camp experience. Regarding the actual experience, there are not many substitutes especially when considering the specialty camps. It is awfully hard to substitute the experience of attending cowgirl yogatography camp⁵ without having access to a horse, yoga master and beautiful settings to take pictures in. Even if someone has the assets, the experience cannot be replicated; many adults attend as a way to meet new people and travel to new places.

Proof of Market

Camp Sonder will mostly service people from the midwest, specifically Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, some of Illinois and perhaps some from Canada. Considering just Michigan's upper peninsula, it only has a population of 311,361. Because this is a travel destination though, many will be expected to travel to the camp. Michigan has a population of 9,895,622 and Wisconsin has a population of 5,742,713⁶

Looking at Michigan's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2013–2017), nearly 84 percent of Michigan residents feel that outdoor recreation is very important or moderately important to their household. This indicates that there would be a moderate to high interest level in a service that facilitates outdoor recreation. Over 33% of those who selected camping as their most important activity are willing to drive more than 6 hours to participate.⁹ Camp Sonder is approximately 6 hours from any major city (Grand Rapids, Detroit, Milwaukee, Green Bay, ect.) and many minor cities are even closer giving the customer base a decent range.

According to the sales forecast, Camp Sonder is expecting a total of 3,200 guests the first year; growing to 6,800 guests by the third year. Given the amount of people within a 6 hour radius, these numbers could be achieved with strong marketing.

Target Market

The various week-long sessions offered at Camp Sonder will target various customers based on demographics, behavioral factors, and interests. Each of these markets will be tested by the success of each session over the years. Over time, the biggest and most successful target markets will be identified and focused on. Predictions of successfulness, based on the amount of existing targeted outdoor programs, are listed sequentially.:

Young Adult (16-20): These are older teens who are in the process of finishing grade school and in their first few years of college. This is a crucial stage in self development. Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self. The main activities in this session

of camp would be focused on social interactions, yoga, nature though art, philosophy/finding oneself, survival skills, disconnecting from technology/social media and adventure based learning. Outward bound type programs for teens have been popular for more than 50 years and it has been proven that outdoor recreation helps limit delinquency and boost self esteem.

Adult (19 & up): Adults from all stages of life are welcome in this session. From younger adults who are focused on forming relationships, to the oldest looking back on their life. This is the time where grownups take a break from their busy lives to be kids again. Adventure based activities and countless other endeavors will be available to explore. The focus will be making friends, having fun and sharing the joy of life with others. This group fit's perfectly in the adult summer camp industry which is a growing section of the economy. The challenge will be making it economical for the younger campers and finding a good marketing strategy for the working ones.

Women (18 & up): This session will be dedicated to empowering women in the field of outdoor recreation. Through art, yoga, adventure based learning and group activities women will have the chance to be leaders, rediscover their own identity and make new friends. Women participating in outdoor recreation is still unbalanced compared to men's participation, but more and more women are getting out and going on adventures every year. Women's programs are common as most women feel more comfortable with the physical activities without men in the group. Empowerment to recreate and take a short, needed break from being mom is also on the rise. Women are generally stuck as trip planner and sherpa on family adventures so this camp aims at allowing them to just worry about themselves for the moment. Family duties and responsibilities may rule out some customers, but marketing to existing women's groups of all types would generate more customers.

Family (all ages): Taking the family camping has always been a classic family activity. This session would be less structured and more providing family friendly activities (art, music, yoga, campfires) and facilitating adventure based ones. Some kid's programs would be in place in case the parents would like a few hours off and various community activities would be available so that families could interact. Many families already have a cabin or camp that they attend in the summer, but with the right marketing Camp Sonder would hopefully acquire a few families that become returners. The many facilitated or non-facilitated activities available would set Camp Sonder apart from many other family camps and the healthy food would be another perk as well.

Mid-life Renewal (50 & up): This is the time of life when parents become empty-nesters, career climbers level out and retire; the second half of life is when time begins to slow down. As the kids grow up and leave for college and the job has been held for more than 10 years, life becomes stagnant and adults begin to search for things to liven up life again. Learning new things and renewing old skills becomes important. For others they are looking back on their life and feeling a sense of fulfillment. All activities will be tailored to the physical abilities and as involved as the participant chooses. The main challenge with this market will be selling the physical activities such as hiking and canoeing. This generation is also less likely than younger generations to try something new so the marketing will have to be directed carefully to active and adventurous elders.

Couples Retreat (21 & up): Many couples look for fun vacations and places to meet other couples with similar interests. Much of the Outdoor Recreation world is aimed at the individual so this session could open up a new niche in the market. Whether the couple has been together for 5 years or 50, there will be plenty of activities available. Interactions with other couples is generally fun for all parties and due to the relaxed nature of the camp, counseling and bonding sessions are not mandatory (as they are with most couples retreats). The challenge will be marketing to couples with kids as it is hard for both parents to leave the children for more than a day.

Competitor Analysis

The competitors of Camp Sonder are as follows:

Mt. Bohemia: Camp Sonder's largest rival will be Mt. Bohemia's summer camp. It is approximately 150 miles north of Camp Sonder and offers similar, if not better, adventure recreation. It has a similar marketing strategy in that every activity offered during the summer/fall season is covered under one price. A ski resort in the winter, it is located on 1100 acres with lakefront on both Lac La Belle and Lake Superior. This makes it a very strong competitor. Camp Sonder is closer to most populations (Mt. Bohemia is at the top of the Keweenaw Peninsula) and the art and yoga, as well as the specified sessions of Camp Sonder and lower price sets it apart from this already established summer resort. ⁷

Interlochen Art's Camp: The largest rival for the artistic side of Camp Sonder would be Interlochen Art's Camp in downstate Michigan. This is a world renowned music and art camp with good facilities and established client base. Located in northwest Michigan on waterfront, it has some basic camp activities but not nearly as much wilderness. While there are sessions open

to all ages, it is a specialty camp and also very exclusive and expensive. Camp Sonder would be much more economic, more diverse and open to all levels of ability. ⁸

Camp Henry: This camp will be the most competitive for the youth market. Located in Newaygo, Camp Henry has over 200 acres of forest and wetlands. This camp has countless programs from archery to painting and horseback riding to ropes courses. Aimed at ages 5-17 it covers a wider range of ages for children. It is based in the Christian faith, but welcomes all religions. Camp Sonder's teen programs will be aimed at an older customer base, is not based in a faith (although open to all faiths) and will be more economical. ¹⁰

Michigan's State Campgrounds: There are hundreds of state owned campgrounds all over Michigan and these will be the biggest competitor for families. Economical and located virtually anywhere in the state, they appeal to the family camping trip. Facilities, playgrounds, sometimes beaches and RV parking all are assets of these campgrounds. Also government funded, these areas are well established and maintained. Camp Sonder offers meals, some lodging and guided activities however, for the family that doesn't want to plan it all themselves. ¹¹



Drawing by Amelia Richards

Marketing Plan

Products

Camp Sonder will provide the service of facilitating outdoor recreation, art, various community activities as well as lodging and optional food service through various camp sessions.

Outdoor Recreation - Camp Sonder's guides will facilitate various activities such as mountain biking, canoeing/kayaking, fishing, hiking, and yoga. Survival skills classes will also be available, teaching shelter and fire building, as well as Leave No Trace education. All equipment

will be provided, but privately owned equipment is welcomed as well. All experiences are welcome and group or private lessons will be available upon request. Some sessions may focus on certain activities more than others.

Art - Many forms of art will be made available with corresponding sessions. Painting, drawing, journaling, sculpture building and more will be apart of Camp Sonder's art programs. Allowing nature to be the inspiration will connect the campers with their environment and tap into their inner creativity. Depending on the session and camper's, art can be guided and taught or free flowing.

Community Activities - Campfires are an essential component of summer and Camp Sonder offers a bonfire each night. S'mores and other camp desserts will be available and this is the time taken for campers to bond through storytelling, conversations and occasional guided discussions. Group lessons for the adventure activities also give the campers time to befriend a stranger and help each other try something new. The hostel will be a constant state of community and neighboring campsites and yurts give the opportunity for fellowship as well. The guides will be trained in adventure activities and facilitating groups so games of all kinds can arise if there are willing participants. The level of community involvement will depend on the session, some are based around mostly group activities and some sessions allow for the individual to schedule their own activities.

Lodging - Various accommodations will be available at Camp Sonder. Three 16' yurts with various numbers of beds (2 twin bunks or a queen with twin bunk) will be available to rent and includes include breakfast, lunch and dinner. Each is equipped with electricity and a full bathroom. A 30' yurt will be made into a hostel with 10 twin bunks (20 sleeping spots) and will be equipped with electricity and full bathroom. Campsites will be offered as well for tent camping. Each campsite will be level ground and access to running water and a community bathroom with showers in a central location. Both a hostel spot and campsites have an optional meal plan attached.

Food Service - Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be made available to those with a meal plan. À la carte options will be made available during dinner priced accordingly. Each meal will be made with gluten free options if needed and all food will be as nutritious and tasty as possible. Each meal will be cooked by a staff member. The kitchen will also be available during some hours of the day for camper use.

Pricing

Camp Sonder will use a value pricing strategy. Customers are paying for their lodging, food and equipment use, but they are also purchasing a unique experience and facilitated outdoor education. To counteract the long travel time, Camp Sonder will also explore a meet-or-beat the competition pricing strategy to appeal to a wide range of socioeconomic groups. Pricing will be set for each session by lodging, the addition of meal plans, and materials for specialized sessions:

Family Sessions and General Attendance

- *Yurt Rental*: 95\$ per night. All meals included.
- *Hostel Bed*: 25\$ per night w/out meals. 35\$ per night w/ meals.
- *Campsite*: 20\$ per night per person. 30\$ per night w/ meals.
- *Art supplies/sessions* can be purchased on demand for 10\$

Art and Yoga Based Sessions

- *Yurt Rental*:
 - Weekend Session + all meals included: 225\$
 - Week Session + all meals included: 620\$
- *Hostel Bed*:
 - Weekend Session + all meals included: 100\$
 - Week Session + all meals included: 270\$
- *Campsite*:
 - Weekend Session + all meals included: 90\$
 - Week Session + all meals included: 250\$

Place

Camp Sonder will be located on an approximately 90 acre property in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It has lakefront on a remote 320 acre lake but is less than an hour west of the city of Marquette. A well will be dug as well as septic field put in. Lodging, bathrooms and equipment storage facilities will be established. Camp Sonder's services will be restricted to the Camp Property. The staff will interact directly with the customers; issuing equipment, guiding or facilitating activities and serving meals.

Promotion

Camp Sonder has a budget of \$15,000 in the first year for marketing purposes. Because this is currently a seasonal business, marketing and promotion will be focused on during the off months. Fliers will be printed to send out to existing outdoor recreation and other specialized groups. Fliers will also be distributed to the outdoor recreation and art programs at Northern

Michigan University and Michigan Technological University. Newspaper ads may be purchased in the local cities papers or magazines as well as posting fliers in various outdoor recreation shops in Upper Michigan. Many outdoor recreation programs are also promoted merely by word of mouth marketing. Having connections in the industry will be vital to Camp Sonder’s success, so various staff members will attend and present at conferences and promote the camp through their personal lives as well.

A large part of marketing will be electronic. Emails could be sent out to the aforementioned organizations and potential customers can add themselves to an email list. Social media will also be utilized through a facebook page, instagram and blog. These will show various events and general promotion of the camp as well as ongoing outdoor philosophy musings on the blog. A 500\$ budget is dedicated to website development and this website will communicate an overview of Camp Sonder, details of various sessions, calendar, photos, maps and links to contact information.

Sales Forecast

The table below shows Camp Sonder’s sales forecast. For the first three years of operation, sales are broken down by type of lodging as well as revenue from art classes and specialty sessions. Each fiscal year starts on May 1 and ends at the end of April the following year. Sales are forecasted to be \$84,980 in Year 1. Sales are projected to rise in Year 2 due to returning customers as well as new customers. Year 2 sales are forecasted to be \$123,580 in Year 2, a 45% increase over Year 1 sales. For Year 3, sales are projected to be \$159,265, a 28% increase over Year 2 sales.

Camp Sonder Sales Forecast

<u>Service Category</u>	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Yurt rental	\$9,500	\$14,250	\$19,000
Hostel Bed	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$10,000
Hostel Bed & Meals	\$24,500	\$35,000	\$35,000
Campsite	\$16,000	\$24,000	\$32,000
Campsite & Meals	\$18,000	\$24,000	\$36,000
Art Class/Materials	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
Art/Yoga Camp Sessions	\$10,480	\$16,830	\$24,765
Total	\$84,980	\$123,580	\$159,265

Management and Operations

Management Team

Amelia Richards, Majority Owner & General Manager

Amelia is currently an undergraduate student in the Outdoor Recreation, Leadership and Management program at Northern Michigan University. She is also studying Entrepreneurship and Art&Design as minor degrees. She graduated from Forest Hills Central High School in 2012 with a 3.99 GPA. Amelia has work experience in outdoor recreation facilitation and programing from various jobs as well as experience in business from working in a law office. She is active in several programs on campus including the Honor's College, Superior Edge and Student Leader Fellowship Program. She has been trained in leadership, outdoor education, adventure education and many fine arts. Her hobbies include: drawing, painting, music, writing, downhill skiing, swimming, hiking, yoga and horseback riding.



Personnel Plan

In addition to the manager, two staff members will be hired for the season. The two staff members will act as adventure guides, cooks, and maintenance. They will live at the camp and help facilitate all camp sessions of all kinds. They will most likely be outdoor recreation students from Northern Michigan University and will need general knowledge (or willingness to learn) of equipment use, all forms of recreation offered, leadership skills and outdoor education skills. Various certifications such as lifeguard, Leave No Trace Educator or Wilderness First Responder will be highly valued as well as expertise in other forms of recreation (yoga, wilderness survival, art, creative writing, music, ect.) The staff's main objective is to help facilitate an enjoyable experience for all campers and help create a sense of community in the camp. These employees will be paid \$8,000 for the season and housing and meals will be provided. A third employee will be hired the second year and pay will raise to \$10,000. More expertise and certifications will be required. In the third year, pay will raise again to \$13,000 and one employee will take over some of the desk work as secretary to the general manager. All guides will be allowed to accept tips for their service.

Location and Facilities

Camp Sonder will be located on 93.9 acres of land near Michigamme, Michigan. This plot of land has waterfront on the remote, 320 acre Fence Lake. Camp Sonder will be only one hour west of the city of Marquette and can be accessed by any vehicle. Nestled in the tall white pine forest, overlooking the lake, are the various lodging and facilities of Camp Sonder.

Camp Sonder facilities include lodging (for both guests and employees), bathrooms and cook/equipment tents. Three 16' diameter yurts with various numbers of beds will be available for guests to rent. Each is equipped with electricity and a full bathroom. A 30' diameter yurt has been transformed into a hostel with 10 twin bunks (20 sleeping spots) and will be equipped with electricity and full bathroom. 10 campsites will be established throughout the property and each campsite will be at least 10x10' of level ground. Another 30' diameter yurt is divided into small rooms and will act as housing for employees. This will be equipped with electricity and a full bathroom as well. Shower and bathroom facilities will be located in a central location for campers. On the men's side there will be a toilet stall and a urinal as well as a shower stall. On the women's side there will be two toilet stalls and a shower stall. An 18'x52' army surplus tent will serve as a kitchen, equipment storage and community room. In Year 2, Camp Sonder plans to buy a second surplus tent and convert it into a larger community room/dining area.

Operations

Camp Sonder will be operating from May to October. A calendar will be developed depicting the various specialized camp sessions. These will be either a week (Monday - Sunday) or weekend (Friday - Sunday). All days in between these sessions will be considered General Attendance, during which the camp is open to anyone with no special theme. Of the 180 days Camp Sonder is open, 100 of them will be dedicated to specialty sessions and 80 will be considered general attendance days.

Breakfast will be served between 8 and 10am each morning, lunch choices will be available between 1 and 3pm, and dinner will be served from 6 to 7pm every night. Employees will work in shifts to help with food production and serving. Between these times guided adventure and group activities will be available. Each night there will be the opportunity for a campfire (weather permitted) and s'mores starting at dusk. This time will be accompanied by guided activities or discussions during specialty sessions. During the week-long specialty sessions, Monday will be considered a travel day and the guides will not be facilitating activities; they will only be responsible to help with maintenance of the campgrounds and checking in campers. For the weekend sessions, Thursday will be considered the travel day. During general attendance

days the guides must be on duty but will have much more free-time than during the facilitated sessions.

Major Business Risks

Injury to customers or staff: Due to the high physical risk associated with outdoor recreation, Camp Sonder is at risk for accidental injury or even death on its premises. Camp Sonder will be insured for facilitating adventure activities and require all participants to sign a waiver upon arrival acknowledging the danger of the various activities and claiming personal responsibilities for accidental injury. Camp Sonder is still at the risk of guide negligence claims and bad publicity from serious injuries. Staff members are at risk as well for accidental injury or death.

Less customer attendance than expected: This is a large risk for any service based business. No matter how good the service, without enough customers the business will ultimately fail. Good attendance rate is vital as well because this is a seasonal business and only has an inflow of cash during the summer months. In Camp Sonder's sales forecast a low attendance rate is predicted for the first couple of years. Despite this, many factors could influence attendance rates and cause them to drop dramatically. In order for the camp to stay open it cannot produce losses for more than two years in a row. The main factors that could cause this the first year are failed marketing and too remote of a location.

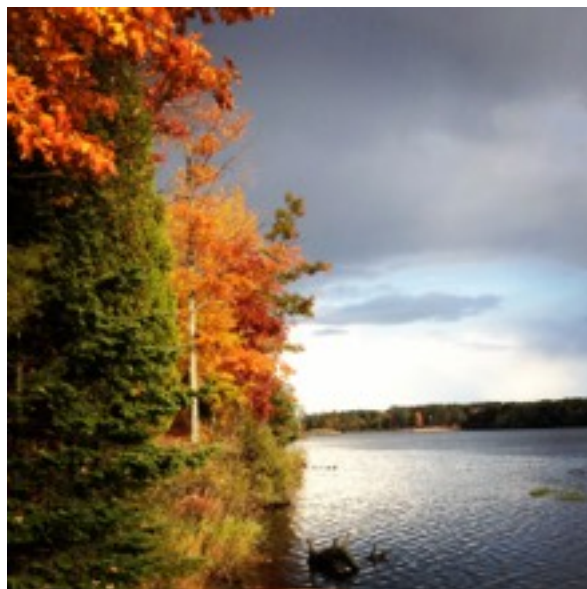
Overworking the General Manager: For the first two years, the general manager will be solely responsible for all paperwork and programming of Camp Sonder. She will be acting as a guide, chef, and camp director for the entire season with little to no breaks as well. Ultimately responsible for all of the camper's needs everything will fall on her shoulders. There is a risk that she would be overworked by the end of the season. She will be paid under 30k the first year and still under 35k by the third year so she will have to supplement her income with a job during the off season as well. To lessen this risk Camp Sonder plans to hire a secretary by the third year to take some of the paperwork off of the general manager's shoulders.

Excess amount of customers: If there is too much attendance in the first few years, customers may not get the experience they were hoping for due to overworked staff, insufficient amount of equipment and overcrowding. This would lead to bad reviews and perhaps a dramatic decline in customers bringing the risk of not enough campers into play. Land management is also a concern because overcrowding would leave a large impact on the surrounding environment. Overuse of the well and septic system as well as overflow of trash would also be concerns. This can be

easily combated by limiting the spaces in camp sessions and reservations during general admittance.

Mt. Bohemia's Summer Resort expanding their program: If Camp Sonder's biggest rival, Mt. Bohemia, were to expand its activity offerings and create specialty sessions similar to those at Camp Sonder, many more people would pass over Camp Sonder in favor of the larger and more established resort. With better amenities, arguably better location and established customer base, Mt. Bohemia would outshine Camp Sonder tenfold. This would be disastrous for Camp Sonder as it would dramatically lower attendance rates. A few ways to stay competitive if this were to happen are: adopt a meet-or-beat the competition pricing strategy, develop new and more unique programs or offer certification classes, or (if fairly well established) market to loyal attenders and downsize to fit that customer base.

Natural Hazards: Forest fires have been known to occur in the Upper Peninsula and if Camp Sonder's property were to be destroyed, there would be major losses. Not only would assets be destroyed but the property itself would sharply decline in aesthetic value. It would take years for the undergrowth to return and decades for the pine forest to regrow. Flooding is a possibility, especially in the spring. If there is a high snowfall during the winter, the land will be wet with snowmelt well into May. Extreme cold during the winter months may freeze and damage the water pipes or ice buildup could cause damage to the permanent structures. During the working season, wild animals may pose an issue as there are many large and dangerous animals in the remote Upper Peninsula including, but not limited to; black bear, wolves, coyotes, cougar, and moose. Camp Sonder will be well insured to lessen these risks and will keep up with land management and maintenance of the facilities to lessen the impact of any extreme weather.



Financial Analysis & Projections

Startup Costs

Many assets have to be purchased before Camp Sonder can open. Firstly, land must be purchased and permits gathered to dig a well and septic field. Five yurts will be built and equipped with running water and electricity. Each of these plans to be fitted with furniture and light fixtures as well as a full bathroom in each of the two largest yurts. Ten small campsites will be chosen to be clear-cut and ground leveled and camper's shower and toilet facilities will be built. A temporary large equipment tent will need to be purchased and a small platform built inside for kitchenware and electrical outlets. Once the facilities are established, recreation equipment will be purchased including: mountain bikes, yoga mats, kayaks, canoes, life jackets, and fishing rods. The total amount needed for startup assets is \$382,550. Major expenses for the first year include; wages, marketing, art and food supplies, and insurance. Approximately \$95,475 will be needed to cover the total expenses. The total amount of funding estimated to start up Camp Sonder is \$478,025.

Income Statement

According to the sales forecast, Camp Sonder is expected to have a sales revenue of \$84,980 in Year 1, \$123,580 in Year 2, and \$159,265 in Year 3. These numbers also represent the gross profit for each year as there is no cost of goods sold. The fixed operating costs slightly rise over the first three years due to predicted wage raises, hiring an additional employee in Year 2, and accommodation of higher camp attendance rates over time (raising utilities and supplies needed). Interest expense is based on a \$100,000, 20-year loan at a 6.7% interest rate. Camp Sonder is estimated to have a net income of negative (\$21,481) in Year 1, \$1,844 in Year 2, and \$16,963 in Year 3.

Statement of Cash Flow

Net cash flow from operations for Camp Sonder is forecasted to be negative (\$10,995) in Year 1, \$12,450 in Year 2, and \$27,569 in Year 3. The negative cash flow in Year 1 is from a negative net income of (\$21,481). Cash flow from investing is predicted to be negative (\$66,650) in Year 1, negative (\$2,200) in Year 2, and \$0 in Year 3. In Year 1, the owner will provide \$378,025 of equity financing and a lender will provide \$100,000 of debt financing. Because the cash flow becomes positive in Year two, only a small amount of additional capital is invested in Camp Sonder with the owner contributing an additional \$5,000 in Years 2 and 3. Cash flow from financing activities is projected to be \$475,561 in Year 1, \$2,366 in Year 2 and \$2,184 in Year 3. In total, the net increase/decrease in cash is projected to be positive \$397,917 in Year 1, \$12,616 in Year 2, and \$29,753 in Year 3.

Breakeven Analysis

Camp Sonder has no real variable costs. Fixed costs include utilities, insurance, wages, promotion, legal and accounting, art and food supplies, depreciation and interest expenses. Total fixed costs are expected to be \$106,461 in Year 1, \$120,946 in Year 2 and \$135,032 in Year 3. Because there is no cost of goods sold, in order to breakeven sales will need to equal the fixed expenses. So, Camp Sonder will need to generate sales of \$106,461 in Year 1, \$120,946 in Year 2 and \$135,032 in Year 3 in order to breakeven. As long as fixed costs stay constant, sales higher than the breakeven amount will generate a positive net income.

Funding Request

A total of \$478,025 will be required to fund Camp Sonder's startup. \$264,617 will be provided by owner Amelia Richards \$113,407 is being offered to an external equity investor for a 30% equity stake. This investor will not need to provide much additional funding in later years because Camp Sonder will be cash flow positive by Year 2. If any extra funds are provided, they would be as low as \$1,500 in Years 2 and 3. The remaining \$100,000 will be obtained through commercial bank loans and be considered debt.

Exit Strategies

There is no intention of exiting Camp Sonder within the first three years. Visions of expansion are endless and while sales may level out after several years, the intention is to keep Camp Sonder a small and personal camp that doesn't have to be hugely profitable (while keeping well above breaking even). Camp Sonder's expansion is less about raking in huge profits and more about stabilizing to become self sufficient so that the heart and soul of the camp can develop. This venture follows the owner's passion and she plans to remain the owner for the foreseeable future. Despite all of this, exit is always a possibility with the right conditions. Conceivable exit strategies include:

Liquidation: If for some reason, Camp Sonder utterly fails at attracting customers and there are little to no campers for the first three years, it is possible that the owner would choose to liquidate all of Camp Sonder's assets and pursue a new venture. If the problem is identified, the owner is much more likely to try and problem solve before completely closing the doors on Camp Sonder. For example, if the problem is location, it would be more likely that Camp Sonder would begin a process of relocating than liquidating. If for some reason the owner was unable to

care for and work with Camp Sonder due to physical, mental or family issues, she might consider liquidation as well.

Third Party Buyer: In the instance that a potential buyer offers an extremely attractive offer (we're talking set for the next 10 years or so) the owner would consider selling a successful Camp Sonder. In order for this to occur however, it is likely that the buyer is looking more at the land than the camp. In this case, a deal might be struck that Camp Sonder could relocate and keep the assets.

If the owner were to want to move on or retire, she would strongly consider both of these exit strategies as well as management buyout if one of the employees made an offer.

Milestones

- **April 11, 2014:** Complete draft of Business Plan.
- **July 2014:** Secure needed funding.
- **August 2014:** Purchase land and building materials and permits
- **September 2014:** Break ground for construction. Establish campsites, bury electric lines, dig well and septic field. Build community bathroom.
- **October 2014:** Install yurts and plumbing. Begin developing marketing and purchase recreation equipment. Find storage for assets during the winter.
- **November 2014:** Continue marketing and begin programming sessions. Find a reliable, healthy food supplier.
- **December 2014:** Have calendar of sessions and website up and running. Begin solidifying each session's activities and itineraries. Open booking reservations for general attendance online.
- **January 2015:** Solidify sessions with updated webpages describing each session's objectives. Open sessions for booking reservations online.
- **February 2015:** Increase marketing with new fliers and emails focused on the various target markets for each session. Begin looking into hiring two qualified guides.
- **March 2015:** Continue strong marketing. Have guides hired, likely through NMU's outdoor recreation program. Install furniture in yurts and open place up.
- **April 2015:** Last minute maintenance and strongest marketing through this month.

- **May 2015:** Open Camp Sonder with two weeks of general attendance. Guides move in and pay begins. Women's art session and College week.
- **June 2015:** Yoga camp, teen camp, Women's weekend, family week, general attendance
- **July 2015:** Young adult adventure, Adult art camp, yoga and survival camp, Teen adventure education, general attendance
- **August 2015:** Teen back to basics, Adult summer camp, creativity camp, family week, general attendance
- **September 2015:** Life renewal, women's camp, couple's retreat, general attendance
- **October 2015:** Fall color camp. Adult art camp, college weekend, general attendance
- **November 2015:** Close camp facilities. Storage for equipment.
- **December 2015:** Review successes/failures, make appropriate changes to each program.
- **January 2016:** Marketing / new program development, purchase of any new assets
- **March 2016:** Hire three guides, begin to open place up, review finances from Year 1
- **April 2016:** Maintenance and marketing
- **May-October 2016:** Guides move in, open Camp, general attendance and various sessions
- **November 2016:** Close camp facilities. Storage for equipment.
- **December 2016:** Review successes/failures, make appropriate changes to each program.
- **January 2017:** Marketing / new program development
- **March 2017:** Hire two guides and one secretary, begin to open place up, review finances from Year 2
- **April 2017:** Maintenance and marketing
- **May-October 2017:** Guides move in, open Camp, general attendance and various sessions
- **November 2017:** Close camp facilities. Storage for equipment.
- **December 2017:** Review successes/failures, make appropriate changes to each program.
- **January 2018:** Marketing / new program development
- **March 2018:** Hire two guides and one secretary, begin to open place up, review finances from Year 3 and compare to original business plan for kicks and giggles.

Appendix



Financial Statements

Camp Sonder *Startup Costs*

Expenses	Cost
Rent & Utilities (First 12 months)	\$0
Utilities (First 12 months)	\$500
Insurance (First 12 months)	\$4,000
Salaries & Wages (First 12 months)	\$55,850
Marketing (First 12 months)	\$15,000
Art and Food Supplies	\$10,500
Website Development	\$500
Legal & Accounting Expenses	\$2,500
Interest (First 12 months)	<u>\$6,625</u>
Working Capital Requirements	\$95,475
Start-Up Assets	
Land	\$315,900
Yurts (2x30' and 3x16')	\$35,950
Storage Tent	\$2,000
Furniture & Fixtures	\$7,000
Mountain Bikes	\$1,250
Kayaks, Canoes and Life Jackets	\$1,300

Kitchen ware	\$3,000
Tools, yoga mats and fishing rods	\$550
Well and septic	\$13,000
Shower, Toilets and sinks	\$2,600
Other	\$0
Security Deposits	\$0
Total Start-Up Assets	\$382,550
Total Start-Up Requirements	\$478,025

Sources of Funds	<u>Amount Provided</u>
Contribution: Amelia Richards	\$264,617
Contribution: Investor (30% stake)	\$113,407
Total Equity	\$378,025
Debt	\$100,000
Total	\$478,025

Camp Sonder
Projected Income Statement

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Sales Revenue	\$84,980	\$123,580	\$159,265
Cost of Goods Sold			
Gross Profit	\$84,980	\$123,580	\$159,265
Operating Expenses:			
Rent	\$0		
Utilities	500	550	600
Insurance	4,000	4,000	4,000
Salaries & Wages	55,850	75,335	88,553
Promotion	15,000	10,000	10,000
Legal & Accounting	\$3,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
Art and Food Supplies	\$10,500	\$11,000	\$12,000
Depreciation	\$10,486	\$10,606	\$10,606
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$99,836</u>	<u>\$114,491</u>	<u>\$128,759</u>
Operating Income	(\$14,856)	\$9,089	\$30,506
Interest Expense	\$6,625	\$6,455	\$6,273
Earnings Before Taxes	(\$21,481)	\$2,634	\$24,233
Income Tax	\$0	\$790	\$7,270
Net Income (Loss)	(\$21,481)	\$1,844	\$16,963

Camp Sonder
Projected (Pro Forma) Statement of Cash Flow

Cash Flow from Operations:	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Net Income	(\$21,481)	\$1,844	\$16,963
Depreciation	\$10,486	\$10,606	\$10,606
Changes in Working Capital:			
(Increase) Decrease in Current Assets:			
Change in Accounts Receivables	\$0	\$0	\$0
Change in Inventory	\$0	\$0	\$0
Increase (Decrease) in Current Liabilities:			
Change in Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cash Flow from Operations	(\$10,995)	\$12,450	\$27,569
Cash Flow From Investing:			
Sale of Fixed Assets			
Purchase of Fixed Assets	(\$66,650)	(\$2,200)	\$0
Security Deposits Paid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Cash Flows from Investing	(\$66,650)	(\$2,200)	\$0
Cash Flow from Financing:			
Proceeds from Long-Term Borrowing	\$100,000	\$0	\$0
Proceeds from Equity Investment	\$378,025	\$5,000	\$5,000
Dividends Paid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Long-Term Debt Paid	(\$2,463)	(\$2,634)	(\$2,816)
Net Cash Flow from Financing	\$475,561	\$2,366	\$2,184
Net Increase/(Decrease in Cash)	\$397,917	\$12,616	\$29,753
Cash, Beginning	\$0	\$397,917	\$410,533
Cash, Ending	\$397,917	\$410,533	\$440,286

Camp Sonder
Projected (Pro Forma) Balance Sheet

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Assets			
Current Assets:			
Cash	\$397,917	\$410,533	\$440,286
Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0	\$0
Inventory	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Current Assets	<u>\$397,917</u>	<u>\$410,533</u>	<u>\$440,286</u>
Fixed Assets:			
Security Deposits Receivable	\$0	\$0	\$0
Property Plant & Equipment	\$66,650	\$68,850	\$68,850
Accumulated Depreciation	\$10,486	\$21,092	\$31,699
Net Fixed Assets	<u>\$56,164</u>	<u>\$47,758</u>	<u>\$37,151</u>
Total Assets	\$454,080	\$458,290	\$477,437
Liabilities & Equity (Debt)			
Current Liabilities:			
Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0	\$0
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt	\$2,634	\$2,816	\$3,010
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$2,634</u>	<u>\$2,816</u>	<u>\$3,010</u>
Long-Term Debt	\$94,903	\$92,087	\$89,077
Total Liabilities	\$97,537	\$94,903	\$92,087
Owner's Equity:			
Paid-in Capital	\$378,025	\$383,025	\$388,025
Retained Earnings	(\$21,481)	(\$19,637)	(\$2,674)
Total Owner's Equity	\$356,544	\$363,387	\$385,350
Total Debt & Equity	\$454,080	\$458,290	\$477,437

Camp Sonder
Wage Schedule

3.50%

\$9,000

7.65%

Owner	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Salary	\$27,000	\$30,000	\$33,000
Benefits	\$8,000	\$8,300	\$8,600
FICA	\$2,066	\$2,295	\$2,525
Total Owner S&B	\$37,066	\$40,595	\$44,125

Part-Time Employees

Number of Part-Time Employees	2	3	3
Average Wage	\$8,000	\$10,000	\$13,000
Total Wages	\$16,000	\$30,000	\$39,000
FICA	\$1,224	\$2,295	\$2,984
Unemployment Insurance	\$560	\$945	\$945
Disability Compensation Insurance	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500
Total Part-Time W&B	\$18,784	\$34,740	\$44,429

Total Wages, Salaries & Benefits **\$55,850** **\$75,335** **\$88,553**

Resume for General Manager

Amelia Richards

(616) 481-6327

School Address:

308 Van Antwerp
Marquette, MI 49855
americha@nmu.edu

Home Address:

1315 Buttrick Ave. SE
Ada, MI 49301
amelia.richards15@gmail.com

Education:

High School Graduate

Forest Hills Central High School

Graduated: May 2012

Overall GPA: 3.9

Member of the Honors Society

College Sophomore

Northern Michigan University

Current GPA: 3.99

Member of the Honors Program



Work / Service Experience:

Data Management, Mika, Meyers, Beckett & Jones Law Firm (Summer 2013)

- Worked 2-3 days a week
- Worked 7 hour shifts
- Digitized confidential case files
- Archived 10+ years worth of client information

Stablehand, The Double CC Ranch (25 horse riding stable) (2007-2011)

- Worked some weekdays, Saturdays, and Holidays
- Worked 2-4 hour shifts morning and night
- Fed horses and cleaned stalls
- Performed general maintenance of the barn

*Camp Counselor, **Ada Township Park** (Summer's 2011, 2012, 2013)*

- Volunteered at numerous summer day camps for elementary age kids
- Worked 3 days a week for 7 hours each day
- Helped with organization and creation of activities
- Assisted with organization of office space and record keeping
- Mentored the kids and taught them about the environment

*Care Giver, **Domestic Child Care** (Summer 2009 – Present)*

- Provided child care for neighbors, friends, cousins, and my younger brother
- Mentored younger members in my equine 4-H Club. (2009-2011)

*Volunteer, **Carol's Ferals** (A nonprofit organization that cares for stray cats) (Summer 2011)*

- Helped with maintenance of the facility
- Admitted and cared for cats
- Organized office space and records

*Section Leader, **FHC High School Marching Band** (Fall 2010)*

- Responsible for leading a small group of peers
- Helped teach the music and proper marching techniques
- Accountable for part of the formation on the field

*Field Commander, **FHC High School Marching Band** (Fall 2011)*

- Responsible for all 35 flute players on the field
- Directed the section leaders
- Worked with the drum majors and band directors on music and marching
- Taught the flute part of the music and proper marching techniques
- Accountable for the overall formations on the field and musical quality

Other Experience:

*NMU Student Leader, **Student Leader Fellowship Program** (2013-2014)*

- Paired with a mentor from the community who exposed different leadership opportunities in Marquette and beyond.
- Volunteered in several service projects
- Attended 5 workshops on leadership and a two credit course on leadership theory.

*Participant, **4-H Club: A Canterring Commotion** (2007-2011)*

- Showed horses in the Kent County Youth Fair and KFNO shows
- Mentored younger members of 4-H Club

- Kept a detailed and organized record for my horse each year

*Problem Solver, **Odyssey of the Mind** (A creative team based activity) (2005-2010)*

- Won 1st place and Ranatra Fusca Award at Regional and State Competitions (2009)
(The Ranatra Fusca is a prestigious award for demonstrating the highest possible level of creativity)
- Won 7th place and Ranatra Fusca Award at World Finals (2009)
- Won 1st place at Regional Competition; 2nd place at State Finals and 7th place at World Finals (2010)

*Musician, **Vocal, Piano and Guitar***

- I play piano, sing and self taught how to play guitar.



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¹¹ <http://www.michigan.org/campgrounds-rv-parks/>

¹² All photo credit: Amelia Richards

