



handstolove

“where difference does not equal disability”



Aubrey Spencer

“Hello! My name is Aubrey Spencer, and I was born with amniotic band syndrome, which affects all four of my limbs. I have been attending camp for ten years, and this is my final year as a camper. Camp has made such a huge impact on me, and I truly cannot imagine a life without it. I have made so many lifelong friends and memories and have had the opportunity to connect with people who share similar struggles.

I began dancing at the age of 12, quickly fell in love with dance, and joined my studio’s competition team. Throughout my life, I had never experienced a significant limitation that I was fully ready to accept. I am missing all of the toes on my left foot, and when I was put on pointe, it proved to be especially challenging for me. It has taken a lot of determination, tears, encouragement, trial and error, and three years to reach the point where I felt comfortable enough to dance en pointe!

To be able to dance on pointe, I had a special pointe shoe filler made by the prosthetist helping me get on pointe, custom toe pads to fill the gap in the shoe, and split-sole pointe shoes instead of single-sole ones. I plan to continue attending H2L as a volunteer and AULD after high school graduation, as well as advocating for limb-different individuals. I aspire to be an inspiration to all.”



Meet The Hand Camp Leaders



*Kara Poole
Happy Campers*

"I started volunteering at Hand Camp as a student at UF, and have continued ever since! I have been working as a pediatric occupational therapist for 10 years. When I'm not at work, I enjoy spending time with my niece and nephew, playing sports, and cheering on the Gators!"



*Grace McClelland
Firefly Explorers*

"My name is Grace McClelland, and I am a first year OTD student at Xavier University in Cincinnati. I have been coming to Hand Camp since I was in second grade and am thrilled to be in a leadership role at camp this year!"

*Fawn Coombs
Firefly Explorers*



"I'm Fawn Coombs, and I first learned about Hands To Love when I was Dr. Dell's patient in 2005. Ruthie and Miki were my OTs and encouraged my family and I to attend Hand Camp. We loved every minute of it. Since then, I've been involved off and on from being a camper to being a CIT (Cool Inspirational Teen), to family pal, and co-leader for Firefly Explorers. I'm currently working as a nurse in north Florida. Last year, I married a wonderful man, Josh Coombs, and we are blessed with our sweet baby Judah."



Hailey Monahan - Fireflies 1

"My name is Hailey Monahan, and I've been attending Hand Camp since I was 6 months old! This will be my 21st Hand Camp. I was born with polysyndactyly and growth plates issues. I was lucky enough to have Dr. Dell do 13 surgeries on my hands. And Ruthie Dell did all my physical therapy. They are amazing, and I am forever thankful for them. I'm currently a senior in at Florida Atlantic University and graduating this year with my bachelors of health science. Post grad, I plan on transitioning into a full time ocean rescue EMT lifeguard. I started lifeguarding when I was 16 and fell in love with it. While I'm not working or doing school, I enjoy spending time with my family and spending time outdoors! Can't wait to see everyone at camp so soon :)"

Sam Zangrilli - Fireflies 1

"I am a freshman at the University of Florida with a double major of Data Science / Mathematics. I plan on becoming a college professor and staying here at UF with my new Gator family! I started Hand Camp back in 2011, along with my younger brother Joey, and have gone every year since (with the exception of Covid). In my free time, I love playing with my dog, Scooter, writing poems and short stories, reading and drawing, going to the gym, playing video games, and baking."



Savannah Grannan Fireflies 2

Savannah Grannan (left) is a freshman at the University of Florida. This is her 17th year at Hand Camp, and she's so excited to be actually helping with camp out this year! Her hobbies include frolicking, dancing, carpool karaoke, and basking in sunny areas (in true Gator spirit).

Michael Clarke - Fireflies 2

Mike is a 26-year-old welder with one hand who doesn't let anything slow him down and lives a life with no limitations. Born with one hand, he knows the power of perseverance and confidence. He loves playing and watching football, attending and serving at church, and most importantly, encouraging kids—especially those with physical challenges—to believe in themselves. He encourages kids with one hand to be confident and chase their dreams, showing through his passion for sports and work that, with determination, they can achieve anything they set their minds to.



Austin Trout Campfire Crew



"Hello, my name is Austin Trout. I have attended Hand Camp since 2006 as a camper, transitioning to a volunteer in 2018 and continuing to the present. I have had many different jobs and volunteer positions, including Chemical Operator, Work Boot Sales Associate, Numismatist, Online Sales and Social Media Manager, Car Audio Installer, Football Coach Volunteer, Prison Ministry Volunteer, and more. My hobbies include video games, repairing old consoles, board games (not regular games like Monopoly), Bible study, fishing, squirrel watching, YouTube, baking, and mastering coffee making."



Veronica Grannan Pathfinders

"My name is Veronica (Roni) Grannan. I am currently a kindergarten teacher in Englewood, Florida, who loves watching the sunset, working in my garden, and reveling in creation. My husband, Matt, and I found out about H2L through Shriners Hospital. Savannah was not quite two years old when we attended our first Hand Camp that altered the course of our lives forever, for good. It's been 17 seasons, and our family still loves volunteering at Hand Camp in any capacity that we are needed. Though we only gather for one magical weekend in April, I try to carry the camp spirit with me all throughout the year... 'I CAN at Hand Camp!'"

Bryanna Williams Campfire Crew

"A couple of volunteer OTs helped create a 'rig' for me to shoot at archery using a wrist release, a bead, and some dental floss. It truly was one of my favorite moments at Hand Camp! I now do competitive archery in my free time. I had my first competition in December of 2024. I'm 26 years old, from Jacksonville, FL, and I have been coming to camp for about 10 years now. I started as a teen camper and have kept coming back as an AULD to help out with leading the Fireflies 2 group. This year, I am so excited to help lead the Campfire Crew! One thing about me is that I love all things cats! I have 6 cats of my own, and I currently work at my local Animal Hospital. I am currently applying to the Veterinary Technology program at St. Petersburg College to work towards becoming a Registered Veterinary Technician, and I am so excited for this next chapter in my career. I cannot wait for camp and to see everybody. Hand Camp is my home away from home, and I look forward to it every year!"



Shari Gorman Teen Camp

"This will be my 22nd Hand Camp and 7th Teen Camp (since we started Teen Camp!). I think the high school aged campers have so much to offer, and I love to see them bloom and become leaders/mentors for the younger campers. About me: I grew up in Ontario, Canada but went to college at UF and UNC. I am an OT in hand therapy at UFHealth and I enjoy ceramics, photography, hiking/exploring, and reading."

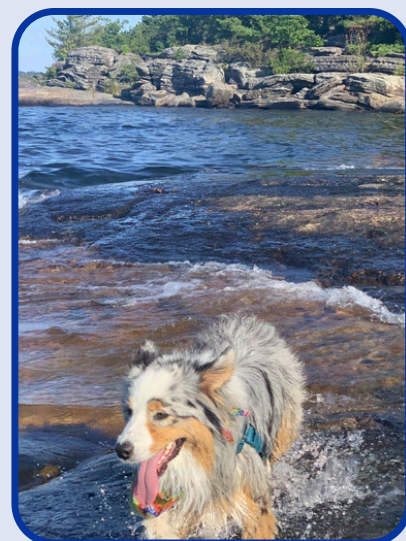
Jocelyn Hunt- Teen Camp

"Hi there! My name is Jocelyn, but my friends call me Joss. I'm returning for my third year at Hand Camp, and I'm thrilled to be supporting the Teen Retreat again this year!

I came across H2L on Instagram about 4+ years ago during a time in my life when I was searching for a community of people who could understand me better. Living with a limb difference isn't always easy, but it's such a beautiful, empowering experience when you find the right people who "just get it." That is what being at camp - even as an AULD - means to me. When I saw the Instagram post asking for volunteers, I knew coming to this camp was where I needed to be as a way to serve and give back to our community.

I live a few hours north of Toronto, Ontario, and it's a trip I look forward to taking each year. Professionally, I worked hard to get my master's degree and am a proud registered Social Worker and Mental Health Therapist. I work part-time on an inpatient medicine unit at a nearby hospital and also run my own private practice business, where I provide counselling and psychotherapy for people needing support with a variety of topics - including people living with limb differences, just like us! When I'm not working, you'll find me outside with my dog, Xena, swimming, or enjoying a nice cup of coffee with my friends and family.

I'm excited to see both new and familiar faces at camp this year - see you soon!"



OT Tip of the Month

Whether you're lacing up for Spring sports or ready to take a hike, a well-tied pair of shoes is a must. Traditional shoelaces are no longer the only way! Elastic shoelaces come in all shapes and sizes, from colorful and crazy to flat and plain. Any pair of shoes can be turned into slip-on shoes, and the tightness can be adjusted to meet your needs. Elastic laces are a great option to make the getting-ready process quicker as well as to eliminate the risk of shoes coming untied!

Send any questions about the OT Tip of the Month to kara@handstolove.org

How To Set Up Recurring Donations

1. Navigate to handstolove.org and click on the "Donate" tab on the top right
2. Scroll down and click the blue "Make a Donation" button
3. Click the blue "Donate" button on the right side of the screen
4. A pop-up will appear with amount options. Instead of choosing "One-time," consider setting up a monthly, quarterly, or annual donation.

Feel free to email info@handstolove.org with any questions!

Hands To Love is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. We strive to provide all H2L events and activities at the lowest possible cost to our families. We rely on the donations of generous supporters like you in providing services to upper limb different youth and their families.

Thank you for helping us make a difference!



A Note From the Executive Director

We're just a few weeks away from our 25th Annual Hand Camp, and we couldn't be more excited! We've planned so many incredible activities to celebrate this milestone. Our theme for the year is **25 Years of Hand Camp Magic**, and we're thrilled that our **special guest: Chris Canfield**, a magician with an upper limb difference, will be joining us for the celebration. Throughout the weekend, Chris will share his story while showcasing his amazing magical talents. Hand Camp will be a weekend-long celebration of this special anniversary. We'll kick things off on Friday evening with a fun-filled carnival featuring games and surprises. On Saturday evening, we'll enjoy a unique performance titled Heroes Among Us, featuring Aerial Dance Circus performance, our campers, and a magical showcase from Chris. It will be a memorable celebration of the past 25 years, and an energetic start to the next 25 years! Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors and supporters, our 25th camp is set to be our biggest and best yet!

80 Families from 19 states

16 1st Time Families

81 Children with upper limb differences

80 Siblings

140 Parents/Guardians

301 People Total!

12 Happy Campers (birth-3)
 33 Firefly Explorers (PreK 4 – 1st Grade)
 65 Fireflies (2nd-6th Grade)
 25 Campfire Crew (7th & 8th Grade)
 24 Pathfinders (9th-12th Grade)
 14 Teens and their Families are attending Teen Camp on April 3rd

3 New Families received Travel and Registration Scholarships
 2 New Families received a Registration Scholarship

We hope you're as excited as we are for Hand Camp 2025 and the next 25 years! You can be a part of this celebration by partnering with us in our mission to empower children with upper limb differences and their families through essential resources, support, and connections for the next 25 years and beyond. Start a monthly donation of at least \$25 today and help make a lasting impact!