



Tall Turf Today

Spring 2017

Equipping Youth and Families for Lives of Reconciliation in God's World

The CEO's Corner

By Marcus Hargrave, President & CEO

Greetings from Tall Turf Ministries! Each year, hundreds of children and young people from all walks of life come to Camp Tall Turf and take their first few steps down the road of reconciliation. Through our programming, our goal is that every child leaves camp with three key deliverables:

1. Knowledge of their own worth and their individual identity in Christ.
2. A greater appreciation for their own cultural identity.
3. An understanding of and respect for the value of other cultures.

We are proud to be the most diverse Christian Summer Camp in Western Michigan! TTM's ministry of reconciliation builds on the primary and foundational experiences that occur while being part of a diverse and caring community at camp. We provide ongoing support to enable and equip youth with developmental assets such as faith, confidence, ability to face and overcome challenges, achieve their potential, and live lives of celebrating diversity. All done with a lot of fun activities!

You can partner with us in creating this opportunity – the chance for our young people to learn about the importance of reconciliation – by sponsoring a camper with a gift of \$300. This gift allows us to offset the actual cost of camp as compared to what most of our campers can afford to pay.

Please, sponsor a camper today with your tax deductible donation!



Welcome to My Tall Turf!

By Noemy Parra-Cano, Leader In Training



Tall Turf Ministries is more than summer camp to me; it's my developer. I have been involved with Tall Turf for 3 years and have grown tremendously. My first year I was completely terrified with the idea of leading a group larger than nine in activities. Today, I have spoken at banquets, talked in rooms filled with adults, lead groups larger than 50 adults, and lead 60 teens in a bible study. My social anxiety went from the size of the Empire State

Building to the size of a hill because of Tall Turf.

Accepting my calling has been greatly accelerated because of Tall Turf and its people. Encouragement is abundant. God has used this ministry to remind me that He always has a plan. I began writing music at about eight years old, but never shared it. God moved me to share a song I wrote last summer at camp. I had prolonged it for as long as I could, but I knew that I had to share my song before the summer ended. The minute I stopped playing the last chord, my fellow staff looked up astonished that the girl they knew for years wrote *that song*.

Through devotions and people at Tall Turf, God has reminded me that I can do all things because I am simply a vessel. My time at Tall Turf has allowed me to be part of multiple worship teams, interact with adults & peers for planning city-wide worship events, and connect with my community more. Now, I freely express my music to show not what I can do, but what God gave me to touch others. To me, Tall Turf is a nest of undiscovered game-changers. I, Noemy Parra-Cano, have walked out of self doubt and into my purpose. As an obedient daughter of Christ, I seek to obediently serve through passion filled worship in order to restore the relationship between man and God.



Spring Break 2017: Many Hands Make Light Work

By David Brasser, Site Manager

As with many ministries, Camp Tall Turf relies on volunteers to provide time, energy, and skills to accomplish thousands of behind-the-scenes tasks in preparation for summer programming. In early April, Tall Turf hosted its 48th annual Spring Break Work Retreat. Over 30 volunteers of all ages made their way to Camp for 4 days of work, play, and fellowship.

Coming from Holland, Grand Rapids, Osego, and several other communities, these intrepid

individuals braved the rain and cold to help get Camp ready for another summer.

Volunteers raked leaves, hauled and stacked wood, updated cabin showers, repaired docks, "goat-proofed" the barn and much more. The week started out on the warmer side of cold, but by the middle of day two, the sun was out, a slight breeze was blowing, and there were smiles on people's faces. Days were spent enjoying each other's company while working, and evenings were spent relaxing in the Proctor Youth and Family



Center reading, talking, and playing games. Foosball and air hockey were favorites! Meals also provided time for fun and fellowship, with great food provided by our hard-working kitchen staff.

All of our volunteers further our mission and ministry in so many ways. They help us create a beautiful and welcoming space for campers and staff to commune with God, each other, and nature. To all of our volunteers, we want to say, "You help make this ministry possible! Thank You!"

Tall Turf Ministries Announces Sale of 816 Madison Ave. SE

Tall Turf Ministries announces that Monarch Investments closed on the sale of its office building located at 816 Madison Ave. SE on March 24th, 2017. Monarch Investments and Management Group, Grand Rapids, LLC (MIMG) will use the building for administrative offices.

"We are committed to serving local youth through our programming and this move will allow us to continue our mission for years to come," said Marcus Hargrave, CEO of Tall Turf Ministries. "Although we are currently exploring new locations for Tall Turf Ministries' administrative offices in Grand Rapids, we will continue our year-round programming and planning for the 2017 summer camp season during this time of transition. Temporarily, we have relocated to Hope Reformed Church at 2010 Kalamazoo Ave. SE."

"We are grateful for the opportunity to purchase 816 Madison Ave. SE and are excited to work with Tall Turf Ministries moving forward," said Bobby Nichols from MIMG. "This building will allow us to expand our presence in West Michigan, and we look forward to being a part of this growing community."

The 6,232-square-foot two-story office building is a converted firehouse that was built in 1891. It served as a firehouse until 1979 when the Inner City Christian Federation purchased it. In 2009, Tall Turf Ministries purchased the building to expand its programming and administrative offices. Funds from the sale of the building will go to enhance the summer camp located in Hesperia, MI, as well as year-round leadership development programs.

The building's upper level features open office space, private offices and a large conference room. The lower level features a larger gathering room with garage-style doors opening to the street with a full kitchen. There is also free onsite parking. "Our community is faced with opportunities for a prosperous future, and we will continue to work to ensure neighborhood residents are part of that positive change," said James White, former Grand Rapids City Commissioner, and former Tall Turf Ministries Board Member. This is an opportunity to strengthen our community, and Tall Turf Ministries along with MIMG will play an essential role in supporting neighborhood revitalization."



School Year Highlights

By Miriam De Jong, Director of Programs

While many kids spend their Saturday mornings sleeping in after a long week of school, a group of committed children and teens spent their Saturdays waking up early to come to Tall Turf Ministries for our weekly school year program. Each week, approximately 20-30 kids came together from all over Grand Rap-



ids to participate in games, Bible study, activities, a meal, field trips and more. Tall Turf Leaders In Training (LITs) worked every week to prepare activities such as drama, dance, team challenges, arts and crafts, and science experiments. LITs also lead participants through a small group Bible study each week where children had the opportunity to study the book of John and how it relates to their lives.

Several of the highlights during the year included field trips that Firehouse Kids were able to take. Early November, Firehouse Kids journeyed to camp for a Fall Retreat. Campers were able to strengthen relationships through team building, devotions, and an "amazing race".

In November, Firehouse Kids were able to join thousands of other participants for the annual Art Van Santa Parade downtown Grand Rapids. Campers walked alongside the Tall Turf float while singing their favorite camp chants as loud as they could! Campers were also able to enjoy time learning about reconciliation with nature through a memorable field trip. In March, campers visited Blandford Nature Center for their annual Sugarbush Festival. While there, campers learned about the process for getting and making real maple syrup. They also had the opportunity to explore the grounds and learn about the many different animals that inhabit



Blandford Nature Center such as owls, turtles, and rabbits. Several brave campers were even able to experience what it felt like to sit on top of a Belgian Draft horse. Overall, it was a great year of learning, growing, and discovering new things together about God & each other!



SAVE THE DATE!

Tall Turf Ministries'

Building Bridges Banquet

Thursday, October 19, 2017

6:00PM

\$30 Per Person

Formal Invitation to Follow

SUMMER CAMP 2017

YOUTH CAMP SESSIONS

Tall Turf Olympics Week (ages 8-13)

July 5—12

Discovery Science Camp (ages 8-13):

July 18—22

Adventure Camp (ages 14-17):

August 1—5

Young Leaders Camp (ages 8-13):

August 7—11

FAMILY CAMP WEEKENDS

June 30—July 2

July 14—16

July 28—30

August 11—13

Register Now: www.tallturf.org

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