



A COURT OF OUR OWN

We would like to offer a very special thank you to **The Well Church** for their generous donation of 2 brand new basketball hoops! Our kids have never had so much fun during summer camp game time. We will never forget the looks on their faces as their bus pulled up to camp and they saw their very own UYM basketball court! Thank you for providing us with a fun and safe way to stay active, right in our own parking lot!

THANK YOU MARIA RAMIREZ AND FAMILY FOR MAKING OVER 200 HOMEMADE TACOS FOR OUR SUMMER CAMP FAMILY PICNIC!



AURORA NEIGHBORHOOD BASEBALL LEAGUE RETURNS IN 2021 WITH A BRIGHT NEW FUTURE!

After the 2020 season was canceled due to Covid-19 restrictions, the ANBL had a very successful 2021 season **because of the generosity of it's sponsors, the hard work of it's players and coaches, and the support of it's families and community.** We had 111 players between t-ball and little league, with all of them excited to play again in 2022. We are planning on doubling our numbers in 2022 and our sponsors have already expressed their eagerness to be a part of the growth and excitement next season. The 2021 season could not have happened without our **Commissioner Mike Michalek** and **The Fox Valley Park District.** Also, we can't forget the ANBL 2021 Championship Team, The Cleveland Indians, sponsored by **Westminster Presbyterian Church** and led by Bella Magaña and her coaching staff! A special thank you to **Community Christian Church Blackberry, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Village Bible Church Aurora** for providing hotdog lunches for opening day, the all star game and the championship game.



"Sowing the seeds for tomorrow"
Matthew 13:3-8
FALL 2021



Urban Youth Ministry

A DIVISION OF WAYSIDE CROSS MINISTRIES

WELCOME TO OUR OFFICIAL 2021 UYM NEWSLETTER! Our journey through this pandemic has had many ups and downs, but if there is one thing we know for sure, it's that we couldn't have done it without the generosity of our amazing donors! Thank you so much for standing by us and offering your faithful support, even through these difficult times. Now, join us as we recap how God was at work in our programs this summer!

SUMMER CAMP 2021

After a year of hardships, our kids had never been more desperate for a normal summer camp. We were able to return to our regular schedule this year, and God blessed us with a summer like never before! We decided to put a huge emphasis on academics in order to make up for a difficult year of e-learning, and our kids rose to the challenge. We wrote essays, learned our times-tables and even made time for cooking class! Most importantly, our Bible time taught us how Jesus has a hand in everything, and that all of his beautiful creation points back to Him. Every UYM kid left camp with **Colossians 1:17** on their hearts; ***He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together!***



ACADEMICS LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Our middle and high schoolers spent their summer academics time learning how to write essays. Many of them had never even written an essay before, but that didn't stop them from succeeding! Each child was tasked with writing a 5 paragraph paper on something they are passionate about. Topics ranged from videogames to tree-climbing; we even had an essay about chicken nuggets! Thanks to a generous donation of 4 laptops by **Dee and Eric Pierce** and the dedication of our volunteer academics teacher **Janet Spence**, we had 23 students complete original essays by the end of the summer, and we could not be more proud of all our kids' hard work. They were rewarded with a fun day at Splash Country and the Jericho Lake Pavilion courtesy of the **Fox Valley Park District**, wrapping up a summer full of learning experiences!



real stories...real HOPE

GOD CAN TURN ANY DAY AROUND!

When our field trip to Phillips Park was rained out, we were stuck inside our lunchroom with 50 sad faces. Thinking quickly, we decided to gather up any art supplies we had and hold a competition to see who could invent and build the most creative creature! We made the teams ourselves, forcing kids who had hardly ever spoken to each other to work together. What started as complaints and sadness soon turned to joy and fun as the kids got to know each other. Our rainy day stuck inside turned out to be one of our most memorable field trips, and the friendships made on that day lasted the rest of the summer!



EVERYONE WINS ON COOKING DAY!

Every Thursday this summer our Middle and High school students spent the afternoon learning how to cook a variety of recipes that they can make at home! They learned the value of nutrition and creativity in the kitchen, and thanks to our volunteers **Laurie and Angi Pilkington**, they got to cook some pretty delicious foods like cheeseburgers and pizza puffs!



REWARDING RESPECT

We work hard to make sure our kids get properly rewarded for all of their good behavior! Most often, rewards come in the form of UYM Dollars, given only to kids who respect JOY (Jesus, Others and Yourself). Our kids can spend their UYM Dollars at our official UYM Store, where they can buy things like candy, toys and even shoes!

THANK YOU COFFMAN BROS. TRUCK SALES FOR TEACHING OUR KIDS ABOUT WORKING WITH LARGE VEHICLES!



THIS SUMMER, EVERY UYM KID LEARNED A LESSON THAT WILL STAY WITH THEM FOREVER:

WE ARE GOD'S MOST BELOVED CREATION!

SPIRIT WEEK MEANS CRAZY OUTFITS AT UYM!

Wacky Wednesday and Wear One Color day are two fun ways to get our kids excited to come to summer camp. Every Spirit Day our staff votes for who looks the best, and the winner gets their very own slushie from 7/11!



MEET OUR 2021 GRADUATES!

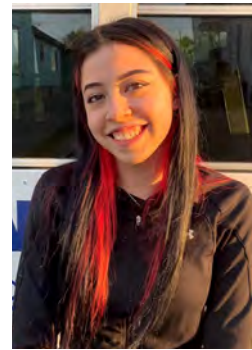
As a truly bittersweet ending to this year, UYM got to see off not one, but TWO high school graduates. We work hard to make sure our high schoolers leave with a strong understanding of the value of hard work, family, and most importantly, the love of Jesus! We are so grateful that God gave us the opportunity to watch both of these beautiful young ladies grow into the women they are today! Even though we will miss them dearly, we could not be more proud of our graduates. Look below to learn a little about Nataly and Liz and what they are up to now!



NATALY FLORES

Nataly Flores has been a part of Urban Youth Programming (summer camp, after school program and the ANBL), since she was a 10 years old. She graduated this past May and is pursuing a degree in exercise science and athletic training at Aurora University!

We had the pleasure of hiring Nataly to run game time for our summer camp this year! She also volunteered with our Aurora Neighborhood Baseball League as the head coach of the Cubs, giving her some great experience for her degree. We are so blessed to have you as a part of our UYM family, Nataly!



LISSET MARTINEZ

Liz has been with UYM since she was in a freshman in high school. She worked overtime in our After-School Program last year studying Calculus, even skipping game time to work with her tutor **Chuck Wilde**. Liz will be attending Aurora University this fall for a degree in pre-dentistry.

Liz's gentle nature and kindness have made her one of the best staff members we have ever had, especially with our little ones! We were honored to hire her for one full season of summer camp and after-school programming. We are really going to miss you Liz, thank you for being such an amazing part of our programs!